

for seeing what the

that discussion if we  
to — to produce  
value for money

re of indexation and  
ard and management  
; the need to make the  
sets to meet some of its  
sts.

is for change at the BBC  
orporation's acceptance  
ent's independent pro-  
[his will both add to the  
's — and its audience's  
romote the pursuit of

of programme stan-  
l be noted that BBC  
e others, are within the  
ce of the Broadcasting  
cil and, if Parliament  
ought within the scope  
legislation.

s Committee supported  
roduction of sponsor-  
grammes in the field of  
ort. The Government  
view that any relaxation  
nsorship restrictions  
the expense of editorial  
r transparency for the  
e is force in the Home  
tee's argument. After  
the BBC on this subject,  
been reached on less  
gements for the broad-  
sponsored events, such  
s events.

#### BC's role

ry to review the role of  
the present Charter  
d of 1996. It would be  
the Government to

powered satellite services which viewers  
may already receive direct.

- ITV will become Channel 3.
- The IBA and Cable Authority will be replaced by a new Independent Tele-

● All UHF "terrestrial" channels, BBC  
and independent, would be required to  
take at least 25 per cent of original  
programming from independent pro-  
ducers.

express a view in this White Paper on the  
Peacock Committee's suggestion that in  
the longer term a Public Service  
Broadcasting Council should be respon-  
sible for commissioning public service  
programmes which even a fully de-  
veloped consumer market in broadcasting  
would not otherwise deliver. Experience  
needs to be gained first of the progress  
and impact of the reforms set out here  
and elsewhere in the White Paper.

#### Radio

The Government's view, following on from  
the Green Paper on radio published in  
February last year, is that there will be  
scope for at least three new national  
commercial services. A new VHF frequency  
will be available for one of these services.  
The BBC's existing Radio 1 and Radio 3  
MF frequencies will be reassigned for the  
other two. The BBC will retain sufficient  
frequencies to broadcast its national  
services. The White Paper says: "Minimum  
standards will be retained. Public service  
radio broadcasting will continue under the  
aegis of the BBC. BBC Radio services will  
continue to be funded from the licence fee  
for some years to come. But BBC radio  
services will be subject to a much stronger  
stimulus of competition. The Government's  
proposals will create the conditions for an  
expansion of radio which should benefit  
broadcasters, advertisers and listeners  
alike."

#### Transmission

The White Paper expresses a Government  
wish to separate service delivery from  
service provision.

- The Government considers that the best  
arrangement in due course would be a

regionally based, privatised transmission  
system designed to promote competition,  
while containing certain common carrier  
obligations. The route towards this ob-  
jective is complicated at present by the  
way in which the IBA's system is  
entwined with that of the BBC, and the  
fact that the BBC's transmission respon-  
sibilities are rooted in its Charter which  
lasts until the end of 1996. The  
Government proposes to discuss with  
the BBC, the IBA and others how the  
objective of moving towards a privatised  
transmission system might best be taken  
forward. It will also be considering how,  
given its inherent monopolistic character-  
istics arising in part from topography,  
any necessary regulatory oversight  
should be arranged.

- Until such a system is in place the BBC  
will continue to have responsibility for  
transmitting its television and radio  
services. The Government hopes that the  
BBC will, during this transitional period,  
test the market for the operation of its  
own transmission system by commercial  
contractors on a regional basis. This  
would be consistent with the steps which  
the BBC has already taken to test the  
market for a range of support services, as  
part of its general policy of devoting as  
great a proportion as possible of its  
resources to programmes. This would be  
a useful step in itself, and would also  
prepare the way for privatisation in due  
course. The advent of new services —  
such as the new national commercial  
radio services — will open up new  
commercial transmission opportunities.  
The Government also envisages that the  
BBC might, in the transitional period  
while it retains a transmission role, be  
able to arrange for its contractors to  
offer a transmission service to new  
entrants.

ARIEL NOV 1988