[GB] Future of the BBC Debated

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On 9 February 1995, the House of Commons debated the future of the British Broadcasting Corporation, following the publication last Summer of a White Paper on the topic.

Two important issues were discussed. One concerned the basis of the BBC's financing, specifically the retention of the licence fee. The Secretary of State for the National Heritage - the Government department responsible for broadcasting - reaffirmed the Government's commitment to the licence fee as the basic means of funding the Corporation. However, some MPs criticised the fact that this policy was to be reviewed before the end of 2001.

The second topic concerned the commitment in the White Paper to taking 'a reasonable proportion of network production from the nations and regions' of the UK. The Government supported this policy of decentralisation, but urged the BBC to be more precise as regards introducing more programme production outside London. Thus far, it has decided to spend GBP 75 million implementing the policy. (David Goldberg, School of Law, University of Glasgow) Information on law related policy developments which may have legal consequences but of which no documents or other texts are yet available.

Hansard [verbatim proceedings of Parliament] Vol. 254, 9 February 1995. Session 1994-5. Cols 471-554.

White Paper 'The future of the BBC: Serving the Nation, Competing World Wide'; Cm 2621.

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