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DS  
Press office

Local Govt

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

20 June 1979

R/P 25679  
In Hansard

Thank you for telephoning through the text of the answer which your Secretary of State proposes to give to a written Parliamentary Question, as a means of announcing today's Cabinet decision on rating revaluation.

The Prime Minister is entirely content with the terms of the answer. She has commented that the Government should ensure that maximum advantage is taken of the opportunity to present this positive decision. As I told you, we consider that tomorrow would be an unfortunate day to make the announcement as at least two other stories seem likely to have major claims on the headlines. I would be grateful if you could keep in touch with the Paymaster General's office in settling the timing of the announcement.

I am sending copies of this letter to Richard Prescott (Paymaster General's Office) and Martin Vile (Cabinet Office).

M. A. PATTISON

Mrs. E.J. Meek,  
Department of the Environment.

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## Rating Revaluation

Following today's Cabinet decision Mr. Heseltine proposes to make the following announcement by means of a written PQ which would be answered tomorrow.

Question: Will the Secretary of State make clear the Government's intention with regard to the general rating revaluation for England and Wales for 1982?

Answer: The Government has decided to cancel the rating revaluation currently in progress. The necessary legislation will be introduced in the autumn. Meanwhile no further evidence will be sought from the public by the Valuation Office and people who have received questionnaires about their property for the revaluation need not return them. Cancellation of the revaluation will spare the 22 million ratepayers of the country the disruption and inconvenience caused by the effects of a revaluation in 1982 while we sort out the longer term future of the rating system. It will also lead to significant manpower economies in the Valuation Office of the Inland Revenue and has saved about £5 million of public expenditure over the next three years.

We need to put the question down very shortly. Are you content?

Liz Meek  
Department of the Environment

20 June 1979





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PRIME MINISTER

Mr. Heseltine will now announce in Parliament by Written Answer, and publicise, the decision to cancel the rating revaluation on Friday. He is in touch with Mr. Maud about handling of publicity.

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20 June 1979