

House of Representatives Standing
Committee on Communications,
Transport and the Arts

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STANDING COMMITTEE ON
COMMUNICATIONS, TRANSPORT AND
THE ARTS

129 Hovell Street,
Echuca VIC 3564.
16th April, 2001.

The Secretary
Standing Committee on Communications,
Transport and the Arts,
Parliament House,
Canberra ACT 2600.

Dear Sir or Madam,

Greetings again in the precious Name of Jesus. I thank you for your letter of 9th April 2001 and the accompanying proof transcript of the evidence which I gave at the public hearing on Wednesday, 28th March, 2001. I didn't record what I said to the hearing that day, but as far as I can ascertain and as far as I can remember, what you have sent to me as my evidence to the Inquiry is correct.

I could scarcely hear the folk from Canberra so I was really struggling that day. From what I can see of the reports, the other parties interviewed that day were having difficulties too. After I had hung up, I realised that I had omitted to thank you folk for the privilege of allowing me to take part in the Inquiry, and I sincerely apologise now for that omission. It wasn't intentional; in fact, it was the first thing that I had in my notes but when I had such difficulty in hearing you, the notes were mostly disregarded.

There were quite a few other things which I had wanted to say but which I didn't include because of the communications difficulty. Perhaps I could include some of them here. These are mainly in regard to item number three in the the terms of reference:-

The effect on individuals, families and small business in non-metropolitan Australia of networking or radio programming, particularly in relation to local news services, sport, community service announcements and other forms of local content.

Networking has taken away the personal contact which the Christian public and the listeners to Central Victorian Gospel Radio had when CVGR was operating. This was extremely beneficial to the listening public, but that benefit has gone now that the ABA has closed down CVGR. The programme content currently available from existing radio stations, in my opinion, has very little, if anything, of eternal value, and can only have a detrimental effect

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on individuals and families. It seems to me that there is no solution being offered to those people who have huge drug and alcohol problems or those who are experiencing marriage problems. The programmes which were being broadcast by CVGR offered permanent solutions to these problems.

We could also relate this to item number one in the terms of reference:-

The social benefits and influence on the general public of radio broadcasting in non-metropolitan Australia in comparison to other media sectors.

I feel that the influence on the general public, of the programmes currently available on radio stations is not beneficial. One has only to listen to Triple J for a few minutes to gauge the type of influence that programming is likely to have on listeners.

The Christian programming being offered by CVGR was a tremendous encouragement to the Christian listeners and it also had a very beneficial effect on non-Christian listeners.

As the ABA has seen fit to grant licences to Vision Australia Foundation for three (3) frequencies which can be received here in Echuca, surely it wouldn't be too much to ask that CVGR be granted one licence to recommence their broadcasts. I understand that CVGR has located a vacant frequency on the FM band and that they have applied for it, but that the ABA don't want to grant them a licence to use it. Maybe as apparently has already been suggested, there should be an inquiry into the ABA, but that obviously wouldn't come under the terms of reference of the present inquiry.

In our area at least, I feel that the Christian community is not being catered for by the radio programmes currently available. I would be willing to admit that not everyone will be willing to listen to a Christian radio station, but for those who do listen, and take in the message, the effect can only be beneficial.

Thanking you again for the privilege of taking part in this inquiry.

With warm Christian greetings.

Yours in Christ,

A. J. Dunstone

(Mr) (A. J. Dunstone).

Some incidents of obscene language on the ABC programmes.
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14th February, 2001. Approximately 4:57 p.m.

A recorded programme, probably Brian Daw aping Sir Murray Rivers.

In the 5 p.m. news immediately following the above incident, Pauline Hansen used obscene language. This incident too appears to have been recorded.

16th February, 2001. Approximately 8:25 a.m.

The AM programme. Obscene language used.

17th February, 2001. Approximately 8:05 a.m. to 8:10 a.m.

The AM programme. Obscene language. This appears to have been a recorded programme.

Monday, 19th February, 2001. Approximately 10:04 a.m.

News. Offensive language. Not recorded.

Monday, 26th March, 2001. Approximately 5:29 p.m.

Foul language on the record (or CD) being played.

Tuesday, 20th February, 2001. Between 9:30 a.m. and 9:45 a.m.

"Open Line" programme. Offensive language used three times in a period of about five minutes, and the compere of the programme didn't even comment on the language used.

Is this becoming normal everyday language in our ABC programmes?

If we are going to allow the minds of our young people to be fed on the language of the gutter, we can confidently expect to reap gutter type behaviour from these young people, with all of its associated anti-social behaviour. This anti-social behaviour has a devastating effect on the individuals concerned, although they often don't realise it, and on their families.

All of the above instances were heard on ABC Regional Radio FM 91.1 Mhz broadcasting from Bendigo.

(The above information was requested by the Inquiry Chairman on Wednesday, 28th March, 2001).