



Seen by CAS.

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Recd. 10/8

The Right Hon Douglas Hurd CBE MP
Secretary of State for the Home Office
50 Queen Anne's Gate
London SW1H 9AT

8 August 1989

Dear Douglas,

Apap.

Thank you for your letter of 19 July to Kenneth Baker.

I welcome your proposals and am particularly pleased that you intend that the ITC should be able to require licensees to transmit programmes within normal school hours. Given the need to help schools to deliver the new national curriculum and the proven power of schools broadcasting, I hope that both quality and quantity will not be less than under present arrangements.

I accept that it will be for the ITC to determine with which of the licensees the requirement to provide schools broadcasting will rest. It is worth noting however that under the present arrangements the main companies provide a varied diet of schools programmes and that there is a good co-ordinating mechanism between them. There is much to be said for continuing to place these requirements on Channel 3 and Channel 5 companies rather than with Channel 4 which does not have any experience in this field. I agree that we do not need to make any statutory provision for networking.

I also agree that we do not need formally to exempt schools programmes from subscription television. I am anxious however that we regard this only as an option for the future since subscription now would certainly inhibit their use in schools.

Might I refer to two other areas - broader educational programming and children's broadcasts, both raised by Kenneth Baker in his letter of 17 April. On broader educational programming I believe that the funding option now secured should be conducive to good quality programmes in this field. But such

programming can by no means be a foregone conclusion and I would want us to do everything possible to ensure that the quality and quantity of such programmes is maintained and even increased given the need to provide better education for the population as a whole. Like Kenneth Baker I too place great importance on the provision of high quality children's programmes. If the Channel 3 companies fail to match the present provision then I think that we must do everything possible to ensure that Channel 4 remedies that deficiency. I am asking officials to pursue these and other points in this letter with your officials and the ITC as appropriate.

I am copying this letter to other members of MISC 128.

Yours ever,

JL

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