

1<sup>st</sup> March 2004

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

Dear Sirs,

Here are my thoughts on the key questions in the Your Say leaflet. I should first of all declare my age as 74 so I guess it is inevitable that a lot of the output of popular entertainment is aimed at a much younger audience than I am and therefore not really to my taste. However, what I have always valued about the BBC, and still do, is that it is the distinctive voice of the United Kingdom and regarded as such throughout the world. I believe in the concept of devolution and therefore voted in favour of the establishment of the Scottish Parliament. I believe that Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are recognizably distinctive but I also strongly believe that their future should lie as part of the United Kingdom. That being so the BBC has an obligation to recognize the distinctiveness of these nations and, in the case of Scotland, I believe that, by and large, this is managed effectively. I accept that, logically, this should mean the establishment of regional assemblies in England but I have difficulty in imagining how this could work in practice, and I have no experience of programming aimed at the various English regions. One further comment about the BBC being the distinctive voice of the United Kingdom. I travel regularly to America and have thus had experience of American TV; it seems to me there is no way that the output of NBC, ABC or CBS could be described as a distinctive voice of the United States.

Changes in technology. If the government is determined to switch off analogue transmissions in the next few years then it is only right that the BBC must prepare for the digital age. I have to say that I was not aware of the range of the existing digital channels until I read the consultation leaflet and part of me feels a little aggrieved that the licence fee I pay is funding programming that I am unable to receive.

Basically I only watch television in the evenings. Some of the programming is not to my taste but there are enough programmes that I like to make watching BBC TV an enjoyable experience. Listening to the radio tends to be confined to the car when I listen to Radio 4 and 5 live. For some reason I have never got into the habit of listening to Radio Scotland though many of my friends do and find it enjoyable. I have never made use of the online services.

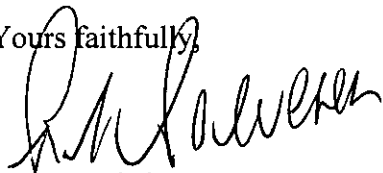
I think the BBC should continue to run and develop commercial services as a means of generating additional income and making the output more widely available. I know that BBC programmes are available in America on PBS channels and no doubt the same applies in other parts of the world. It can only be a good thing that people overseas are able to get a flavour of life in Britain.

How should the BBC be paid for? I would hate advertising to be the source of revenue but I recognize that the licence fee is looked upon as a form of taxation and therefore unpopular. The methods needed to detect those who do not pay also make for resentment. The BBC must jealously safeguard its independence and cannot therefore be funded directly by government. At the moment I cannot see an alternative to the licence fee but no doubt the continuing improvement in digital and computer technology may one day make "pay per view" the norm.

How should the BBC be regulated? I think that now the system of independent regulation of broadcasters is in place it is only right that the BBC Governors should hand over their regulatory function to the independent regulator.

The accountability of the BBC to public and Parliament. The independent regulation of the BBC should be the best way of ensuring accountability to the public. I understand that some of the BBC Governors are selected to represent the countries and regions of the United Kingdom but I am not aware of any mechanism whereby such regional Governors can seek the views of the people they represent. If such a mechanism does exist perhaps it should be made more widely known. If not, then perhaps a way could be found of encouraging greater public input.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roger N. Salvesen', written in a cursive style.

Roger N. Salvesen.