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The Rt. Hon. Nicholas Ridley MP
Secretary of State for Trade and Industry

Rt Hon John Major MP
Chancellor of the Exchequer
Treasury Chambers
Parliament Square
London
SW1P 3AG

Department of
Trade and Industry

1-19 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0ET

Enquiries
01-215 5000

Telex 8811074/5 DTHQ G
Fax 01-222 2629

NBM
RACB
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Direct line 01 215 5623
Our ref JW5AEP
Your ref
Date 4 December 1989

Dear John

REPORT OF THE REVIEW OF GOVERNMENT VALUATION SERVICES

WITH PG? / WITH REQUEST IF AGREED

I have seen your letter of 23 November to Chris Patten.

I am in agreement with the proposals set out in the report and there are two areas of direct concern to this department on which I would like to comment.

As you know, we will be responsible for the management of our own departmental estate with effect from 1 April next year. It is not clear whether we would also assume responsibility for the proposed property database. It would certainly make sense for us to take this on, particularly since much of the Estate will be in the hands of agencies. I think it would be helpful if the working group were to consult with estate holding departments.

From our contacts with industry, I can tell you that a review of the Scottish Valuation service would be especially welcomed. The Chemical Industries Association in particular have commented on the problems caused by the different lines taken by the Assessors in Scotland and by the Valuation Office in England and Wales. And the existing relationship between the Assessors and the local authorities can sometimes lead to a conflict of interests. A consistent approach to valuation throughout Great Britain is clearly desirable.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Cabinet members and Sir Robin Butler.

John Major
NBM



