

Lord THOMSON

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10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Principal Private Secretary*

25 November 1986

I should be grateful for a draft letter for the Prime Minister to send in reply to the letter attached from the Chairman of the Independent Broadcasting Authority about a world television news service. Please could I have a draft reply by 9 December.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Stephen Boys Smith (Home Office), Alex Allan (H M Treasury), Tim Walker (Department of Trade and Industry), Andrew Lansley (Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office), and Trevor Woolley (Cabinet Office).

N L WICKS

GA

A. C. Galsworthy, Esq., C.M.G.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office



INDEPENDENT BROADCASTING AUTHORITY

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Tel: 01-5847011 Telex: 24345

THE RT. HON. THE LORD THOMSON OF MONIFIETH, KT, PC Chairman

Plcc B.G.

Pone News

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24th November 1986

Dear Prime Minister

There has recently been speculation in the press about BBC plans for a world television news service, funded initially by the Foreign Office.

The IBA recognises the BBC's legitimate interest in the matter but we view with concern the prospect that public money might be made available to the BBC to fund such a development whilst ignoring the private sector and the potential which ITN could offer.

Earlier this year, David Nicholas, ITN's Editor and Chief Executive, wrote to Geoffrey Howe at the Foreign Office and to Peter Middleton at the Treasury. He outlined ITN's interest in a British world television news service. At that stage no decisions had been taken but given recent BBC statements about their international television ambitions, I believe it right to register with you the IBA's wholehearted support for ITN's case.

Contd/...

A British worldwide television news service could be of great value to Britain. The IBA would wish to see ITN given every opportunity to compete for the privilege of supplying it.

Yours sincerely,  
Leone

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, MP,  
Prime Minister,  
10 Downing Street,  
London. SW1A 2AA.