

Kate

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<b>Department for Culture, Media and Sport</b>	
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Action	at Office
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Dear Ms Jowell

**RENEWAL OF BBC CHARTER**

sent 6/1/4

**"MODERNISATION"**

I am seriously concerned by the approaching near-monopoly of the commercial media/information services by (inevitably) egoistical persons. Taken to its limit we could find the Mafia controlling our information. Reportedly, this process is now under way in Italy and, of course, was equally apparent in both Russia and Germany in the 1930's and onwards. Some have argued that an ill-chosen word or two by one BBC reporter is a reflection on the whole of that Corporation; "therefore" RESTRAINT is necessary.

By way of comparison I would draw attention to:

1. Over much the same period, the inconsistency of statements from Government sources of far greater significance to the Country.
2. The Press, nearing monopoly as a result of Thatcher policies, mocks the difficulties of 'strapped' public servants including politicians. It is symptomatic of influence that the turnout for 15 rugby footballers who just happened to tip the scales in an arbitrary sport was nearly as great as those who questioned the Prime Minister's decision TO TAKE THE COUNTRY TO A WAR IN IRAQ!!
3. Amongst the commercial media barons appears an lifelong ambition to demonstrate, even HUMILIATE, the gullibility of the Electorate of which:  
"It Was the 'SUN' What Done It"  
is typical.

In this context an independent "Public Service" section of the media is ESSENTIAL. As it is staffed by humans, there will be human errors but the INTENTION at least is free of commercial pressures and (if not entirely!!) free of the quirkiest egotisms.

**FUNDING**

Reliable general/longterm UNBIASED funding is needed with, ultimately, only indirect control of its use via, for example, the Courts of Law. We also need to counteract the culture of the 'bean-counters' who count audience NUMBERS ie equate one Professor to one drug-sodden layabout. The present BBC licence fee costs, per day, about the price of two cigarettes, or a FRACTION of the real cost of one newspaper when propagandist advertising subsidy is included in that cost.

The present METHOD of collection of this 'support' for a 'Public Service' industry is, like so many other items, arbitrary. BUT, RELATIVELY, SMALL. Possibly with improved (cheaper) technology, an element of 'Pay-per-View' could supplement basic programmes. At first sight, it seems plausible to charge more for 'thoughtful'/specialist programmes\*, a suggestion which could be countered by the needs of Education for which a direct charge cannot be levied on non-earning juveniles. But perhaps some experiments could be usefully conducted.

From the age of seven onwards I/we heard the propaganda of Nazi Germany relayed objectively by the BBC BUT also obligingly translated/"explained" by William Joyce on alternative 'wavelength'. Despite "hiccoughs", this remains true. Hitler sought MIND CONTROL by unsubtle means; latter day 'barons' have learnt more.

So :

HANDS OFF THE BBC PLEASE

INVESTIGATION OF COMMERCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCE INSTEAD

Any chance there could be some reduction of Governmental 'diversions' particularly when news is not at its rosier?? A spurt of Euro(currency) publicity: voting at 16 (with minimal experience of practical living ;how many marriages made at age 16 years survive?) to name but two.

A A Briggs  
(Neither Professor nor layabout)

cc Rt Hon Andrew Tyrie MP

\* By chance there was FREE viewing of a BBC transmission of "The Merry Widow". But worth several pounds to 'specialist viewers'. Unfortunately 'conscience' gifts to the BBC are NOT ring-fenced.