

MR. GRAY

BROADCASTING WHITE PAPER

The Home Secretary has now written with revised proposals following Brian Griffiths' meeting with him last night. As Nigel suggested last night, it is not in a state on which it can be sensible to ask the Prime Minister to take crash decisions while she is in Spain. Brian Griffiths agrees. His initial views on the main headings are:

News Provision - on the right lines but some minor refinements needed;

Night Hours - fine;

Transmission - too cautious; further discussion needed;

Channel 4 - substantial further discussion needed;

The Third Force - the Home Office have not properly grasped the concept.

Brian will be putting a detailed note to the Prime Minister on all this for the weekend box.

Against that background, I suggest the following revised timetable for considering the White Paper next week. I should be grateful to know if the Prime Minister is content:

Monday 26 September over lunch, discussion with Brian Griffiths;

1630-1730: bilateral with the Home Secretary (meeting planned with Commissioner Imbert would have to be postponed);

Thursday 29 September: 1600-1730, MISC 128 (the Chancellor's bilateral would have to move. As would Charles' 1630 meeting which could go into the former MISC 128 slot on Tuesday). All the key MISC 128 players can, at a pinch, make the new date.

6 October - Cabinet.

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This timetable is still very tight given the complex issues involved, but Nigel and I think it is probably worth a try given the expectations built up for early publication of the White Paper (of course more important to get it right than to get it early).

If the Prime Minister is happy with the revised timetable we can arrange the meetings tomorrow.

*DM*

DOMINIC MORRIS

21 September 1988

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