

25th March 2004

Dear Sirs

I am writing to express my strong support for the BBC. I am a great radio listener and in particular very much appreciate the excellent reports and debates, etc., on current affairs and political matters and enjoy local radio. The quality of reporting is on the whole excellent and well-balanced and the overseas reporters paint magical pictures!

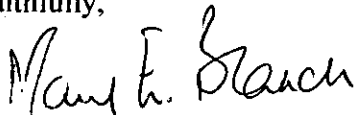
Most of our TV viewing is from the BBC and, whilst some comedy programmes are weak, the drama and documentaries are generally of a high standard, although digital is -not available here. Sadly, the high standard we used to expect has been lowered with respect to sex and language. We enjoy sport and news coverage, but would question the value of the "watershed". If certain programmes are not suitable for younger folk, why is it acceptable to show clips of them before 9pm?

I feel it is a pity that the BBC seeks to compete with other channels for ratings, which usually means introducing inferior programmes merely to attract audiences. That inevitably means also that programmes of a higher quality are shown out of peak times. I am more than happy to continue to pay a licence fee, which I feel is incredibly good value for money. Perhaps if there is a ground swell against such a fee, people could be allowed to opt in (or out), but I'm not sure how that would affect radio.

For me, as for many others, the BBC stands for a service which is independent and not controlled by either big business or any other outside interest. It does obviously need to be well-regulated, but I would hope that it would be free from Government interference. It is vital in a democracy that there are those who can question freely all who have influence on our lives, and I was sorry that the Hutton enquiry was so critical of the BBC. We all make mistakes and the BBC was not alone in that, but hopefully remedies have been taken.

I appreciate that in the 21st century changes may be necessary, but I would like to think that the BBC will continue more or less as it has in the past and that its Charter will be renewed with confidence.

Yours faithfully,



Mrs Mary Blanch

BBC Charter Review Consultation