

From: Brian & Barbara Hardiman [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 7 August 2001 10:25 AM
To: ecita.sen@aph.gov.au
Subject: Senate inquiry on ABC Board Appointments

The Secretary,
Senate Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts References
Committee.
S157 Parliament House,
Canberra, A.C.T. 2600.

We expect the ABC to show no bias in its programming and to be free to act without fear or favour. In practice this is jeopardised by a board that is too keen to implement government policy.

We urge you to appoint independent people who are committed to fighting for appropriate funding to enable the ABC to regain its integrity and high standing in the community at home and abroad.

The present system of appointing Board members has failed to protect the independence and fearlessness of the ABC. Too many of the present appointees appear to be too close to the government. For example, Donald McDonald publicly supported John Howard's bid for election as Prime Minister. This is inappropriate for the Chairman of the Board of an Independent broadcaster. The present Board and Managing Director should resign immediately.

'Stacking' the Board has occurred under other Australian Governments and this problem needs to be addressed immediately before standards fall irreparably. The appointment of Board members should be open to public scrutiny, and nominees' qualifications and goals clearly enunciated before appointment.

Yours faithfully

Barbara and Brian Hardiman 8 Castleton rd View Bank, Vic. 3084