

Founded in 1975 by the late Viscount De L'Isle, Ross and Norris McWhirter



The Freedom Association

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

13th May 2005

Dear Sirs,

Green Paper Consultation

The Freedom Association is genuinely concerned about the level of political bias present in the BBC's output and the virtual impossibility of obtaining redress in the circumstances in which the Corporation is effectively judge and jury in its own court.

Replacing the Board of Governors by a new BBC Trust will not solve this problem unless it is established that Trust members are genuinely independent of both Government and the BBC itself. The same remarks apply to those who are appointed to advise the Trust – the advisers most definitely must not be employees of the BBC neither should they be beholden to the Corporation in any way for their ongoing employment or career prospects.

The Freedom Association submits that the proposed BBC Trustees and their advisers must be uncompromisingly committed to ensuring a proper debate on matters of public interest that is both responsible, balanced and devoid of bias. Unless that is the established aim and object of the proposed changes then the restructuring will be simply cosmetic and the prospective improvements more apparent than real.

Vice President: Vladimir Bukovsky
Management Committee:
Hon. Chairman: Christopher Gill RD,
Hon. Treasurer: Nigel Axelrad ACA, Professor Antony Flew, Hon. Secretary: Tony Hilder
Freedom Today Editor: Simon Richards
Campaign Manager: Philip Duly
Organising Secretary: Mrs. Vicki Stevens

As a former Member of Parliament the writer is only too well aware of the BBC's technique of answering complaints by quoting sections of its Charter rather than addressing the substance of the complaint. Similarly he is aware that under the current system BBC Governors almost invariably refer the complaints which they receive to the management who are, of course, the very people that the complainants have failed to obtain satisfaction from in the first place.

The public service broadcaster is an undeniably powerful voice in the nation's affairs but, as with all power, that power must be tempered with responsibility.

We look to the Government to ensure that the outcome of the current deliberations will achieve the balance between power and responsibility that is essential to the well being of all viewers and listeners.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Christopher Gill".

Christopher Gill
Hon. Chairman
The Freedom Association