

PRIME MINISTER

BROADCASTING BILL: INDEPENDENT PRODUCTION

Earlier in the month you saw a note from the Home Secretary setting out proposals for the independent production provisions of the Broadcasting Bill. These involved tightening up some of the requirements, but leaving the categories of programmes covered by the 25 per cent target unchanged.

Brian Griffiths supported this package. You continued to have concern about the exclusion of news and news-related programmes from the initiative, but reluctantly agreed with the Home Secretary's proposals. I recorded your reaction in my letter at Flag A.

This approach has subsequently been supported by the Chancellor. But Nick Ridley has now written round (Flag B) returning to the issue of the exclusion of news and news-related programmes. He suggests that there should be a change in the coverage of the initiative, by limiting the exclusion to national news and news-related programmes; this would bring within the scope of the initiative local news programmes.

You will want to consider whether to support this approach.

i) Content to offer no further comment and leave your position as recorded in my letter at Flag A?

Or

ii) Do you want to support Nick Ridley's proposal?

Yes otherwise

Recg.

PAUL GRAY

22 NOVEMBER 1989

a:casting.mrm

*independent production
would be reduced
from 20% to 15%*