

7/25/2001

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To the Secretary,
Senate Environment, Communications, Technology & the Arts
References Commission,
S157, Parliament House, Canberra ACT, 2600

Aloha,

I have read many reports concerning the funding cuts and related threats to Australia's ABC broadcasting service. As an Australian citizen living abroad, I am ashamed and embarrassed that this independent organization is now in cahoots with the current Australian Government.

As a child growing up in Geelong I can only remember the hours of enjoyment I experienced regularly from the ABC... an enjoyment that could never be found anywhere else in the Australian broadcasting universe. I loved the many children's programmes intensely, and as I matured I developed a love for quality news reporting and classical music that lives with me today. Every time I return home, I always look forward to those times when I can be reunited with my family and enjoy together the programmes on Channel 2, as well as ABC Classical FM. Increasingly over the past few years I have noticed that there are fewer and fewer local programmes available and considerably more repeats of foreign shows.

Here in the United States, there is the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) that provides similar programming to the ABC. However due to the fact that many programmes are underwritten by donations and grants from the corporate world, there is a constant influence upon the integrity and independence of producers and directors. Only with its federal funding can such independence and programme quality be maintained and increased at the ABC. When the government meddles in areas out of its expertise, only disaster can follow...

I respectfully implore the powers that be to forego the temptation to meddle in the affairs of such an internationally respected organization as the ABC. I request that the government not use the ABC's budget as its convenient nest-egg... this abuse will affect Australia's citizens for generations and contribute to the continuing deterioration of Australian broadcasting.

Sincerely,
GARY B SMITH