

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

---

MEETING OF MISC 128: 20 OCTOBER

There is an enormous weight of paper which is relevant background to the meeting. But much of it is difficult to follow and provides an unhelpful basis for discussion.

The key papers are those included in folder 1 below, namely:

Flag A - Cabinet Office

Flag B - Brian Griffiths' brief

Flag C - Full draft of White Paper circulated by the Home Secretary in September

Flag D - Revised passages circulated by the Home Secretary earlier this month, to reflect the discussions you had with him.

---

In folder 2 are all the other background papers. I hope there is no need for you to refer to them. But you may like to have them to hand for the meeting in case others refer to particular points raised in them.

Attendance at the meeting

In addition to the normal members, the Foreign Secretary and Education Secretary are attending the meeting. The Minister for Arts has also expressed an interest in the exercise, and I have shown him a copy of the draft White Paper, but not invited him to the meeting. His relatively minor drafting comments - which I have now shown to the other departments mainly affected - are in the last paper at the back of folder 2. There is no need for you to refer to this.

Handling of the meeting

To ensure a reasonably orderly discussion, you should start by defining the agenda. Outstanding issues to be discussed fall under six headings:

CONFIDENTIAL

- (i) local services and Cable
- (ii) transmission
- (iii) Fixed or open-ended licences
- (iv) ITN
- (v) subscription
- (vi) Channel 4

I have arranged for both the Cabinet Office and Brian Griffiths (Flags A and B in folder 1) to organise their comments on the basis of this structure. So, having defined the agenda at the outset, you can then use Flags A and B to steer the discussion. If others present have comments that do not fit under these six headings, they can be taken at the end.

Conclusion of the meeting

Your aim will be to reach agreed conclusions on all the key points. You will then want to invite the Home Secretary to circulate the draft White Paper, under a suitable covering minute, to Cabinet for discussion next week, Thursday 27 October.

You may want a brief word at the end about the target date for publishing the White Paper; 8 and 15 November have been identified as possibilities.

*PLG*

PAUL GRAY

19 October 1988

SL3BED