
March 27th 2004

BBC Charter Review Consultation.
2-4 Cockspur Street,
London.

Dear Sir,

The things I have valued most about the BBC have been honesty and integrity. I think it should aim for excellence at all times and should strive to present a balanced and independent view. It must serve the entire population and must never become a mouthpiece of government.

I am sorry that the views of one ex-tabloid journalist, Alistair Campbell, should have had so much publicity in the last few months although I notice he is appearing on a popular show this evening (paid for by licence payers no doubt). The government now seems to regard the BBC as being "flawed",

I find that Radios Three and Four offer the most interesting, inspirational and inspiring programmes; the Today Programme, World at One, From our Own Correspondent, In our Time, Any Questions, Today in Parliament, Money box, You and Yours together with intelligent and challenging drama, concerts and arts coverage are amongst the programmes which give me great pleasure.

On television the choice is much less varied. I am very conscious of programmes having been "dumbed down". I personally enjoy Panorama and Question Time and am sorry that these are now shown in the late evening. I watch Channel 4 News because it appears less government biased than News at Ten. I don't watch soap operas, property programmes, quiz shows or sports such as billiards, darts or golf. I find the content of many television programmes fairly limited and patronizing. The acclaimed presentations by Robert Winston on Child Development seemed to contain about twenty minutes information which it took an hour to present. There are some very good programmes, Mozart on BBC Two was engrossing, but these are fairly infrequent.

I do not think there are many members of the public or the government who are sufficiently well informed to pass judgment on whether the BBC is organised in the most efficient way or could state, in a few words, how it should be run or regulated.

I think it has responded to changes in technology and is running successful commercial services. I did think my licence fee was expensive for two radio channels and a very limited number of watchable, television programmes. People such as myself, who live alone, pay the full cost of the licence fee even though we may watch a very small number of television programmes. Both my daughter and I wondered whether it was worth bothering to renew our T.V. licences this year although we both enjoy listening to the radio.

yours faithfully,

C. Judith Grant.