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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

RESTRICTED

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

REVIEW OF THE RADIO FREQUENCY SPECTRUM
30-960 MHz

I have shown the Prime Minister your minute A08294 of 4 May 1982, and she has accepted your advice that she should agree to the Home Secretary's proposal to set up a review of the radio frequency spectrum between 30 and 960 MHz.

I attach a copy of the letter I have now sent to Mr Halliday conveying the Prime Minister's agreement.

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6 May 1982

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1.

Prime Minister.

Ref. A08294

MR WHITMORE

Content?

Yes

AMW

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The Home Secretary sent the Prime Minister (and other members of the Ministerial Committee on Economic Strategy) a copy of his letter of 26th April to the Secretary of State for Industry proposing an independent review of the radio frequency spectrum between 30 and 960 MHz. ^{attached}

2. As the letter makes clear, this part of the spectrum is congested immediately and in the longer term. Some relief will come from phasing out 405-line television by the end of 1986, and by replanning the military use of the top end of the band. But there remains pressure to release more frequencies for the land mobile services, which of course includes the emergency services like police, fire and ambulance.

3. I think that the proposal for a review is sensible; it should help the Government to take decisions and to be seen to be sensitive to competing demands for frequencies.

4. The proposal has been agreed between the Departments concerned at official level. There is no reason to expect any of the Ministers concerned to object to what is proposed.

5. I recommend that the Home Secretary should be told that the Prime Minister is content, subject to the views of her colleagues. Presumably the Home Secretary will consult the Prime Minister about the appointment of the Chairman.

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

4th May 1982