[GB] Attempt to remove limits on television licence ownership by newspaper group fails

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During the passage of the UK Broadcasting Bill, an attempt was made to change the provisions in the Bill prohibiting ownership of more than 20% of a Channel 3 licence holder by newspaper groups with more than 20% of national newspaper circulation. The effect of the provisions is to exclude Rupert Murdoch's News International, and the Mirror Groups from extending their participation in Channel 3.

Proposals to lift the restriction were supported by two junior ministers and by the Labour opposition (which has traditionally been supported by the Mirror Group). The Government however decided to resist the amendment and it was defeated.

Fuller information on the Bill will be provided when it becomes law. For details of the attempt to amend it, see Financial Times, 17 May 1996, 21 May 1996.

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