

Independent Television News Limited

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FROM THE EDITOR

29 September 1986

11- OCT 1986

INDEXED

The Rt Hon Norman Tebbit MP
Chairman of the Conservative Party
Conservative Central Office
32 Smith Square
London SW1

Dear Norman,

I am writing to you about a matter which is giving increasing concern to us here at ITN. It is no secret that the BBC want to start a World Television News Service as a video version of their English-language news service from Bush House. As we understand it, it would take the form of about four half-hour news programmes at different times of the day, fed up to the satellite and available free to anybody who wants to pay for the down-leg of the satellite.

Our concern centres on the fact that, in addition to use of Licence Fee money, the BBC is counting on major funding from the Foreign Office on the lines of the existing subvention to the External Services from Bush House. We understand that a BBC report recommending this system is with the Foreign Secretary right now.

There are several reasons why ITN would object to a Government-aided BBC TV World Service on these lines.

1. If taxpayers' money exists for such a purpose, should it not be open for ITN to tender?
2. ITN, together with ABC News of America and the National Nine Network of Australia, owns an international news video agency called Worldwide Television News (WTN), which serves broadcasters in over 100 countries throughout the world with an international news service several times a day. (The Prime Minister opened WTN's new headquarters in Foley Street in December 1983). The WTN turns over 20 million dollars a year. We are concerned about the effect on that business if a new BBC video service, subsidised by the British taxpayer, were to make its product available virtually free.

As you know, ITN has its own aspirations to provide a trans-frontier news service in English. Our first step in that direction will be taken in about three months' time when we shall supply a half-hour news at 2200 on the new Superchannel cable service to Europe.

ITN also envisages a major news presence for itself in the English-speaking world built upon the services it will provide to the UK DBS service in three years' time. Unfair competition from the BBC would jeopardise such aspirations.

Though we would like to tender for a world service if Government finance is to be made available, we see no reason why public money should be called upon at all. Such a service should be funded by advertising and by programme sales. Indeed, a British-originated news service of this kind could be an attractive platform for advertising British exports.

I wrote to Sir Geoffrey Howe earlier this year expressing these views, and he has assured me that no policy has yet been formulated about funding such a BBC programme.

However, the BBC is busy selling their new product worldwide so I thought you might like to be briefed on how the idea is developing, which is the reason for this letter.

Yours ever,

David

David Nicholas

thought them things that would be useful in a job; 52 per cent that it had given them confidence to make decisions and only 11 per cent that it had been "a waste of time".

Railway attack

Police are investigating an attack and attempted robbery on Mr Roy Hattersley, deputy leader of the Labour Party, at Euston railway station in central London a week ago. According to Mr Hattersley, he was approached by a young man and sworn at as he was trying to make a telephone call. He was sprayed with beer, spat on by a girl who joined the youth and his briefcase was seized. Mr Hattersley recovered his briefcase.



BBC's global designs

The BBC World Service expects to announce next month that it is ready to proceed with an international television news service for a global audience that could grow to hundreds of millions (Jonathan Miller writes). The service would consist of one hour of programmes a day in English, broken down into two half-hour news and current affairs slots. The service could grow to include additional languages and material. Programmes would be transmitted by satellites owned by an international consortium, Intelsat, and beamed by foreign television stations. The scheme is expected to cost more than £10 million a year, which would require a direct government subsidy.

Pathology pay claim

Six pathologists in London, who are on 24-hour call to assist at the scene of suspicious deaths, are demanding a salary increase backdated to 1981. The pathologists, members of the British Medical Authority's forensic science committee, want their pay to be brought into line with the rest of England and Wales. Under a 1981 agreement, doctors outside London who investigate suspicious deaths are paid a call-out fee and a retainer to cover their 24-hour availability.

on the basis of its members being able to move quickly from area to area. With three RUC men having been blown up by an IRA landmine in October 1982 it was a time of "very high tension". "But there could never be in our system special set up hit squads or a shoot to kill policy."

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Student loans reverse

University vice-chancellors have rejected proposals for a mixed system of grants and loans for students. Instead, the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals has asked the awards sub-committee to draw up more flexible proposals to take more note of poorer students. The sub-committee had proposed that all students received a basic minimum grant and loan of equal value.

It will now consider that the proportion of loan to grant to vary according to the financial position of students; employers in fields where there are graduate shortages be encouraged to pay off the loans; repayments depending on the student's earnings so those on low incomes will not have to repay the loan; and university or government help in repayment being given to those performing exceptionally well at their studies.

Professor John West, vice-chancellor of Bradford University, said last night that he and many others were increasingly opposed to the idea of student loans, which would require an outlay of about £1,000 million.

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TIMES

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The cold war against pain



Back strain, a touch of stiffness, a pulled muscle or the effect of lumbago or sciatica can all be unpleasantly painful.

PR Spray is the really quick and effective way to relieve that pain.

Unlike most other pain relief sprays, PR Spray is cold. It is the spray used by professional trainers attending injuries.

PR Spray, which is odourless, rapidly lowers the temperature of the skin over the painful area, and so freezes pain out - quickly and effectively.

THE PROFESSIONAL WAY TO STOP PAIN.



Medieval ge

By Geraldine Norman
Sale Room Correspondent

A medieval gold pendant worth up to £300,000 has been found on waste ground near the ruins of Middleham Castle in Yorkshire.

Mr Ted Seaton thought that he had found a lady's powder compact after his metal detector located the object.

Sotheby's, who valued the pendant at between £200,000 and £300,000, have described it as "one of the most impressive creations of the goldsmith's art to have come down to us from the Middle Ages". The pendant is set with a Roman or Byzantine sapphire.

It is to be auctioned by Sotheby's, in association with Tennant's of Yorkshire on December 11. Efforts are certain to be made to save it for the nation.

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