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

Dear Sirs

18 March 2004

Mr ANDREW McINTOSH, Minister for Broadcasting, has invited me to write to you about the "BBC Charter Review" - which, he says, affects "all aspects of the BBC".

I comment about just one such aspect, namely the BBC Licence fee.

I request as strongly as possible that the BBC Licence fee must be done away with.

Alternative funding for the BBC could come from:

Alternative No 1 which is for the BBC to receive a grant directly from the Exchequer, with the BBC's editorial independence guaranteed by Statute, as suggested by Mrs Joan Horton JP in her brilliant letter in The Times on 30.12.03.

No 2. Advertising.

No 3. Privatisation.

David Elstein stated in his excellent report in The Daily Telegraph on 25.2.04 that the present system of the BBC licence fee is a monstrous waste of money with the:

"Sending out of 24 million pieces of paper each year, and using hundreds of detector vans, thousands of inspectors, and tens of thousands of prosecutions each year to impose a payment system" - which could be done away with at a stroke with any of the alternatives, mentioned above.

As a doctor, I see the terrible distress and illnesses caused to patients by the worries and harassments associated with the collection of the BBC licence fee. I am writing a book about such cases.

In 1943, the author C.S. Lewis observed that the worst crimes in society were not those hatched in sordid dens but those which were ordered, moved, seconded, carried out and minuted in clean, carpeted, warmed and well-lighted offices.

In the name of God, the BBC licence fee must go.

PLEASE ACKNOWLEDGE.

Yours truly,  
(Dr) D H S Reid.