

BBC Charter Review Consultation,
Dept for Culture Media and Sport,
2 – 4 Cockspur Street,
London,
SW1Y 5DH

Dear Sirs,

I have regarded the BBC as my main source of information and entertainment for many years and could comment at length on many issues, but in the interests of brevity am confining myself to four topics.

1 Quality of entertainment programming on radio & TV.

From the Goons to Steptoe & 'Till death Us do Part the BBC has presented challenging and controversial comedy. I do not look back on a Golden Age, as we are in one now. Little Britain, The Office & Nighty Night are of the highest standard, combining great comedy with thought provoking material.

However, BBC1 has presented material that should be within Channel Three's remit. For example it is scandalous that license payers funds should be wasted on paying Camelot to advertise its product on the downmarket Lottery show.

2 Financial matters

The license fee is a regressive tax and should be phased out. A national debate on funding should be inaugurated.

The BBC is in receipt of too much money, and wastes much of it by chasing ratings and overpaying staff. This overpayment is then matched by the financially weaker commercial sector, and less is available for its programmes. The recent Gilligan affair has brought to light salaries in BBC management and production that are astronomical to the average license payer, who is compelled by law to foot the bill.

3. Objectivity of News and Current Affairs

This is the saddest and most disturbing element in the BBC's history.

I buy a couple of broadsheets each weekend, as well as watching Channel 3 News, and compare these sources with what the BBC has on offer.

I have no doubt that over the past 15 years, grossly overpaid, and therefore insulated, BBC journalists have been using licence payers money to run their own agenda. Having tasted blood with John Major's government, these same arrogant people have gone on to make the BBC the unofficial opposition to the present government, running a coherent political agenda which is virtually identical to the editorial line of "The Independent" newspaper.

The BBC agenda runs from the news to Woman's Hour and includes the following.

Support for multi culturalism in Britain, with hostility to Englishness in particular, but also to European culture, both high and popular.

Hostility to Israel, support for Islam and a refusal to face the problems caused by Muslims living in the Western world.

Hostility to the Iraq war and general anti-Americanism.

A belief that asylum seekers should be encouraged to come to Britain.

A sneering distrust of the two main parties and the assumption that their MPs are all liars.

These are cohesive enough opinions to form a political party.

This slant even extends to Ceefax, where I read the newspaper headlines daily. Normally Ceefax is virtually identical to Teletext. However, if Teletext reports a tabloid front page story over asylum or immigration, the politically – correct BBC will ignore it and go as far as to describe a cartoon on page seven of the Daily Express rather than inform us what its lead story is.

Again, the BBC was broadly supportive of the large anti-war rally in London, and barely criticised teachers and children truanting to attend.

Only Independent radio informed us that it was coordinated by the Socialist Workers' Party and an extreme Muslim group founded to bring "good morals to Britain" the BBC never informed us that the rally was "standing on two platforms" in its coordinators' words. Those two platforms were "No war in Iraq and Freedom for Palestine". Would the BBC in the 1930s describe Mosleyite rallies as "demonstrations for full employment" ?

As a liberal who believes in a multi-racial Britain at the heart of the EU, I recognise that people who are to my political right don't get much of a look in with the BBC. How much more outrageous is it then, that a small segment of politically correct, far left, opinion should dominate the corporation's news and current affairs.

As a last observation I feel I must praise Andrew Marr who stands head and shoulders above his colleagues. Whatever his political beliefs, they do not stop him asking pertinent, polite, questions and setting out political problems clearly, and in an interesting way. He is one of the most attractive broadcasters in my experience, and, unsurprisingly, has not been mired by Gilligan.

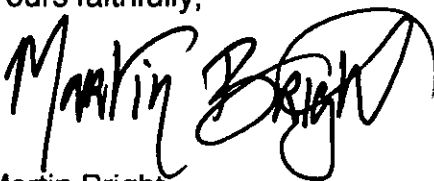
4 BBC's independence

"Independence" has two opposite meanings and the clique referred to above seem to genuinely believe that, like some subsidised artist, they have been given money and resources with which to do what they like.

In fact, the BBC must be independent of the government of the day, but not independent of its obligations to be accurate in its reporting. Above all it must realise that it represents Western, democratic and largely secular values. Those are the sources of its revenue and the values of its audience. Those values must be reflected in its programming and reporting. Broadcasters who feel unsympathetic to Western European values should be encouraged to vacate their highly paid jobs and work in countries more amenable to their outlook.

I hope my opinions are of interest to you and I hope I am not alone in expressing them to you.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martin Bright". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font. The first name "Martin" is written in a larger, more prominent script, and "Bright" follows in a similar but slightly smaller script. There is a small dash or mark at the end of the signature.

Martin Bright.