

INDEPENDENT TELEVISION AUTHORITY

70 Brompton Road, London SW3

Tel. 01-584 7011

5th November 1968

Dear Mr. Black,

Thank you for your letter of 25th October.

I can best describe the Authority's attitude to the Granada programme on Londonderry by saying very regretfully that it did not entirely come up to our expectations. It seemed to us that presentation of the point of view of the Unionist party on the issues involved might have been more adequate and complete than in fact it proved to be. We have discussed the programme thoroughly with the Granada management who are aware of our views and are making investigations before reporting to us again.

Although it is a matter of real concern to us that this particular programme was incompletely balanced, we do not feel that, looking at ITV's network coverage as a whole, our viewers have been left with an unfair presentation of the issues raised in Londonderry. Leaving aside altogether Ulster Television's own local treatment of the subject - about which no complaint has reached us - we can look back upon three occasions during October when ITN's News at Ten carried on the network extended stories about Londonderry. The first of these on 6th October included an interview with Mr. Craig, and on the following day both the Prime Minister and Mr. Craig appeared. The third occasion on 15th October was a balanced report by the news team which contained an account of the statement made by the Prime Minister. There was also, of course, the edition of Frost on Friday in which the point of view of the Unionist Party was expressed by Mr. Roy Bradford and by Mr. Anderson, the former Lord Mayor of Londonderry.

I need hardly assure you that we shall keep a vigilant eye on the coverage of Northern Ireland issues over the coming weeks. As you may know, ITN would have liked to interview the Prime Minister for News at Ten on the 4th November, but of course his reasons for feeling unable to give one are fully understood.

Yours sincerely,

*R.B. x Frost*

H. Black, Esq.,  
Cabinet Secretary,  
Northern Ireland.