

Mr. D. Kirkman.

24/3/2004

Dear Sirs,

RE: Your BBC Your Say:

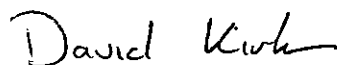
Please find enclosed a copy of my response to the above consultation.

I trust it is of use.

I am also happy for this response to be published and to be contacted for the next stage in the consultation process.  
The fate of the BBC cannot be left with a New Labour administration.

I look forward to further opportunities for a say in the future of the BBC.

Yours Sincerely,



David Kirkman

## BBC RESPONSE.

### VALUE in BBC.

The drama produced by the BBC is usually excellent. Drama productions like Dalziel and Pascoe and Inspector Lynley are of particular note. Also the Science Fiction that Used to be on during the week, I really appreciated.

Other areas of value are the News coverage, across the Radio and TV. Also Radio 4 is excellent. Radio 4's comic out put is excellent, particularly the one about the female Rabbi.

I would like to see greater diversity of programming, that has less reliance on soap operas, football, make over programmes and gardening, which seem to bulk up the schedules.

It would be good to see more history, the recent programme on Guy Fawkes was excellent, a greater variety of sport and more up to date films, instead of them being on Channel 5, which has limited availability.

It would also be good to see more coverage of religious issues in general and in Christianity in particular, which is not limited to the God slot on Sundays. The recent programme on Noah's Ark was interesting, but its main thrust was to disprove the Biblical record, more than anything else. Where are the interviews with people like the authors Josh McDowell (Evidence that Demands a Verdict) and Alistair MacGrath, to name only two. As a Christian I faithfully pay my TV licence, Yet I do not see this faith represented within the schedules, unless it is in a derogatory manner. The last positive Christian role model on TV was 'The Vicar of Bible.' Where are the dramas about John Newton, William Wilberforce, or the Wesley brothers?

There is also no serious examination of religious issues and when it is covered it is usually in a manner that is often antagonistic and portrayed as a negative force, i.e. Islamic Fundamentalism.

However, in contrast we have wall-to-wall coverage of sports like Football, Golf or Snooker, which seem to dictate the schedules.

### Technology and Culture.

The BBC should continue to make use of the Internet, as it already does. The news coverage and programme details are excellent, particularly the cult section.

However, the digital surcharge on the licence fee is unfair for those who do not have access, nor can afford digital. We are taxed, but do not have a choice or see the benefit of that tax. Nor should we be forced or coerced into purchasing digital, as would appear to be the case. The analogue system should be maintained till an affordable and truly national alternative is properly in place.

### Commercial Services.

The BBC should continue its commercial services and should be extended to more programmes, both radio and TV.

Payment for the BBC.

The licence fee for the BBC is probably the best way to fund the BBC. However, the digital levy should be cut for those who do not have it.

BBC Organisation.

The BBC needs to find a way to be more responsive to complaints, instead of hiding behind; we only reflect societies standards or directorial freedom. Maybe sometimes, Programmes should be raised from the gutter and new standards of excellence sought.

How should the BBC be run and accountability?

Their needs to be a more thought out way to involve the public. Maybe an elected or employed member of the public on the Board of Governors. A nominated governor people identify as having a direct responsibility and accountability to the public. Also, a clear line of communication to that individual.

There should be less government interference in the BBC. The negotiations should be with an independent body, not linked to the government, particularly if it has an axe to grind.

General Comments.

On the whole the BBC is excellent. However, its news coverage of the Gulf Wars were bordering on voyeuristic, with little genuine information. I learned more about the background to these events from two Rory Bremnar programmes than all the wall-to-wall BBC news coverage.

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It was a mistake for Greg Dyke to resign and whoever takes his place should continue to attempt to hold this and other governments to account, as they seem to be happy to ignore the electorate. The Hutton Inquiry results were a total whitewash and an exercise in scapegoating. The BBC being a victim of the latter and the public and truth being the losers. As it is the public that fund the BBC, your first allegiance should be to us and not government spin-doctors. Therefore, parliamentary input should be kept to a minimal.