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15 March 2004

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

Dear Sirs,

I am responding on behalf of our church to the letter of 11 March from The Media Trust regarding the DCMS consultation on the future of the BBC.

The BBC has a huge responsibility and opportunity to provide a wide variety of quality programmes, both for the UK market and for overseas broadcasts. I think that I am right in saying that many countries, at least in northern Europe, can pick up some of our TV channels. Many of the programmes are of a high standard, whether comedy, drama, educational, documentaries or news items.

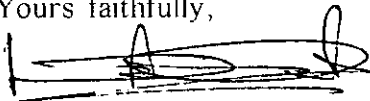
The BBC needs to be impartial regarding news coverage and in its relationship with the government of the day. This works both ways. It should be free to give fair criticism and, in return, **not** be subject to interference from politicians, other than to prevent actual slander, a breach of national security or stepping outside the law.

It is essential to ensure that there is a decent 'God-slot' each Sunday; the return of 'This is the Day' would be most welcome.

Something that concerns a lot of people is the gratuitous violence, sex, foul language and profanity that appears to be on the increase. As well as being used in some dramas, the 'f'-word has been used in so-called comedy programmes like 'Gimme, gimme, gimme' and the new Catherine Tate Show, as well as liberal use of the name of Jesus Christ as a swear-word. Judging by the responses that I have received when I have complained about this, it appears that the BBC is totally indifferent to the offence that sort of language causes and considers it perfectly acceptable, in that some people speak like that! I see from Tessa Jowell's letter that "in many ways, [the BBC] reflects what is best about the values, culture and society of the United Kingdom, at home and abroad." Really?!

The BBC will do well to remember that when the public pays it £116 per year for the privilege of watching **any** television, whether BBC or not, they are entitled to expect decent standards and a sense of accountability in return.

Yours faithfully,



Ian Hack.  
Church Secretary.