

8 February 2004

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Charter Review

My responses to the key questions concerning the Charter review are as follows:

What do you value most about the BBC? Arts coverage (BBC programmes seem to be far more accessible than similar programmes on other channels) and documentaries. One area that does seem to be lacking is comedy - a number of recent ones seem to be of a very low standard and quickly have me reaching for the remote control.

How should the BBC adapt to cope with changes in technology and culture? Keep up with them, but not run too far ahead - this only seems to result in expensive services which only a select few can access and, therefore, aren't watched/used by many people. (Incidentally, I am increasingly exasperated by the constant trailers promoting Freeview, only to be told that it still isn't available in my area, despite promises that it will be "soon".)

What do you think of the television, radio and online services the BBC provides? By and large, excellent, particularly radio. I'm not online at home, so I cannot comment about that, but am told by other people that your websites are very informative and useful. I do not have access to digital television, either - since this means that I can't watch the apparently dire BBC3 this does have its good points. More BBC4 output should be shown on BBC2, like News 24 is on BBC1. One other thing - the World Service. It's an absolute gem - there's nothing like it when you're far from home. That's not just an English view - a Belgian friend of mine had the same opinion of it when he was working in Jordan. It's an asset - make sure you look after it.

Should the BBC run commercial services? Commercial services, yes. Commercials, no.

How should we pay for the BBC? The license fee seems to be the best method. If the BBC were to take advertising or begin operating a pay-per-view system, there would be a danger of tailoring its output purely to please its advertisers.

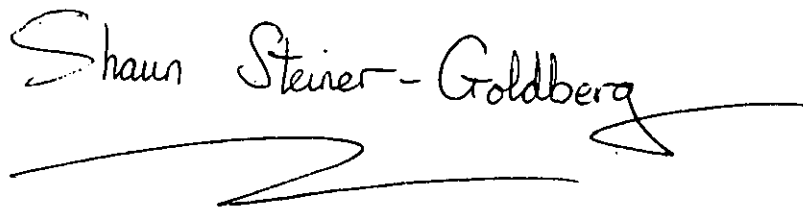
Is the BBC organised in the most effective and efficient way? I'm sure improvements could be made, but I cannot see what they would be.

How should the BBC be run? How should it be regulated? Similar answer to above

How do we ensure that the BBC is properly accountable to the public and Parliament? By making sure that public concerns about programmes are openly dealt with (not behind closed doors), and that management (particularly those in news/current affairs) are dedicated to airing all sides of an issue. As for Parliament, the BBC should be accountable to it but never controlled by it.

So, no great answers, just some opinions.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shaun Steiner-Goldberg". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right and then loops back under the name.

Shaun Steiner-Goldberg