

From: Penelope Lewisohn [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 9 August 2001 9:38 PM
To: ecita.sen@aph.gov.au
Subject: Submission to the Senate Enquiry on ABC Board Appointments

I wish to submit that the Board of the ABC has become strongly influenced by political appointees and has lost its way. The Board no longer champions the interests of a National Public Broadcaster but seems hell bent on implementing Government policy which is generally the product of vested political interests. Private media interests have never been as strong - or as wealthy - which of course makes it the more difficult to withstand their power.

It is my hope that this Senate inquiry will take a strong stand in protecting the independence of the ABC. I urge you to introduce a system which will enable ABC Board Members to be chosen from amongst those with a genuine interest in and understanding of the role of a Public Broadcaster. They must be chosen on the basis of merit and should be people without strong political commitments or connections who have a track record indicating the strength to stand up and be counted and argue the ABC's case no matter what the political flavour of the particular government of the day.

The current ABC Board is particularly poor and extraordinarily pliant. It is a perfect illustration of the urgent need for a better system for choosing Board members - unfortunately. May the Senate show its capacity for making the difficult decisions which it has on occasion been recognised for in the past! Good Luck!!!

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