

SRW 6/5/11/20 P 2

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 11 June 2003 20:54
To: RAMSAY ANDREW; [REDACTED] ZEFF JON; [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] BUSH BILL; [REDACTED]
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Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Lord Puttnam

Tessa Jowell met Lord Puttnam this afternoon. The main points to note were:

1. On general duties, Puttnam is convinced there should be a hierarchy, with an overriding duty to protect citizens. SoS said she wouldn't countenance that, but we'd look at whether the drafting could be tightened to better reflect what Puttnam and others wanted for citizens.
2. Puttnam thought a plurality test would resolve his own concerns about foreign ownership and Channel 4. He accepted, however, that he couldn't speak for anyone else. The SoS said she would be concerned about a double bind of ownership rules plus plurality test, and was not convinced that the industry would buy it, given the uncertainty involved. Puttnam said his conversations with industry leaders suggested they were not unduly bothered by such uncertainty. He is not hung up about the precise wording - the extract from the PCC Code is deliberately provocative. SoS agreed we'd look at his ideas and discuss them with our lawyers.

Those were the 2 points he came to make, but in conversation he ranged much wider. His points included:

- he doesn't trust OFCOM to regulate ownership responsibly. He thinks they will be too economically orientated.
- he doesn't trust anyone in the industry - "there are bad people out there who have to be stopped"...
- he is nostalgic for the days of regional ITV monopolies in commercial TV
- he doesn't think reciprocity is an issue, and said he would welcome American investment
- however he doesn't think the Americans will ever understand the PSB culture, and letting them in will ruin it (not sure how this fits with the previous point)

He plans to organise briefing meetings for backbenchers in the run-up to Report - including Pat Mitchell, who runs PBS in the US, speaking about the dangers of deregulation.

He agreed to send us any further advice that he gets from lawyers on either of 1 or 2 above. I agreed to send him a summary of the responses to our media ownership consultation on plurality tests. [REDACTED] could you send me them please?