

PRIME MINISTER

NEWS FOR CHANNELS 3, 4 AND 5

You saw last month the detailed proposals from the Home Secretary for the provisions in the Broadcasting Bill for News Services on Channels 3, 4 and 5 (Flag A). Both Bernard Ingham and Brian Griffiths had no comments, and you agreed to support this package.

Subsequently, the Chancellor (Flag B) has minuted raising two doubts on the package:

- questioning the proposal that all Channel 3 licensees should show high quality regional news
- questioning the need to require Channel 3 licensees to broadcast national news simultaneously.

Before he went on holiday, Brian Griffiths provided further comments (Flag C). He supports the Chancellor on the first point, but recommends that you should continue to support the Home Secretary's proposal for simultaneous broadcasting of national news on C3.

Douglas Hurd (Flag D) has now responded, resisting the Chancellor's amendments on both points. His defence of the high quality requirement for regional news is not wholly persuasive. But I am not sure there is a great deal to worry about on this point.

Conclusions

(i) On the proposed high quality requirement for regional news

- do you want to support the Chancellor's objection?

or

*I think that to supply regional news is sufficient. It would be impossible to adjudge 'high quality' regional news not*

- support the Home Secretary

or

- make no comment?

(ii) Content to support the Home Secretary on the proposed requirement for simultaneous broadcasting of national news on C3?

*Yes mt*

*Heck*

PG

4 August, 1989.