

5th August 2011

Letter to the Editor, The Age



Dear Editor

Re: **Inquiry into ABC needed | 'Deliberate dismantling of our diminished ABC continues'**

ABC audiences have observed first hand the result of the ABC's backdoor privatisation that Quentin Dempster outlined in 'Deliberate dismantling of our diminished ABC continues' (*The Age*, August 4). Many programs screened on ABC TV are now barely distinguishable from offerings on commercial channels.

The ABC was envisaged as a producer of programs of cultural value and intellectual integrity.

Instead, Australia's public broadcaster is being transformed into a platform for programs that are made by the same companies that make programs for commercial television, and with an eye to commercial sales after first screening on the ABC.

Cutting edge content is disappearing, along with the ABC's independence and integrity. True diversity is being lost as program-makers who specialise in their area are axed, and decisions on programming shrink into the hands of a small number of managers. So is the secure base the ABC once provided to develop and nurture future local talent.

ABC managing director Mark Scott and the ABC Board are caretakers of this great national institution which belongs to the people of Australia. They have no authority to privatise it. An urgent public inquiry is needed to stop the ABC's commercialisation and rebuild its in-house production.

Yours sincerely

David Risstrom
President
Friends of the ABC (Vic)

GS: media folder

SMH (Q Dempster article not published in SMH):
ABC audiences have observed first hand the result of the backdoor privatisation of the ABC that is underway. Many programs screened on ABC TV are now barely distinguishable from offerings on commercial channels.