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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

4 February 1985

Dear Peter,

REVIEW OF BBC EXTERNAL SERVICES

Thank you for your letter of 1 February.

In your letter of 26 November, you said that Sir Geoffrey Howe would study the recommendations of the Report of the Review of the External Services carefully before deciding whether the Government should accept all or some of them. In my reply I said that the Prime Minister looked forward to seeing recommendations on how the Government should react.

It now seems that the Government will be giving their view on the Report in the House this evening before the Prime Minister has seen or commented on any recommendations by the Foreign Secretary. While I have no reason to think that the Prime Minister does not accept the Report's conclusions, I believe that she may feel that in some respects they do not go far enough and that further steps are needed.

May I suggest therefore that any presentation of the Government's view at this stage should leave open the possibility of a further announcement of the more precise steps intended by the Government; and that the Prime Minister now be consulted upon these.

I am copying this letter to Janet Lewis-Jones (Lord President's Office), Rachel Lomax (Treasury), Hugh Taylor (Home Office) and Paul Thomas (Office of Arts and Libraries).

Yours sincerely,  
  
S. D. POWELL

P. F. Ricketts, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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