

11-3-04

BBC Charter Review Consultation
 Department 4
 Culture, Media & Sport
 2-4 Cockspur Street
 London
 SW1Y 5DH

Dear Sir pr Madam,

"Your BBC Your Say"

Please find our comments below.

"What do you most value about the BBC"

The quality and diversity of its programmes, its ability to stage the big events, continuity of programmes without breaks for advertising, we appreciate that the BBC does everything possible to cater for all interests, about the only thing we do not like is today's Pop Music, that is "Top of the Pops", but other people do and we respect that, but then none of us go without there being so much more to view or listen to.

Different "Nations", not living in those regions not fair to comment except to observe if people in those regions were not satisfied we would all hear of it. Would welcome more programmes from across the borders, particularly comedy as we used to receive.

How should the BBC adapt to cope with changes in technology and culture"

We really are not part of all the new technology and may never be so, however, did read an independent source which claimed the BBC to be very expert in this field, this is easy to believe when thinking of all the technology involved necessary to be such a successful broadcaster long before modern day technology was invented. BBC has been adapting to change from the very beginning, real fact is, being the first in the field the BBC has set the pace for others to follow.

CULTURE. Over the years and still today we have enjoyed programmes across every level of society from centuries ago to present day which has not only been entertaining but informative regarding attitudes and perhaps in particular changing attitudes and we are sure that the BBC will continue to reflect the ever faster changing attitudes of present day life, as we are increasingly becoming a multi national society the BBC has put out programmes introducing what is described as ethnic minorities into what could be described as British culture, which is fine because that is life now and this must surely play its part in us accepting each other.

"What do you think of the television, radio and on line services the BBC provides"

We cannot comment on-line services for reasons given in the previous question, however, if we were into that technology am certain we would be very satisfied with it given the BBC's good reputation with everything it does. We have always been happy with television and radio, being in our 80's we have grown up with them giving us many years to experience and appreciate the BBC above all others particularly as the BBC will make programmes that others would not even attempt, just for one example how wonderful to be able to sit in your armchair and ~~travel~~ travel the world with David Attenborough, plus all the other different documentaries, we have learnt so much this way, we would add the World

Service which brought such comfort and hope to millions during the Second World War and since and the contribution of educational programmes to our children in school and at home, we could go on, suffice to say there are many in this world who envy what we have, surely that says everything.

"Should the BBC run commercial services"

A resounding YES to the BBC commercial enterprises, not only for the money it generates to further finance its other activities to the benefit of the licence payer but help to keep our country in world focus, this is one more reason why other broadcasters would be happy with the report commissioned by the Conservative Party which recommends that the licence fee be scrapped and the BBC broken up into smaller units, obviously this would be disastrous for the BBC and the millions of us who want it as it is, but make life very comfortable for the satellite and cable networks not having BBC quality to contend with.

"How should we pay for the BBC"

Licence fee absolutely best way to fund the BBC, guaranteed income enabling planning ahead with confidence and reason for its success, justified because despite the argument of being unfair that I pay when I subscribe to other channels, the BBC can be accessed by every TV set and Radio in the country and no doubt is for as often as anyone wishes which makes a poll claim that the BBC only have 25% of the share of viewing time totally false. Charter renewal debate pre 1986, the question of funding was very much a topic of a BBC Question Time programme. This was before satellite and cable when it was purely between licence fee or advertising, there was much debate on the issue which came to an abrupt end when a member of the panel who, as we remember, was big in advertising said this will not happen because there is not enough revenue from that source for both BBC and ITV. While advertising revenue may well have increased since that time it is astonishing that despite the money Sky and Cable earn from subscriptions they have advertising revenue as well, if the BBC were ever forced to accept Advertising that additional fighting for revenue would further deteriorate every broadcasters ability..

"Is the BBC organised in the most effective and efficient way"

There cannot be any question that it is set up to provide the best service for the public. Sadly it is fashionable for some to criticise without taking the time to understand what a treasure we have in the BBC, it is surely fair to say we would not have the whole range of excellent programmes unless it were.

"How should the BBC be run". "How should it be regulated"

This is a question we would have had difficulty answering had it not been for the "Panorama" programme, Sunday 7th March, there was a for and against debate, having listened to all the points made we came out on the side of the Governors and feel confident that Governors appointed for their knowledge of broadcasting backed up by the years of experience that the BBC has to offer for guidance if necessary should continue as before. However, Ofcom has been created and this makes it perhaps impossible for the Governors to regulate the BBC when others would be regulated by Ofcom.

"How do we ensure that the BBC is properly accounted for to the public and Parliament"

Occasionally there is displayed on our screens the findings of a complaint through a Complaints Commission, "cannot remember its full name", this procedure is open to any of us, this seems to cover issues other than, for example, peoples likes and dislikes about a particular programme, there is another venue for that type of complaint. These methods seem fair accountability to the public but it may be one of the things which could be transferred to Ofcom, if

so, sure it will be given prominence as it is now. No other broadcaster, business or company would have such a public debate into its affairs, so that very open debate on "Panorama" into BBC future role can hardly be more public accountability. The public have always been able to write with concerns and now with technology it is even easier to do so. There have been occasions when a panel of senior staff, including Director Generals, have been available on a "Question & Answer" programme which is perhaps one of the best ways of airing concerns and suggestions as a result of enough people writing in on different issues, this could be the most effective and satisfying way with the added advantage of being seen to be open.

As to Parliament, the only accountability that we are aware of is Parliaments approval of Licence Fee increase, often Parliament does not approve full amount proposed, incidently does satellite and cable have to submit their programme price structure to Parliament for approval or do they have a free hand.

The only other Parliamentary responsibility we know of is appointing a Chairman.

Handwritten signature of Arthur and Vera Carey in cursive script.

Arthur and Vera Carey