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HOME OFFICE
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4 October 1989

No further action necessary.

Dear Paul

McG 5/10

BROADCASTING BILL: MAJOR SPORTING EVENTS

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Thank you for your reply of 18 September to my letter of 8 September, outlining the Home Secretary's proposals for liberalising the regime on the broadcasting of major sporting events.

The Home Secretary is grateful for the Prime Minister's agreement to his proposals, which he considers to be the minimum necessary to make this part of the Bill politically defensible. His proposals are, in fact, considerably narrower than implied in Jonathan Taylor's letter of 15 September, since they will bite only on the showing of listed events on a pay-per-view basis, not on their inclusion in any subscription service. He accepts that the list of events should be kept as short as possible. He plans to prune the present list before the new legislation comes into force, and to keep it under review thereafter. He has taken note of Mr Lang's concern about the Scottish Cup Final. In order to lessen the risk that the composition of the list would itself become a subject of Parliamentary debate, he would plan not to consult about it until the Bill has completed its passage.

The Home Secretary has it in mind to announce these proposals before the introduction of the Bill.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to the other members of MISC 128, to Linda Joyce (Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office), Kate Bush (Department of the Environment), Gillian Kirton (Lord Privy Seal's Office) and to Trevor Woolley (Cabinet Office).

Catherine Bannister

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