

My interventions about the future of Channel 4

Rt Hon Sir John Redwood MP (Wokingham) (Con): Many fine British businesses have grown, flourished and invested far more once being privatised, and I hope that this one will too. But will the Secretary of State see, during the privatisation, whether there is a way of allowing the people who work for Channel 4 and do so much for it to gain participation, perhaps partly by buying and partly by gift, so that they become shareholders in whatever entity emerges?

Nadine Dorries, Secretary of State: I will go on to talk about the fact that we have many bidders who are looking at purchasing Channel 4, and we are looking at all options before we bring the matter to Parliament to see what is on the table. But for the sale of Channel 4, as it says in the "Up next" White Paper, what we are looking at is to sell Channel 4 as a PSB. Therefore, I do not think the model that my right hon. Friend outlines briefly would be conducive to that sort of purchase. We are going to sell to an organisation that will invest in Channel 4 and keep it able to make those distinctive programmes.

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Rt Hon Sir John Redwood MP (Wokingham) (Con): Has my right hon. Friend noticed that the Opposition think that they know better than the audience what Channel 4 should show every evening? Is it not a good idea that we move to a model where the owners engage with the audience and try to grow the audience, because that way they will attract more revenue?

Nadine Dorries, Secretary of State: We agree on many things, and we agree on that.