

Sir Christopher Bland

Chairman,

British Broadcasting Corporation

Broadcasting House

Portland Place

London, W1A 1AA

16<sup>th</sup> July 1999

Dear Sir Christopher

We enclose a research project commissioned by our organisation, Global Britain, into the BBC's coverage of the recent elections to the European Parliament.

The research was carried out by an independent company, Minotaur Media Tracking\*, on the whole of the Corporation's news output on terrestrial television and Radio 4 during the election period.

The survey, based on transcription of the relevant output over the five weeks from 9<sup>th</sup> May to 14<sup>th</sup> June, found:

- Significant elements of partiality or bias;
- A worryingly small proportion of the overall news output devoted to the elections
- Some programmes were unbalanced in their political content;
- Some parties contesting the elections received unequal treatment.

If this survey is accepted, it must follow that the BBC is failing to provide a news service which meets the Corporation's stated objectives.

May we therefore suggest a meeting at your earliest convenience, so that we can discuss the survey's findings in greater detail?

Yours sincerely,

Lord Stoddart of Swindon (Labour)

Lord Harris of High Cross (Independent)

Lord Pearson of Rannoch (Conservative)

- Minotaur Media Tracking is a company run by:
- David Keighley, who founded the News World international conference for news broadcasters and is a former BBC Head of News and Current Affairs Publicity and

- Director of Corporate Affairs at TV-am; and
- Kathy Gyngell, a research sociologist who worked at LWT as a researcher on Weekend World before becoming Features Editor at TV-am.