

Prime Minister

Note

Decided not to write at the
Prime Minister's counsel as this is already
covered by Caroline's letter to Duncan Spence
of 7/8/89.

NEWS FOR CHANNELS 3, 4 AND 5

Prime Minister (2)

We received this today.

You have already
decided against (X) -

I assume you do not
want to change your view,

CAS 7/8

I am writing in Malcolm Rifkind's absence to make a point on an aspect of
broadcasting services which he attaches importance to.

I welcome Douglas Hurd's proposed arrangements for news services but
Nigel Lawson's subsequently expressed doubts about the requirement on
all Channel 3 licensees to show high quality regional news cause me
concern. In Scotland we rely heavily on regional news for coverage of
many locally important events, often involving Ministers, which do not
merit inclusion in the national news. The Scottish news broadcast by the
independent companies (as well as by the BBC) is much appreciated and
any diminution of coverage or quality would be a matter of widespread
regret. The Scottish news makes a significant contribution to the public
profile of the Government in Scotland.

No doubt demand for regional news would indeed encourage a continuing
supply but I feel that a requirement on Channel 3 licensees is in this
case appropriate and desirable.

I am copying this to members of MISC 128, to the Foreign Secretary and
to Sir Robin Butler.

I disagree. I believe
that regional stations will
report local news. That is
part of their local allocation.
I find it impossible to judge
between high quality local
news and local news.

I.
IAN LANG
4 AUGUST '89

~~Public, will be the best of it~~
I agree with the Chancellor. He must not put
too many post. demands on
on these stations

