

PO Box 1353
North Fitzroy
Victoria 3068

April 14 2009

To Whom It May Concern,

I am an internationally published author who writes about contemporary Australia. My most recent book, *The Tall Man: Death and Life on Palm Island*, is a non-fiction account of the death of an Aboriginal man called Cameron Doomadgee in a North Queensland jailhouse. It is my belief certain stories tell us who we are as a people and speak to the psychology of our country. I also believe it is imperative that Australian writers are able to tackle these stories so as a nation we have a more nuanced, sophisticated sense of our history and culture.

Sadly, the Productivity Commission's recommendations in its Discussion Draft would fundamentally damage our country's literary culture, most obviously by eroding the income of Australian writers. The US, the UK and Canada all maintain their copyright exclusivity vigorously, and it is illogical and dangerous to imagine that a smaller territory would in any way benefit from their copyright being dismantled. The Productivity Commission has not found satisfactory evidence to suggest that the current system restricts availability of books in Australia; that books are more expensive here than elsewhere; or that any savings would be passed on by retailers to consumers. As the Discussion Draft, itself, states:

Measuring the magnitude of any actual price effects caused by Australia's PIRs is problematic. Indeed, the Commission has had to draw mainly on qualitative evidence together with theory, as well as some quantitative evidence, to gauge these effects and has not put a figure on them.

Without the financial and practical support of my Australian publisher I would not have been able to dedicate two years of full time work to researching and writing this story of early twenty-first century Australia. If my copyright were reduced to twelve months, there is simply no way my publisher would have the commercial incentive to support a book of this nature. I am fortunate to be published overseas but the reality is that the main market for this book is Australia and it is gruesome to imagine Australian readers studying a book on this topic replete with American spellings and basic explanatory notes about Australian geography and culture. The effect of dismantling territorial copyright protection will be to irrevocably diminish Australian cultural production and to have what remains bounced back to us through an American or British filter. I join with the Society

of Authors, the Australian Publisher's Association and the Australian Booksellers Association in urging you not to let this happen.

Sincerely,

Chloe Hooper