



Prime Minister

(2)

These increases were
being to be announced on

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG Nov 24m. The
01-233 3000

20 November 1981

Home Secretary

proposed 8 December; this

is the Chancellor's reply,

MS 20/11

The Rt. Hon. William Whitelaw, CH, MC, MP
Secretary of State for the Home Department

W. Whitelaw

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TELEVISION LICENCE FEES

TPM

Thank you for your minute of 3 November about television licence fees.

I agree that the increases should be deferred from 24 November. If at all possible, however, we should avoid recourse to a Contingencies Fund advance at a time so close to when we are present Winter Supplementary Estimates.

I would therefore much prefer your announcement to be made on 1 December. That would be certain to avoid a demand on the Fund. An announcement on the 8th might not do so if Supplementaries proceed according to schedule.

1 December would also ensure that all licences bought in December would be renewed at the higher level, increasing the flow of money to the BBC and treating all licence payers equitably.

I recognise that no date is ideal from all points of view, but I hope that you will be able to agree to 1 December.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Prime Minister and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

[Handwritten signature]

GEOFFREY HOWE

20 NOV 1961



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