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Mr Ridley

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

March 8, 1983.

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The Rt. Hon. Sir Geoffrey Howe, QC., MP.,
Chancellor of the Exchequer.

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I am sorry not to have replied sooner on the Manifesto. In fact, we have been doing a lot of preliminary work. I have been preparing an update of the Paper prepared for the Welsh Conference last year giving a progress report and pointing the way forward. We have been looking at Papers being prepared by the Party in Wales. I asked Wyn to talk to Westminster colleagues.

I conclude that there is nothing distinctive to inject at this stage. You are right in thinking that we will have to take the Party Manifesto and present it in Welsh clothes. I think all the separate issues are already being considered in one way or another.

- e.g. (1). Various housing initiatives - we are working with John Stanley and will be putting proposals to Family Policy Group.
- (2). Severn Bridge, about which we will have to say something positive - already the subject of discussion with David Howell.
- (3). Railways and Transport - being covered by the P.M.'s group
- (4). Various industrial initiatives in Wales - being carried forward with the appropriate bodies.

WELSH OFFICE

How much gets into the Manifesto will depend on how far we have got with each when the election comes.

No doubt there are general matters of policy that I would like to see covered by the Manifesto but intelligent comment is hardly possible in the absence of knowledge of where you have got. My particular point is that nothing extra needs to be done at present about the Welsh aspects. They are well in hand and can be grafted to the main tree quite quickly.

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