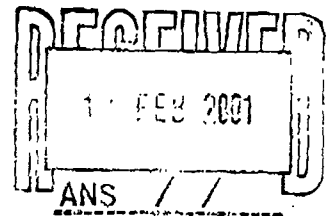


TO : C I A COMMITTEE
 House of Representatives Standing
 Committee on Communications,
 Transport and the Arts

Submission No: 262
 Date Received: 14/2/01
 Secretary: Janet Holmes



36 Bauer Street,
 Mundubbera, 4626
 13/2/2001

Mr. Paul Neville, M.P.,
 Member for Hinkler,
 BUNDABERG.

Dear Paul,

Yesterday one had the privilege of again meeting Mr. Neville, in Bundaberg, at a public function.

It was his suggestion that I submit some thoughts concerning the activities in the region of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

Firstly, one has known Mr. Neville for more than 30 years. At that time I lived in Proston and had more time to attend meetings of Divisional and Electorate Councils having been a member of what is now the National Party since 1957.

What does radio mean to me? A good question as one day in February 1937 I arrived at home in Murgon from school to learn we had a radio and a cricketer named Bradman was batting gloriously at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. What more could a nine year -old ask for in life?

To this day one is always on the lookout for news particularly news on radio. At various times in my life have been a correspondent for ABC news working to newsrooms at Toowoomba and Maryborough.

So it is that in the year 2001 we are aware of more and more broadcasts of 'news' however the content has diminished. With that diminution has come the apparent lack of interest by journalists in what is being said.

Presumably these people write the copy which they are trying to convey but there is hesitation and no real attempt is being made to comprehend the 'Wide-Bay and Burnett's' geography.

Were one to use a stop-watch when listening to regional news he would discover that a big percentage of the time allocated at the present time is devoted to the fact that there is an election taking place. The people who don't know that is the situation are probably out in the garden anyway. Then the bulletin tails off with promotions of forthcoming stupendous news matter at state or international level.

If we want to absorb items of regional news we do it at the appropriate time; should our interest take us to what is happening in Brisbane there is a time for State news.

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Further to all of the above the various bulletins are interspersed with attempts to provide tapes of local people making their various points. This is all very well however recordings are of varying quality so when a person is nicely into his subject matter the recording is terminated often when a rising inflection is being used and the 'point' of the discussion has not necessarily been reached.

One submits that there could be some flexibility in times for news broadcasts with the result that rushing to end some items in a short times leads to stories just tailing off to nothing.

We in country areas realise that demography must prevail and we don't expect a lot of coverage but that does not justify us being forgotten completely.

Should finance and cost of newsgathering be too expensive well perhaps this budget item could go elsewhere

It might be said could we depend upon commercial radio however this is not easy as stations are far away and although my equipment is new the difficulties appear to be increasing. One man told me his reception varies from the same vehicle whether it is parked at home or out in the open. His property is somewhat elevated.

These will convey some thoughts and may be of assistance

With sincere best wishes,

Yours faithfully,



R.J. McIndoe