

*Lord Stoddart of Swindon
(Labour)*

Sir Christopher Bland,
Chairman, BBC,
Broadcasting House,
Portland Place,
London, W1A 1AA.

*Lord Harris of High Cross
(Independent)*



*Lord Pearson of Rannoch
(Conservative)*

28th September, 2000

Dear Sir Christopher,

BBC Euro-phile Bias

You will remember our correspondence and lunch together after we commissioned an independent report from Minotaur Media Tracking into the 600 hours of national news coverage by our terrestrial television and BBC Radio 4 of the European elections during the period from 9th May to 12th June 1999. Minotaur's findings were very disturbing, but we have to say that they do not appear to have had any discernible effect on your editorial policy.

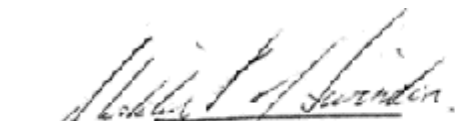
To verify this, Global Britain have commissioned another independent survey by Minotaur, this time into the coverage of 'Europe'-related issues by the BBC's Today programme, during the nine weeks from 22nd May to 21st July. We enclose a copy of their report. This is an extremely thorough piece of work which employed the most rigorous and systematic research methodology.

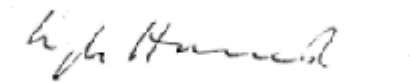
The findings indicate that there is sufficient cause for concern about balance, range of coverage and journalistic practice, for us to claim that the coverage did not meet your Charter obligations. For instance:

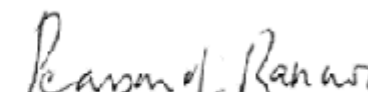
- Twice as many euro-philes as euro-sceptics were invited onto the programme.
- The coverage concentrated almost entirely on European Economic and Monetary Union (the "Single Currency"). It scarcely touched on the wider issues of where the EU may be going and whether the UK should be part of it. These questions are clearly of colossal national significance as we approach the Nice IGC and associated initiatives in December.
- The presenters' delivery on euro-subjects was considerably faster than on other complicated subjects, such as science.

We are copying this letter and enclosures only to you and your executive colleagues (Greg Dyke, Tony Hall and Mark Damazer), in the hope that you will agree to discuss them openly with us. We trust this will be a constructive talk which addresses the issues raised in the report and which leads to change. We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,


Lord Stoddart of Swindon


Lord Harris of High Cross


Lord Pearson of Ranno

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