

POLICY IN CONFIDENCE

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CC/AG



PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE

WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AT

14 November 1990

Dear Chris,

attached

Thank you for copying to me your letter of 12 November in response to Malcolm Rifkind's of 6 November in which he proposed adding to the 'Lambeth' Bill provisions to enable him to reduce community charge levels where these are inflated by under-collection in earlier years.

I have discussed this with Tim Renton, John Belstead and Bertie Denham, and we support very strongly your argument that the scope of the 'Lambeth' Bill must not be widened in this or any other way. Even with a tightly drafted Bill we shall have to work very hard to complete the Commons and Lords stages before the end of March, and anything which increases the scope for amendment as application to Scotland would do, particularly on such a contentious aspect of the community charge system, would greatly imperil our chances of success. Also, by using up more time and more business management effort it would run counter to our wider strategic objectives for this Session's programme.

I am copying this letter to the recipients of yours as well as to Tim Renton, John Belstead and Bertie Denham.

Yours,
John

JOHN MACGREGOR

The Rt Hon Chris Patten MP
Secretary of State for the Environment
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 3EB

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