

From: O'Callaghan family [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 9 August 2001 10:53 PM
To: ecita.sen@aph.gov.au
Subject: Senate Inquiry on ABC Board Appointments

20 Norman Road
RESEARCH 3095

9 August, 2001

Submission to the Senate Inquiry on ABC

Dear Sirs & Mesdames

We wish to submit to the Inquiry our considered opinion that the Board of the ABC must always remain free from any kind of political pressure. It must be, and be seen to be, independent.

The process of appointment of Board members should also be transparent and free from political bias.

It seems to us that both major parties have been concerned that the ABC was biased, whilst that party was in power - it is important that the Board protects the ABC in its vital role which includes independent scrutiny and challenge of government and opposition activities; in addition to its other charters of education, promotion of arts, culture and science, quality children's programs etc.

We don't believe that the ABC should be like commercial broadcasters or seek to be the same as them - it is this point of difference which is of value to us.

We believe the board ought to have a charter of values to which it aspires, and which truly reflects the community's requirements for independence and rigour without fear of retribution. It is important that the Board is free and objective in what and how it acts.

We are also most concerned that politicisation of the Board can bias the ABC and lack of funding can limit its effectiveness. Even if the policies and strategies of Board appointments are right, we acknowledge that the ABC is at the mercy of whichever party is in power for funding. Nevertheless we believe there should never be advertisements on the ABC in order to maintain its independence from all external pressures.

Yours sincerely,

(signed)
John C O'Callaghan

(signed)
Roma J O'Callaghan

(signed)
Bryan R. Cox