

Holmes, Janet (REPS)

From: Kaida, Lisa (REPS)
Sent: Monday, 23 October 2000 9:06 AM
To: Holmes, Janet (REPS)
Subject: FW: Submission to Radio Committee Review

-----Original Message-----

From: StanleyJohn [SMTP:stanleyj@ruralnet.net.au]
Sent: Friday, October 20, 2000 7:45 PM
To: jsct@aph.gov.au
Subject: Submission to Radio Committee Review

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Tuesday October 17th, 2000.

MR PAUL NEVILLE

**CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS
TRANSPORT AND THE ARTS.**

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you regarding the current Parliamentary Inquiry into Radio Services in Regional and Rural Australia.

My submission is mainly pertinent to point 3, "the effect on individuals, families etc." I will mainly concentrate on the effects that the closure of the "Central Victorian Gospel Radio" 88.7, by the Australian Broadcasting Authority earlier this year had. This action had the following effects on myself, and many other elderly and disabled persons, who can not regularly attend their "own" Churches.

The services provided by the Central Victorian Gospel Radio station to others included a kindergarten programme, programming for young people and teenagers, all were removed. All of these programmes were of a positive nature and were devoid of the usual gratuitous violence, and occult, appearing in most television and radio programmes for young people today.

Some programmes were obviously aimed at assisting in the reduction of youth suicide,

giving positive ideas to young people to assist them with their peers contemplating suicide.

That there has been nothing provided to fill the void caused by the loss of this station has detrimentally affected individuals and family groups throughout Central Victoria. The programmes were unashamedly Christian orientated, non denominational, and aimed at assisting people like myself who are disabled to such an extent as to be virtual prisoners in their own homes.

No other radio station in the district, or region, covers religious matters or services. Central Victorian Gospel Radio, without interfering with other stations, provided the local churches with a news outlet. Also by local I mean that Sunday's Sermon in Geelong was Monday mornings listening. Sunday's Sermon in Kyneton was Tuesdays listening in this region; most similar programmes were also locally produced.

All positions were voluntary which unfortunately did not provide for paid employment, but it did give free training to people whose career path was radio.

Each day there were programmes that assisted house-bound Christians to partake in worshipping and learning more about their Creator and Saviour.

Christianity is not a one day a week religion, it is a 24 hour a day exercise of supplication, praise, and thanks.

Central Victorian Gospel Radio was broadcasting on a temporary licence for many years, and the Station was self sufficient, never requiring Government financial assistance.

I will briefly mention injuries that restrict my ability to freely worship; the injuries are numerous, after an active 20 year career in the Victoria Police Force. The injuries include severe neck, back, and knee injuries, Osteoarthritis in both arms and shoulders, as well as a relentless and debilitating nervous disorder.

The nervous disorder became apparent whilst I was a serving member of the 11th Australian Police Contingent in Cyprus in 1975, and has become worse with the passage of 25 years.

These injuries seriously restrict my ability to personally attend church, so I relied on the "Central Victorian Gospel Radio" to bring church to me 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

I am often unable to sleep, because of pain from my various injuries. Even 60 mg of morphine and other pain killing medication, regularly does not assist me in sleeping. Listening to spiritually uplifting music assists me in passing the long nights without becoming suicidal.

I exist on a meagre superannuation and a reduced (minimum payment) Disability Support Pension; the amount does not allow me to purchase CD's, tapes etc, so I derived the benefit of hearing the latest releases of spiritual and inspirational music, on that station, that I could not afford nor would otherwise hear.

The Central Victorian Gospel Radio provided an advertisement free radio station providing local churches news, community service announcements and local content relating to an integral part of a large number of individual and family groups, namely their spiritual life.

The reinstatement of this radio station would have favourable repercussions in this region, preferably without upgrading to digital radio which would reduce the area covered by the station, I live on the very outer edge of that FM band.

The reinstatement of this particular Radio Station, or one along similar lines, would bring the Local-Regional Christian Community an outlet for Christian news, community service notices and local content from local-regional churches. In the last Census over 75% of all Australians claimed "Christian" religious views. As previously mentioned the Central Victorian Gospel Radio was non denominational covering all main stream and Apostolic Churches.

It would allow senior citizens and other disabled people to freely worship, as guaranteed by our Constitution, in the security and comfort of their own homes.

Regions need community based radio stations that cater for the majority of their residents, special interest groups also need support and I recognise that, but the re-starting of Central Victorian Gospel Radio would be a positive step for this region.

I sincerely hope that my submission has been to the terms of reference of your Inquiry, allowing for the narrowness of my submission to the Terms of the Inquiry.



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Yours truly,

S. J. Bolitho



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