

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES 2010-2011**

**Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio
Arts Agencies
Australia Council**

Question reference number: PM49

Topic: Replacing the Australia Council

Senator: Humphries

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 15 April 2011

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Office for the Arts

Number of pages: 1

Senator Humphries - He was quoted as saying there that he was considering a push for a new body to replace the Australia Council. Was there a correction or clarification published in the *Age* in the subsequent days as the minister read, in his own home town newspaper, that he had been misquoted or misrepresented in some way?

Mr Eccles—I do not know.

Senator Humphries—I put it to you that there was not.

Senator Arbib—I do not think that is what it said. I am happy to see it, but I do not think that is what it said. I am happy for you to put words in the minister's mouth, but I certainly will not be agreeing with your interpretation.

Answer:

The article in question, published in *The Age* on 9 October 2010 quotes the Minister for the Arts, Mr Simon Crean MP, as saying

“I think the council has done a good job but I don't know where we go from here”

and

“I am open to discussions.”

The article does not quote Mr Crean as saying he was considering a push for a new body to replace the Australia Council.

It is commentary from the journalist writing the article that states

“[h]is [Mr Crean's] priority is to produce a cultural policy and to consider the push for a new body to replace the Australia Council that would be better equipped to deal with the contemporary arts scene.”