

From Richard W Bond PhD

23 February 2004

BBC Charter Review Commission  
Department for Culture, Media and Sport  
2-4 Cockspur St.  
London SW1Y 5DH

Dear Sirs,

I would like to make the following responses to some of your key questions.

**What do I value most about the BBC?** As one who rarely watches television (I do not have a set of my own) I am mainly concerned with sound broadcasting, and Radio 3 in particular. This is a unique service of inestimable value, which I believe no kind of commercial broadcasting could possibly provide.

**Should the BBC run commercial services?** I see nothing to object to in this, provided that radio or TV programmes do not become influenced in any way by the desire to promote these services. For instance, I enjoy the BBC Gardener's World magazine and (when I occasionally see them) gardening programmes, although I dislike the celebrity-emphasis in both. But I would be very concerned if there was any danger that programmes might become designed to 'sell' the magazine. Otherwise, if the magazines, DVDs, etc. help to finance the BBC, well and good.

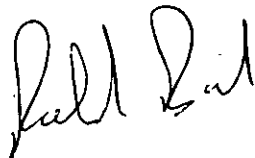
**How should we pay for the BBC?** I have often regretted the abolition of the sound-only licence, which has made sound radio a 'poor relation' of television. I would gladly pay an annual fee, or perhaps some 'pay-as-you-listen' system, to finance independent sound broadcasting.

**How should the BBC be run/regulated?** The BBC Governors have run it well in the past, and I believe they are still the best ones to do so. Whatever action needs to be taken in the light of the Hutton enquiry, this should not be allowed to influence the future of the BBC Charter. Clearly some serious mistakes have been made, but as far as I can see there is nothing whatever to suggest that the BBC is inherently more susceptible to such mistakes than commercial channels.

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**Final comments.** I believe that it is absolutely vital to maintain a radio and television service that is independent of advertising. Only the BBC can provide uninterrupted programmes whose nature and content are not influenced by commercial interests.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard W Bond', written in a cursive style.

Richard W Bond