

PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION SUBMISSION PARALLEL IMPORTATION OF BOOKS

Loss of employment in the printing industry especially in country Victoria is one of several concerns I have in regards to the parallel importation of books. McPherson's Printing in Maryborough employees 250 permanent employees the loss of a substantial employer would have a devastating impact on the whole region. Maryborough is a community already suffering extreme economic hardship.

In August 2008 Melbourne was designated a UNESCO City of Literature this statues was achieved because of Australia's breadth and diversity of literary culture. Melbourne's status as a UNESCO City of Literature would not have been achieved under parallel importation and it's status would be compromised if parallel importation were introduced.

Although it is stated that Australian content is outside the parameters of the inquiry it is a grave concern that our language and culture would be eroded by the lack of local publishing and printing. Our culture is already under pressure from the American film and television industry.

Currently the Australian book and publishing industry is independent, vibrant and not reliant on government funding unlike the Australian film industry. Freedom of speech is a fundamental right of a democratic society and is compromised by dependence on government funding.

Australian authors stand to have their commission entitlements reduced from 10% down to 3% if their work is published overseas. The reduction of the author's commission will significantly impact on author's income. Apart from the loss of income Australian authors would have their work altered by overseas publishers to remove Australian words or phrases.

Canadian teacher librarians visiting our bookshop in Kyneton in country Victoria stated how fortunate Australia was to have such a vibrant publishing industry. They explained that it was extremely difficult for Canadian children's authors to be published. Publishers looked to potential American sales and based their manuscript purchases on the American market and not on the local Canadian market.

It should be noted that both the UK and USA intend to retain territorial copyright thus excluding Australia from the privileges this proposal will give them.

Thank you for the opportunity to present a submission to your inquiry

Clare McKenna
Aesop's Attic Bookshop