



10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

30 December 1986

AIDS - MINISTERIAL BROADCAST

The Prime Minister has seen your Secretary of State's minute of 30 December. She has asked me to say that she is against the idea of such a broadcast. Her view is that a leaflet drop to every house explains the seriousness of the problem, and that it would not be appropriate to have the first Ministerial broadcast for eight years on this subject.

(P.A. BEARPARK)

Tony Laurance, Esq.,
Department of Health and Social Security

BM

1 am against it.
A leaflet drop to every
house is to explain the
reason why - To take the



Prime Minister

CCB

PRIME MINISTER
Just Ministerial broadcast for 5 years

This is a very unusual request although
it has the support of H(A), and the opposition.
Content to approve subject to sight of the text?
Or reserve position until you have seen that?

would it
my new
be wrong
not

As you know, the nationwide household distribution of our AIDS
leaflet starts on 12 January. I have been considering the
possibility of arranging a short (5 minute) Ministerial broadcast
to coincide with this.

203
30/12

not yet
Substance

This would be a Category 1 Ministerial broadcast as set out in
the relevant Aide Memoire. There would be no right of reply by
the Opposition. Ministerial Broadcasts of this type are rare - I
understand the last one was in 1978 - but I think we would be
fully justified in requesting one on this occasion.

A nationwide leaflet drop is an unprecedented step in this
country and of course the leaflet addresses a sensitive subject.
At the same time that the leaflet goes out will also be
television advertisements on AIDS for the first time.

We need to explain to the public why we are undertaking a public
education campaign on this scale and why, as part of this, it was
felt necessary to send a leaflet to every household in the
country. The broadcast would explain the threat of AIDS and the
role which everyone has to play in combatting the spread of the
disease. It would also explain why the message is not being
limited to a few select groups - that everyone may have a role to
play, even grandparents, for example, in counselling their
grandchildren. It would aim to explain also the moral dimensions
of the campaign, which is likely to be a matter of concern to
some people.

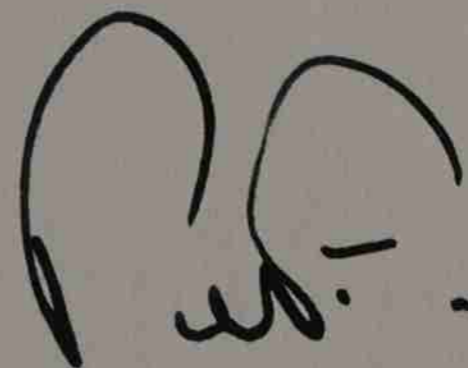
I have consulted the Lord President and Members of H(A) about the
idea of a Ministerial broadcast and they fully support it. I
have also spoken to Michael Meacher who is content with it. We
have gone to considerable lengths to ensure that our policies for
combatting AIDS have the support of the whole House. I believe
that a Ministerial broadcast will help to sustain that and that I
should make reference to it in the broadcast.

E.R.

We have also approached the broadcasting organisations informally who, in keeping with their extremely helpful response on this issue generally, have indicated that they are quite content in principle and have provisionally earmarked time for it.

The aim would be for the broadcast to go out on all channels on Thursday 8 January to ensure that it preceded the first television advertisements and the commencement of the leaflet drop.

I hope you will agree to my going ahead on this basis.



N F

30th December 1986

