



PRIME MINISTER

BBC/TV SERIES ON COMPUTER LITERACY

The BBC are to broadcast a weekly series of 10 television programmes at a peak viewing time starting on 10 January 1982 explaining what computers are, the broad principles on which they operate, what they can do and, to some extent how to use them. We have made a small contribution to the costs of developing the programmes.

Just as other BBC series have had an associated "book of the series" so will this one, but it will also have "the computer of the series" - a powerful new Acorn microcomputer, made in the UK, the standard version of which will retail at £235. Although the programmes will refer extensively to this machine it will not be a prerequisite for understanding them. This is one of the two machines used in the Micros in Schools Scheme.

The series comes at just the right moment to capitalise on the growing interest in the home computer. It will be seen in future years as a milestone in educating the wider public in computing. Consequently both the BBC and I are particularly keen that the programmes are given the best possible launch. The BBC are laying on a range of publicity exercises. We both think these would be greatly enhanced if you gave your backing to them - particularly as the series will start at the beginning of IT year.



The proposal is that some time in the first two weeks of December David Wilson and James Wilkinson should interview you for television and radio respectively, probably in the context of an exhibition in the House of Commons. We can count on the BBC using your interview in the news programme at the time of the launch but it could also be used as part of the introduction of the actual programmes - January 1982.

I am copying this to Mark Carlisle.

K.B.

KENNETH BAKER

25 August 1981



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26 AUG 1981

