

26 May 2005

Dear Sir

In the 20 th century the majority of the population of this country was working-class, now in the 21st century it is middle-class. Fifty years ago 3 percent was upper-class, 30 percent was middle-class, and the rest was working-class. Today the upper-class has been replaced by the Celebrity/Rich class, the middle-class has doubled in size to 60 percent and the working-class, just under 40 percent, are a minority.

In the nineteen sixties when the B.B.C. was more independent it challenged the upper-class conservative establishment with such programmes as ' That was the Week that was ' and helped usher in a new era. But the Establishment did not disappear it changed into a middle-class liberal establishment; which now dominates society. The B.B.C. is no longer independent it has become the mouth-piece of this establishment.

This is clearly evident in the B.B.C.'s different treatment of the various Minorities. Let us consider its radio flagship the 'Today' programme. If we monitor its output over the last five years or more we see that the rights and interests of the ethnic minorities are dealt with daily. Likewise the problems of the gay community are frequently discussed, but this is not the case with the indigenous working-class. Take two examples which show the valuable contribution made to this country and democracy by the working-class minorities and ignored by the B.B.C.

First, early on in the Gulf War the Today programme ran an item called ' Who fights for America ? and came to the conclusion that it was the poor whites and blacks. But they did not ask the question ' Who fights for Britain ? Why? Because they knew that they would not like the answer. The vast majority of the rank and file of our Armed Forces are drawn from the working-class minorities. There are only 740 Buddhists Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs in the Armed Forces. Due to the sad death of a Black Watch soldier we now know that the inhabitants of a small South Pacific island Fiji makes a seven times greater contribution to the defence of this country than the millions of Muslims living here.

The second example concerns the Today's reporting of the Tory party. Having lost three General Elections and five million voters they are now in the middle of a fourth leadership contest. Each time it happens the Today programme invites in the Tory modernisers Michael Portillo, Francis Maude, Alan Duncan etc. to ask what went wrong. They advise that the Tory party must broaden its appeal and have more ethnic and gay candidates. In the last election the Tory party had the most ethnic candidates of any party 39 but its ethnic vote did not increase. The majority of the five million voters who have stopped supporting the party are working-class conservatives. Needless to say the Today programme has never spoken to a working-class conservative spokes person or ask the party why only one working-class conservative candidate stood at the last election - the MP for West Derbyshire. The B.B.C. must accept its part in the decline in the turnout at a General Election as it has written off an entire section of the population. I do not suppose much notice will be taken of this letter as it does not fit in with the B.B.C. middle-class agenda. But unless the B.B.C. represents all the people, all the licence payers, the *raison d'etre* for its existence will be lost and the B.B.C. might as well be privatised.

Yours sincerely,



G.C. Winstone