

CONFIDENTIAL

file



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

16 March 1990

Dear Sara,

BROADCASTING CROSS OWNERSHIP RESTRICTIONS

The Prime Minister will now be holding a meeting next Tuesday morning to discuss the issue of cross ownership restrictions on satellite television services not using UK frequencies, in the light of the Home Secretary's letter to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry of 8 March.

The Home Secretary and other Ministers attending the meeting should also be aware that the Prime Minister may wish to discuss another issue that was raised with her at her recent lunch with the Newspaper Society. Those present recognised that changes had been made such that, although newspapers could own only 20 per cent of a broadcasting station in their circulation area, they could own up to six radio or television stations outside that area. Concern was, however, expressed about the application of the 20 per cent restrictions within the circulation area in relation to conurbations where, it was suggested, far from there being no newspaper monopoly, there is considerable competition. In these circumstances, the argument was that newspapers should have the right to own a broadcasting station within their circulation area.

I am sending copies of this letter to Martin Stanley (Department of Trade and Industry), Carys Evans (Chief Secretary's Office, HM Treasury), Murdo Maclean (Chief Whip's Office), and Sonia Phippard (Cabinet Office).

*Yours
Paul*

PAUL GRAY

Ms. Sara Dent,
Home Office.

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BROADCASTING: Policy