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2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB
01-212 3434

My ref:

Your ref:

The Rt Hon Kenneth Baker MP
Secretary of State
Department of Education and Science
Elizabeth House
York Road
LONDON
SE1 7PH

Prime Minister 2

22 January 1988

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Dear Kenneth

STUDENTS AND THE COMMUNITY CHARGE

Fiat Pt 7

In the paper circulated with my minute of 20 July 1987 to the Prime Minister, about community charge exemptions and reliefs, I proposed that educational establishments should be required to issue certificates to full-time students, confirming their status, and that they should also be required to supply information about students, to registration officers, for the purposes of community charge registration.

Since then I have been giving further thought to what the duty to provide information might mean in practice, and generally to how we can ensure that students are both registered for and pay the community charge.

As far as registration is concerned, I propose that universities and colleges should be required to provide registration officers with the names, and where known, the addresses of full-time students at the beginning of each academic year; and that, in addition, they should be required to respond to specific requests from registration officers for the names and addresses of students during the course of the academic year. My officials will instruct Parliamentary Counsel to include these provisions in the Local Government Finance Bill, by Government amendment.

As far as payment is concerned, my principal worry is that students may default on payments during the summer vacation, particularly after their final year, when they will in many cases be moving to a new local authority area. To deal with this problem I propose to require full-time students to pay in 3 instalments (co-inciding more or less with grant cheques) rather than by the usual 10 instalments. The three instalments would cover the months April to September (6 months' charge), October to December (3 months' charge) and January to March



(3 months' charge). This could be achieved by use of the regulation-making power in the Bill, governing payment by instalment, without the need for any amendment.

I intend to put down the necessary Government amendments as early as practicable.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Prime Minister, the Lord President, Members of E(LF), David Waddington and Sir Robin Butler.



Yours sincerely
Nicholas Ridley
NICHOLAS RIDLEY