

PRIME MINISTER

CHANNEL 5

You have received quite an avalanche of letters from companies actively involved in television advertising who are lobbying against a predicted delay in the initial transmission of Channel 5. These seem to have been co-ordinated by the advertising industry. I have asked Home Office Ministers to reply to all these letters on your behalf. But before doing so I also asked the Home Secretary's office to let me have a note on the line they intended to take.

The attached Home Office letter meets that remit. Brian Griffiths has seen it and supports their line. The key point is to ensure that Channel 5 is launched on the basis of a competitive rather than a monopoly transmission system. And, as the last paragraph of the letter indicates, there is no need to assume this will delay the start of Channel 5 transmission by as much as the protagonists are suggesting.

Content for Home Office Ministers to take the line indicated in the attached letter?

Rec.

(PAUL GRAY)

14 March 1990

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Yes
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