

MR. ALISON

Yes MA 28/4

MR. SHERBOURNE

SCOTTISH RATES

I have at last managed to  
set up this meeting for 1815 hours  
on Wednesday 1 May here at No.10.

Could you both be present  
please?

CR

26 April 1985

Michael Alison - Mary Harkin.  
We are arranging a meeting to  
discuss x/ early next week.

Robin Butler

FRB

25.4

I think you should see the enclosed letter from Sir Hector Monro, who is Chairman of the Scottish backbenchers in the House of Commons. I attach a draft of the reply for the Prime Minister to send him.

X | You will see Hector's concluding paragraph in which he calls for "emergency action". Do you think the Prime Minister should call a meeting quite soon to consider in detail what she could say, specifically, in her speech in Scotland in May, to restore confidence? I think that the passage on rates cannot simply be a piece put together by Stephen and myself: it really will have to be a carefully thought through piece of Governmental policy prescription; and systematic thought will have to be given to this in Government.



MICHAEL ALISON  
23.4.85

From: Sir Hector Monro, AE, JP, DL, MP.



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

R19

Political?  
PPS 1  
Have you  
the PPS?

18th April 1985

Dear Prime Minister

Following upon my letter to you of 1st April, I am afraid I have to report that all the Backbenchers at our weekly meeting yesterday expressed mounting concern at the developing crisis over revaluation and rates in Scotland.

Far from improving since our meeting with you last month, the situation is deteriorating with increasing emphasis on commercial revaluation. All Members reported a vast constituency mail from disgruntled Conservatives and this reaction was confirmed by Jim Gould who attended our meeting throughout.

I need not labour the point that we are in a grave difficulty and that steps must be taken now to stop a complete loss of confidence amongst Conservatives in Scotland.

Is it really too late to take emergency action this financial year, over and above a commitment to reform the rating system before the next Election?

Chairman  
Scottish Backbench Committee

Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher, MP,  
Prime Minister.



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

23rd April 1985

Thank you for your letter of 18th April. Thank you too for keeping me posted about the mounting concern in Scotland about rating revaluation. I am now more than alert to the problems you have described.

I am giving a lot of thought myself, as are our colleagues in the Scottish Office, as to what I can say to reassure our supporters in Scotland when I come to Perth next month. I have noted your plea for "emergency action". You will not expect me to give an explicit response to this request now, but I certainly take note of what you express.

Sir Hector Monro AE JP DL MP