

From:  
Sent: 16 December 2003 19:58  
To: BBC Charter Review  
Cc: blunty@btinternet.com  
Subject: BBC Charter Review - Comments

I have a two observations that I believe affect and differentiate the BBC.

I believe that the BBC should continue to be publicly funded. The compromise of private funding from any source would either result in its becoming a wholly commercial station or, more likely in my view, it being closely regulated. I believe that that regulation would cause a conflict between what the BBC wants to do as a public broadcaster and what its funders want. Just look what happened to Railtrack. The only way to ensure that the BBC provides a public service is for the public to pay for it. I believe that the choice or balance between a license fee and tax is not wholly relevant to viewers. But I believe that there would be real issues of maintaining standards and integrity if there was a switch to private funding.

Secondly, I believe that the BBC should be encouraged to focus its attention on the quality of its output. British television is respected across the world because of its focus on the quality of broadcast content rather than the global obsession with multiple channel output. All the evidence suggests that vast numbers of channels provide viewers with plenty of choice for channels and programmes that they do not want to see or hear. I believe that the BBC has been pivotal in ensuring that we receive high quality content through more limited output channels. I believe this is important for the BBC and also in raising the game of other terrestrial and subscription televisions services in the UK.

I believe that the BBC should be encouraged to focus on its content. I expect that it does not have the money to broadcast over a large number of multiple channels. I would support reducing the current number. Is there really a demand for 7 BBC channels in the UK, not to mention BBC World? I believe that it would provide a better service if it channelled its resources into more limited output, but focusing on investing in content instead. The BBC need not have 15 channels if there are 100 in the UK. Far better have 2-4 that are worth watching. This will help retain the quality of the BBC. It will also force other operators to maintain standards too.

Quality is all too easily lost and hard to gain. I believe that we need to do everything we can to differentiate the BBC as the highest quality broadcaster. That is the only way to make the organisation durable. Over time that will keep its market share and help drive the rest of the industry towards programmes that we want to watch.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Blunt