

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

16th March 2004

Dear Sir / Madam,

BBC Charter Review Consultation.

“What do you value most about the BBC?” Certainly its news and sports, but more educational programmes would be welcomed - when I say educational I mean at an adult level encompassing scientific, international politics and cultural matters, also more world wide news and events.”

Above all, it should keep its ‘Britishness’ and independence, and not lose its identity to become just another media vehicle.

“Technology and culture?” Yes, the BBC should definitely take into account and become a leader in the use of digital television and internet technology.

“Online services the BBC provides?” From the limited use I have made of these services I have found them to be quite satisfactory.

“Should the BBC run commercial services?” Yes, the BBC should continue running commercial operations at its present level but should not have commercial advertising on its UK programmes.

“Paying for the BBC?” The licence fee system is acceptable; however, paying monthly would be better for many people. The current system of paying in advance before a monthly direct debit kicks in is not likely to encourage people to use it.

“BBC organized in the most effective and efficient way?” Let the present system continue and allow it to evolve naturally as circumstances dictate. It is always easy to criticize a system, but to change for the sake of change, historically, has proved to be a big mistake. Once change is made one cannot easily go back to what may have been a better system.

“How should the BBC be run?” The system of Governors has worked successfully and should continue. I would prefer a more independent form of appointments with less government involvement.

“Accountability of the BBC to the public and Parliament?” Of course the BBC must be accountable, but must also be independent of government and its party politics, and of whimsical public trends.

Having travelled widely around the world I have always enjoyed, depended upon, indeed relied on the BBC and its programmes. I have not been alone in this.

The BBC is a world wide institution and is a great credit to the British people and their culture. It is essential to maintain its independence and not lose its British identity.

~~Sadly, the Hutton Report turned out to be a white wash job and the majority of the public know this; but in truth, for Hutton Inquiry to have been conducted in an honest, truthful and independent manner would have resulted in the resignation of the prime minister and other members of the Government. The evidence brought out at the Public Inquiry made it clear that the British public had been deceived.~~

The BBC was a much easier target. There had been errors of judgment by the BBC, but to completely exonerate the Government was appalling.

At a time when independent media and newspapers have all but ceased to exist, and Government and big corporation propaganda has never been greater - indeed it is at a level not seen since the Second World War - it is deeply concerning that we, the public, have very little informed, balanced and unbiased reporting. The BBC has attempted to do just this, and should continue to bring out the truth even if this means upsetting governments as well as people in powerful positions. Ten years ago Ministers resigned for much less misdemeanors. Of late the BBC appears to be following the Government line and being timid in its questions and observations of the establishment and its operations.

I should like to think that my views might be considered in your consultation review.

Yours sincerely

RONALD J. CUSHING