

Friday 12th March 2004

BBC Charter Review Consultation.

I welcome the opportunity of giving my views on the BBC Charter Review.

Perhaps the most important issue is contained in the leaflet 'Your BBC Your Say'. I quote "The only certain outcome is a strong BBC-independent of Government". This I believe is the very essence of what the BBC should be and what it should stand for.

Whatever faults may be devised at the Corporation it is still the best and most highly admired Broadcaster in the World, in both Radio and Television, with the World Service being in a class of its own.

The difficulty with the questions posed tends to give the impression of an agenda being set. However perhaps I can give my

opinion on those I believe are crucial.

2.

1. What do you value most about the BBC?

First its impartiality. I have little to complain about its coverage although, Television Drama appears to have deteriorated, pondering as it now does to commercial pressures.

2. Should the BBC own Commercial Services?

Certainly, providing these are deemed to be appropriate and relevant to the Charter.

The Corporation should conduct its affairs in a business like manner without becoming a business.

3. How should we pay for the BBC?

No doubt the present licence fee has many critics but I cannot see any credible alternative, for my own part I pay it with pleasure. I would willingly pay more to retain the BBC in its present form. To have programmes uninterrupted by advertisements greatly enhances every performance and adds greatly to one's enjoyment.

4. How should the BBC be run? How should it be regulated? 3.

Despite recent, and in my opinion, unjustified criticism the role played by the BBC Governors has worked well for many years and should continue.

However strenuous efforts should be made to ensure there is no hint of political or Government patronage. Could appointments be made through a small all-party Committee

strengthened by a political representative with a knowledge of the Corporation and Broadcasting?

5. How do we ensure that the BBC is properly accountable to the Public and Parliament?

Through its Governors. I believe the BBC takes particular notice of what the public wants, perhaps a little too much at times!

As far as Parliament is concerned, may it continue to be accountable to Parliament as a whole and not to the party with

the biggest majority.

4.

In conclusion may I pay a particular
tribute to music on both Radio and Television.

May the high standards set by the
Corporation long continue.

Yours sincerely

Patrick Walker OBE.