



From the Minister of State
for Local Government

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Department of the Environment
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CHIEF SECRETARY	
REC.	20 NOV 1987

Telephone 01-212 3434

Mr Potter **2**

1987 November 1987

Mr P. McGILVER, Mr ANSON
Mr P. McGILVER, Mr HAWKIN
Miss PEARSON, Mr TAYLOR, Mr BULLGOTT
Mr TUIE, Mr CANN

Dear Nick

COMMUNITY CHARGE - MEMBERS OF RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Thank you for your letter of 20 October.

I am concerned that your proposal for a partial exemption for members of religious orders would, as you say, leave them having to find 20 per cent of the community charge when they have no personal income. This would still leave them in a position inferior to all other adults (including ministers of religion) who, if their income warrants it, can receive both a maximum rebate of their community charge and help towards the minimum contribution.

ie via the addition to income support

On reflection, I have therefore concluded that unless you are prepared to bring this group of people into income-related benefits for the limited purpose of the community charge, we have no alternative but to exempt them completely.

I am anxious to reach a conclusion on this, as pressure on behalf of members of religious orders is likely to mount as we get towards introduction. I am copying this to John Major, Ian Lang and Wyn Roberts seeking their agreement to an exemption if, as you say, members of religious orders cannot be brought into the income-related benefit system to enable them to pay the community charge.

y - eve
Michael

MICHAEL HOWARD

Is there not a danger
that the Church of
Scotland will
take advantage of this loophole?
How are religious orders to be defined?

Nicholas Scott Esq MP

