



PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AT

18 March 1986

Dear Douglas

MBPM

DIRECT BROADCASTING BY SATELLITE

PART 5 (FLAP)

You wrote to me on 26 February seeking the agreement of H Committee to a commitment in principle to legislate to extend the direct broadcasting by satellite contract period from 12 to 15 years.

You will have seen the letters from Norman Tebbit, Nick Edwards and Malcolm Rifkind all in support of your proposal. I understand that Paul Channon is also content. You may therefore take it you have H Committee agreement to proceed as you propose.

I note that your commitment to legislation will be limited to a statement that we will make the necessary legislative change at the earliest opportunity. As you say, it will then be for QL to consider timing and procedure. While I appreciate that the need for the Bill will be conditioned by the emergence of a potential contractor, I think it would help if we now got it into the QL machinery. I should be grateful, therefore, if you could now make a formal bid, confirming that the Bill would be limited to the single point you have raised. The status of the bid might, I suspect, be a contingent item for next Session.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Prime Minister, the members of H Committee, the Secretaries of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, and for Trade and Industry, and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

The Rt Hon Douglas Hurd MP

BROADCASTING: DIRECT BROADCASTING : PEB

