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SCOTTISH OFFICE
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The Rt Hon William Whitelaw CH MC MP
Secretary of State for the Home Department
Home Office
50 Queen Anne's Gate
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SW1H 9AT

15 March 1983

Thank you for copying to me your letter to Patrick about the proposed accelerated closure of 405 line TV transmitters as recommended by Merriman.

I have noted that the officials studying the implications of accelerated closure gave special thought to the situation in Scotland and Wales and concluded that the modest numbers who would be deprived of their TV service by up to 2 years earlier than previously agreed did not merit making special arrangements that would inhibit the introduction of land mobile services in areas of, in the case of Scottish transmitters, North East England. I have also noted that the theoretical maximum number who would be affected in Scotland is 22,000 and that the true number may be substantially less. You have pointed out that somebody is going to be disappointed whatever decision is taken and that there will be risk of political criticism. I would not therefore seek to dissuade you on the general proposition of accelerated closure with which I am in agreement.

I am however uneasy about deprivation - which is how it will be seen by many who are themselves unaffected by the closure - in Scottish areas where there is no pressure for private mobile land use and where the 405 transmitters may not affect developments in NE England. As these transmitters are due to be closed in any event by the end of 1985, advancement of their closure by one year does not seem much of a hardship. On the other hand an exception in their case could be justified on the grounds that there is no argument other than administrative tidiness for their early closure. I hope therefore you could make an exception for these transmitters.

I am copying this to the Prime Minister and the other copy recipients of your letter.

GEORGE YOUNGER

Broadcasting,
Apr. 82, Radio
Frequency.

15 MAR 1983

11 12 1 2 3 4
5 6 7 8 9 10

15 MAR 1983

11 12 11
10 22
9 33
8 4
7 6 5

GEORGE YOUNGER