



FCS/85/203

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT

Direct Broadcasting by Satellite

1. Your Private Office kindly sent mine a copy of your letter of 1 July to Norman Tebbit about the future of a UK DBS Service now that the Joint Venture Consortium have decided not to pursue their involvement in the project.

2. The possible effects of these developments on our political, industrial and cultural interests in Europe are of considerable interest for me too. The French and Germans are due to begin DBS operations from 1987. Their programmes will, I understand, be receivable in the UK. Their adoption of the D2-MAC standard seems likely to have a considerable influence on other European countries' plans, with implications for the reception of British programme material and our ability to export receivers and other equipment.

3. If you have no objections, therefore, I should like the FCO to be actively involved in future discussions on the establishment of a UK DBS Service. There are, as you know, a number of satellite options, some involving European cooperation, which I feel should be fully explored.



4. I am sending copies of this letter to the Prime Minister, Norman Tebbit, Nigel Lawson and Willie Whitelaw and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'G. Howe', written in a cursive style.

GEOFFREY HOWE

Foreign & Commonwealth Office  
15 July 1985

BROADCASTING : ~~OFF~~  
P/S

