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MINISTER: IMMORAL TO THREATEN JAIL OVER LICENCE FEE

EXCLUSIVE

By **Paul Revoir**
Media Editor

THREATENING to send TV licence defaulters to jail is 'morally indefensible', the Culture Secretary said last night.

Lucy Frazer's hard-hitting comments came as she announced a £10.50 rise in the annual fee – far lower than the increase sought by the BBC.

Writing exclusively in the Daily Mail, she put the corporation on notice with a pledge that a review into its funding model will 'specifically look at the issue of criminal prosecution of the licence fee'.

It comes after a report revealed that nearly 1,000 people are prosecuted every week for not paying their licence fee – making it the most common crime in the country, excluding motoring offences.

Concerns have been raised about the disproportionate number of women being pursued through the legal system, with females accounting for 70 per cent of those who get fined.

Campaigners have been calling for a reform of the system for years, saying it discriminates against women and the vulnerable. Ms Frazer said it was 'something I personally feel is



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