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January 10, 2009

Mike Woods & Louise Sylvan
Commissioners,
Parallel Importation of Books Study
Productivity Commission
GPO BOX 1428
CANBERRA CITY ACT 2601
By Email: books@pc.gov.au

Dear Commissioners,

Re: Study into the rules concerning the parallel importation of books

I write to you as an author concerned about the proposed introduction of parallel importation of books into Australia. I stand alongside the thousands of Australian writers and publishers who do not support an open market for book imports.

I believe that any changes to the current system would lead to a reduction in royalty income for literary creators like myself and more than likely a reduction in the level of Australian publishing (especially by Australian-owned companies). Where will Australian cultural product then find a home for publication and distribution?

My own books have been published *under licence* in other territories including Spain, France, the UK and soon China. My rights are protected through contracts between myself and my foreign publishers, so I don't understand how the Productivity Commission argued such contracts could exist and protect books being imported into Australia when changes to the *Copyright Act* to allow open entry into Australia would make such contracts null and void.

I want to be able to continue to trade my rights in different markets, which I hope will be the main economic growth in my income. My rights are the saleable, income-producing parts of the bundle of rights that make up my copyright, and it is important to my self-determination as an Australian author that I can sell my Australian publishing rights, rights for translation into languages other than

English or rights to an American edition. I am relying on international sales for the future sustainability of my career.

I have to ask a very simply question here: What's in it for us? For Australian authors? For Australian publishers? Indeed, if any recommendations for an open market for books are accepted it would seem that the needs of other nations are of more concern to the Australian Government than the needs of its own.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Anita Heiss