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ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE  
LONDON WC2A 2LL

19 January 1989

The Rt Hon Nicholas Ridley MP  
Secretary of State for the Environment  
2 Marsham Street  
LONDON S W 1

*NBRH de this stage*

*PLC  
19/1*

*Jean Nicholas*

RATING APPEALS

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In my letter of 13 January I said that I would write again when I had given consideration to the question whether your proposal conflicted with our obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights.

I have now been able to consider the question and I have concluded that the reason for the retrospective element of the proposal is one which will be unlikely to be found convincing in Strasbourg. We would therefore be vulnerable under Article 1, Protocol 1 to the Convention in respect of challenges brought by the small number of domestic ratepayers who succeed in achieving awards by valuation courts amounting to less than 20% alteration.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Nigel Lawson, John Wakeham and Malcolm Rifkind and to Sir Robin Butler.

*John. em*

*Nick.*