

28th March 2004

Dear Sir/Madam,

May I offer the following observations on the BBC Charter Review.

1. FUNDING.

I think a review of BBC funding is overdue. BBC1 and 2 and the various radio stations are universally available and it seems perfectly reasonable that viewers and listeners should pay for these services via the licence fee.

Digital television and Interactive services are quite different since they are clearly not desired by many and not available to many more (I fall into both these categories). I think these services should be paid for only by those who make use of them, in the same way that Radio Times and BBC books, videos and DVDs are treated. In fact I suggest that these operations could be separated from the public service parts of the BBC and should be self financing.

A slimmed down BBC such as suggested above would be in a better position to fund improved programming (sorely needed) and, dare I say it, a reduced licence fee.

2. PROGRAMMING.

Apart from those national sporting events which it has already been decided should be available to terrestrial television, I do not think that the BBC should compete in the rush to pour extravagant sums of money into the coffers of commercial sports organisations. Let these organisations sell their wares via subscription or pay-per-view

television than those of us who consider their cost is exorbitant can vote with our wallets.

I would like to see an end to attempts by the BBC to compete with commercial television by catering to the lowest common denominator. Quality of programmes rather than audience figures should be their aim. If the BBC do not offer something that is unavailable on the commercial channels then what is the point of having the BBC at all. Classical music, classical drama, wildlife and nature, history and geography and a wide selection of educational programmes are examples of what the BBC can produce better than anyone else. They should concentrate on what they do so well and leave the chaff to the rest. Then they will be worth the licence fee.

Yours Faithfully

Roy Wolfenden