



SL2AVN

atto

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

10 July 1989

Dear Mr. Dainton,

Thank you for your letter of 7 June about the 25 per cent independent production initiative.

As you know, we made it clear when the initiative was announced last year that news and news-related items were to be excluded from the 25 per cent quota. News gathering requires a large central resource, is very expensive to gather and raises issues of editorial control requiring a more integrated approach. As a result it would have been difficult to include a requirement to cover such programmes in the independent production initiative.

I note your concern about the possible use of this exclusion to obfuscate progress towards the 25 per cent target. We are determined to see that the initiative is implemented, both as to the letter and as to the spirit. The Home Office is discussing with broadcasters and representatives of the independent production sector, such as yourself, a number of practical issues which need to be settled. These include clear guidelines as to what is original television output, when a producer is independent (which encompasses questions of ownership by broadcasters and ITV franchise holders), what constitutes a firm commission, what sort of programmes should be counted, the degree of aggregation between different companies and categories of programme and how co-productions should be dealt with. Both

2

the BBC and IBA are committed to achieving the 25 per cent target of original output from independent producers by the end of 1992. Ministers will keep a close eye on progress towards the target, and we have decided to make the 25 per cent a statutory requirement in forthcoming legislation. The BBC have an interim target of 600 hours by the end of 1990 and the IBA 500 hours by the end of 1989. I entirely share your concern that this initiative should be a success.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

Michael Darlow, Esq.

R4/7

PPS. CF ?



HOME OFFICE
QUEEN ANNE'S GATE
LONDON SW1H 9AT

3 July 1989

Dear Paul,

not

Thank you for your letter of 8 June requesting a draft reply to Michael Darlow's letter of 7 June to the Prime Minister about the 25% independent production initiative for television. I am sorry for the delay in replying, pending the outcome of the MISC 128 discussion of the 25% initiative.

Mr Darlow is the Head of Access Negotiations for the Independent Programme Producers Association (IPPA). He has made a number of representations to Home Office Ministers and officials during the past year, expressing concern about progress towards the 25% target by the BBC and IBA and the validity of their figures for independent production hours. He has been assured of the government's determination that both the letter and spirit of the initiative should be implemented, and told about the steps being taken to ensure that independent production is properly defined and monitored.

There is in fact no confusion about the exclusion of news and similar programmes from the initiative - it was made clear in the original announcement - and the draft takes the opportunity to put the record straight on this.

Celia Boyle

CELIA BOYLE
Assistant Private Secretary

Paul Gray, Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street
LONDON, SW1A 2AA

Draft letter for signature by the Prime Minister to:

Michael Darlow, Esq
Independent Access Steering Committee
The Production Centre
5th Floor
Threeways House
40/44 Clipstone Street
LONDON, W1P 7EA

GR
Re Home to PM.
P.

Stearn

Thank you for your letter of 7 June about the 25% independent production initiative.

As you know, we made it clear when the initiative was announced last year that news and news-related items were to be excluded from the 25% quota. News gathering requires a large central resource, is very expensive to gather, and raises issues of editorial control requiring a more integrated approach. ~~such~~ ^{As a result} ~~that~~ it would have been difficult to include a requirement to cover such programmes in the independent production initiative.

I note your concern about the possible use of this exclusion to obfuscate progress towards the 25% target. We are determined to see that the initiative is implemented, both as to the letter and as to the spirit. ~~You will know that~~ the Home Office is discussing with broadcasters and ~~with~~ representatives of the independent production sector, such as yourself, a number of practical issues which need to be settled. These include clear guidelines as to what is original television output, when a producer is independent (which encompasses questions of ownership by broadcasters and ITV franchise holders), what constitutes a

/firm commission,

firm commission, what sort of programmes should be counted, the degree of aggregation between different companies and categories of programme and how co-productions should be dealt with. Both the BBC and IBA are committed to achieving the 25% target of original output from independent producers by the end of 1992. *Ministers will keep a close eye on* ~~and are co-operating in providing information to enable progress towards the target to be measured. Ministers will keep a close eye on this progress.~~ *ad w* We have decided to make the 25% a statutory requirement in forthcoming legislation. The BBC have an interim target of 600 hours by the end of 1990 and the IBA 500 hours by the end of 1989. I entirely share your concern that this initiative should be a success.

BROADCASTING: Summer #2