

Ms Jill Irvine  
Productivity Commission  
Level 2  
15 Moore Street,  
Canberra  
ACT 2600

20<sup>th</sup> December 2008

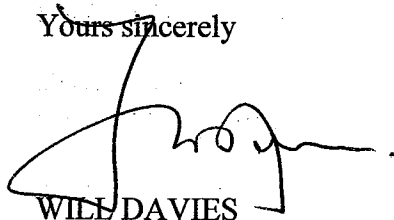
Dear Ms Irvine,

As an author, I write with respect the proposed review by your organisation to changes to the "parallel import" regime for books.

In this regard, I have attached a Submission and would ask that this be tabled at the Productivity Commission review in 2009.

Thank you and all the very best for Christmas and the New Year.

Yours sincerely



WILL DAVIES

## **SUBMISSION:**

**FOR:** Productivity Commission review on the parallel importation of books into Australia.

**FROM:** Will Davies,

**DATE:** 20<sup>th</sup> December 2008

As a relatively new author, I was concerned to read on the Productivity Commission's website of the proposed changes and the scope of the review underway by the Commission. These will have far reaching consequences for authors like myself, to say nothing of the publishing industry, the printers and book binders, retailers and distributors and everyone broadly associated with publishing in Australia.

As it is, life hangs by a thread with respect making a living from writing and being able to contribute to this important part of our culture and heritage. I have had some successful books over the last few years, but I have also had some that, for various reasons, found little support or readership, making the intense year I spent researching and writing the book, a total waste of time, and very costly in financial terms.

Now the possible changes that may come from this review, again puts pressure on my livelihood and whether I can continue as a writer. For a start, I cherish the support and encouragement I get from my publisher, Random House Australia, but fear this may be compromised should these possible changes eventuate. I need to have RHA invest time and money in my work, and to allow them in return, a window of exclusivity in the Australian market.

It is amazing what the legislative review did for writers and for the publishers after the changes first in the 1960's and 1970's and more recently in the early 1990's. From a mere 10% of Australian books sold to today's figure of over 60% is certainly amazing. But the benefits are broader and deeper than just my livelihood and the continued success of the industry – it is the huge cultural, artistic and historical value Australians get from reading Australian stories, understanding Australia's past and simply reading about their country and culture.

Like the Australian film industry, we must have a window on our society, we must offer Australian stories, let people hear an Australian perspective and an Australian "voice". As it is, we are flooded with American and British "culture", entertainment, opinion and information. As newspapers lay-off their journalists, as less people actually read, as the impact of television and computers take over the younger generation, is it hard enough to keep our head above water as it is, let alone take away a small aspect of protecting this fragile industry.

And just like the film industry, we have to continually fight to be heard and to have our voice. But out there, the Americans, the Canadians and the British quietly support their writers and publishers. Please don't feed us to the lions. Support the current legislation and ensure that this important and viable aspect of Australian cultural and artistic life is maintained and protected..