

TO the Secretary,
Senate Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts References Committee,
S157
Parliament House, Canberra

FROM
Keith Burrows
28 Valias Street
Warrandyte, Vic
[REDACTED]

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am most concerned about the present state of 'our' ABC. The ABC, to most Australians, is far more than just another TV or radio station. There is plenty of 'junk' entertainment available on the commercial stations, we don't need more on the ABC.

What we look for on the ABC is quality, informed, serious education, discussion and debate – along with good quality drama and music of course. At present ABC TV seems to be hell bent on outdoing the commercials at their own game, while radio seems starved of adequate funds to present its traditionally well researched programs. If we in Australia can have pride in the nature of our democracy it is very largely the result of the quality of our ABC over most of the last century. No commercial enterprise could possibly achieve that. But that quality is now very obviously under severe threat.

Clearly the new, 'commercial' direction of the ABC is the result of the political nature of the present ABC Board and managing director. It is very obvious that they are acting as little more than puppets of the current government. This degree of barely disguised political control is totally unacceptable in what is supposed to be an independent, quality broadcaster.

I call on this inquiry to demand a system which appoints members of the Board on the basis of their experience and leadership in PUBLIC broadcasting, as well as their commitment to a strong and independent ABC. These appointments must be made by people who have the real interests of the Australian people and democracy at heart, not by party political interests. It seems to me that a scheme such as that suggested by Prof. Frank Morgan would be a considerable improvement on the present one.

Please act urgently, before the damage to the ABC becomes totally irreversible.

Yours faithfully,
Keith Burrows