

Amery

19th November 1981

Thank you so much for your letter of 13th November.

I was most interested to hear the result of your talk with Arnold Fieldhouse.

Michael Heseltine is hoping to produce his Green Paper very shortly and as this is really very much his responsibility, I have sent a copy of your letter to Michael.

I know that he will be very glad to receive any suggestions which Arnold Fieldhouse may make.

It will, I fear, be too late for any such suggestions to be included in the Green Paper; however, as you know this is a consultative paper only and the Government will certainly be able to take these suggestions into account, before it reaches a decision about the reform of the rating system.

The Rt Hon Julian Amery MP



FROM: THE RT. HON. JULIAN AMERY, M.P.

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13th November, 1981.

Personal

Dear Margaret,

I was in Manchester the other day for a couple of political meetings and took the opportunity between them to have a longish talk with Arnold Fieldhouse. He was one of my closest advisers when I was Minister of Housing and I always found him down to earth and wise. I am sure you know him well.

He is at the moment engaged on a special study of the problem of rates which seem to be something of a "little local problem" for us. He is hoping to produce a report which he would send direct to you in the next 2-3 weeks.

It occurs to me, however, that time may be short and that there might be advantage, if your schedule could possibly allow, for your seeing him sooner than that or asking him to put the broad outline of his proposal on paper for you as soon as possible.

As far as I understand him, the essence of his plan is to remove education, police, fire services and housing altogether from local government, reducing the area for which rates would be needed by something like 70%.

I am no expert in these matters but I don't think I could have got through Housing without the support of Fieldhouse from Manchester, Frank Griffin from Birmingham Plummer from London and Gray from Newcastle. They formed a sort of inner cabinet for me and kept me on the road - not at all theoretical but very practical.

Julian
Julian Amery

The Rt.Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.