



CEP

PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AT

NBM

RCC

28/7 28 July 1989

Dear Malcolm,

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HOUSING BILL:
EXEMPTIONS FROM THE COMMUNITY CHARGE

You wrote to Nicholas Ridley on 19 July seeking his agreement to tabling amendments at Lords Committee Stage extending the present exemption from the Community Charge for persons in respect of whom another person is entitled to child benefit.

I see very considerable difficulties in the Government using this Bill as a vehicle for extending exemptions from the Community Charge. As you are aware we had to deal with several extremely difficult amendments on exemptions during the passage of the 1988 Local Government Finance Act and I would view with very great dismay the prospect of going over this ground once again. I believe that if we were to table an amendment (albeit a non-controversial one) along the lines you propose, the Opposition will assume they have license to table much more far-reaching amendments on this issue. This is something I would obviously wish to avoid at all costs, particularly as the timetable for this Bill is already extremely tight and the number of Government amendments is already on the outer limit of what we can accommodate. In view of this I would ask you to reconsider your proposal to introduce any amendments concerning exemptions.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the members of E(LF) and L Committees.

Yours sincerely

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BELSTEAD

The Rt Hon Malcolm Rifkind QC, MP

LOCAL GOVT : Raty Pt 13