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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

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FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE

The Rt Hon The Viscount Whitelaw CH MC
Lord President of the Council
Privy Council Office
Whitehall
LONDON SW1

NBPO.

8 December 1986

In Millie,

"PAYING FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT" - RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

I am grateful to Nicholas Ridley for a copy of his letter to you of 3 December covering a draft statement.

Paragraphs 8 and 9 of the statement describe the treatment of students. When we discussed that under your chairmanship in E(LF) in October, the Committee agreed that commitments about the treatment of students in England and Wales were to be avoided. The present draft text concedes that no final decisions have been taken in respect of England and Wales, but then it goes on to describe the position which will obtain in Scotland. This is strictly irrelevant in a statement about England and Wales, but creates a strong presumption in the reader's mind that what goes for Scotland will also go south of the border.

In advance of collective decisions I should prefer us to say nothing in this statement about students. If, however, Nicholas Ridley thinks that we must acknowledge the existence of the issue in this statement, then I suggest the following in place of paragraphs 8 and 9 (it retains much of Nicholas' paragraph 8);

"The Green Paper proposed that students, like all other adults, should pay the community charge: they use local services and can vote in local elections. But it recognised that students might require special rules because it would be complex and costly for them to be required to register and deregister at the beginning and end of every term. It proposed that students in higher and further education should be liable for the community charge at their term-time addresses as if they were living there throughout the year. However, no final decisions have been taken about payment of the community charge by students in England and Wales."

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I am sending copies of this letter to the Lord Chancellor,
to members of E(LF) and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Lawson

Kennerly

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