

FROM THE ARCHIVES – DOCUMENTATION – HOW THE ABC SUPPORTS TRESPASS

The correspondence concerning Julian Morrow's gatecrashing of a Sydney Institute function is published here in its entirety – for the historical record.

Letter to James Palmer (ABC) from Brian Dillon -12 March 2007

Dear Sir,

I make the following comments, against the background of a 27-year career in the Australian diplomatic service. I am sure I will not be the first to express my distaste at the performance of a member of your so-called "comedy team" at the talk being given by the American Ambassador at the Sydney Institute meeting, held at the [name deleted] offices at 1 O'Connell St., Sydney on Wednesday evening, 7 March.

As you may have already been told, this young man stood up - while another member of the audience was in the process of addressing a civil question to the invited speaker - and yelled out a garbled question, apparently pertaining to the circumstances of David Hicks at Guantanamo Bay. He supported whatever he was trying to shout by holding up what appeared to be an illustration of the detention centre at Guantanamo Bay, captioned "Hicks' Home".

He followed this initial interruption by holding up a large, printed placard, announcing "Fuck Hicks". We gained the impression that this was his suggestion for a response on the part of the Ambassador. At the conclusion of this garbled outburst, he rushed out of the room, without waiting for the response from the Ambassador, who was courteous enough to stand in silence during this performance.

Is this the sort of performance that the ABC management regards as "comedy" and are its employees - contract or permanent - allowed to behave in this manner without constraint? Whether one approves of the manner in which the Hicks case has been handled, or otherwise, the official representative of the American government is our guest in this country and deserves to be treated with the level of courtesy that our own Ambassador to the United States would expect to receive - at least from representatives of host-government and taxpayer-funded organisations.

Brian Dillon

Letter to Brian Dillon from Simon Melkman – 21 March 2007

Dear Mr Dillon

Thank you for your email regarding the filming of a segment for the ABC program 'The Chaser's War On Everything' on 7 March. In line with ABC complaint handling policies, your correspondence was referred to ABC Audience & Consumer Affairs for investigation and response.

'The Chaser's War on Everything' is a satirical program aimed at provoking debate and providing social commentary on topical issues in politics, news and current affairs and public life generally. The Chaser team acknowledges that its activities may at times cause some disruption, and when planning and filming sketches they endeavour to take appropriate steps to ensure that it is kept to a minimum.

In this case, the program sought to satirise the US Ambassador and the treatment of Guantanamo Bay detainee David Hicks by filming a stunt at The Sydney Institute event at which the Ambassador spoke. The ABC considers that the US Ambassador is a legitimate target of satire; as the ABC's Editorial Policies state, "[t]he groups or individuals most often satirised are those prominent in public life." At all times, the Chaser team is conscious of the requirement, also set out in the Editorial Policies, that "[s]taff involved in satirical content need to consider the potential for satire to cause harm to groups or individuals." The ABC believes that the conduct of the Chaser crew on 7 March was in line with this requirement.

I understand the crew were upfront and did not hide their intent to film, nor were they asked to leave at any stage. In order to ensure minimal disruption, the crew waited until close to the end of the event before filming the stunt. Chaser comedian Julian Morrow stood up and asked a question after the Ambassador finished a previous answer. While Mr Morrow spoke over another person to ask his question, this was no different to what occurs at press conferences all the time. The host of the event, Gerard Henderson, refused to let the Ambassador respond to Mr Morrow, so filming ceased and the crew left the event.

As with any comedy program, 'The Chaser's War on Everything' presents program makers with the difficult challenge of balancing taste, appropriateness and humour. While we try to make sure that the correct balance is struck, please accept my sincere apologies for any offence caused by the conduct of Mr Morrow and the crew in this instance. Please be assured, your comments have been noted and conveyed to ABC Television management and the producers of the program so that they are aware of your concerns.

Thank you for bringing your concerns to the ABC's attention. I have attached links to the ABC's Code of Practice and Editorial Policies for your information.

Yours sincerely

Simon Melkman

ABC Audience & Consumer Affairs

Letter to Gerard Henderson from Brian Dillon (With Above Two Letters Attached) – 23 March 2007

Dear Gerard,

I thought that you might be interested in reading a letter (hereunder) that I wrote to the ABC after the disgraceful performance of a member of their so-called "comedy" team at the lecture given by Mr. Robert D. McCallum. Also attached is the (predictable) response that I received.

Like yourself, I am aghast at the gall of the administration of the publicly-funded Australian (Labor Party) Broadcasting Corporation in so blatantly using taxpayers money to peddle their own personal political views. If this can continue to happen under a Liberal government I hate to imagine what will happen if, and when, Labor wins government. Perhaps they will drop the pretence and give the ABC its due and proper status as the Gore Hill Branch of the Party !

To say that "The ABC considers the U.S. Ambassador a legitimate target of satire" only displays the author's utter ignorance of protocol. One can quickly imagine how the ABC might have reacted had His Excellency Gough Whitlam been treated in similar manner during his sojourn in Paris.

Mr. Melkam claims that the Corporation's policy is justified by the Editorial Policy statement that - "groups or individuals most often satirised are those most prominent in public life". That is merely a statement of the obvious - not an authority to act accordingly. For example, to state that - "the Jewish people are a race most often persecuted" is not an authority to persecute them!

Furthermore, ambassadors accredited to the government of Australia are representatives of foreign governments and are not members of Australian political life. The ABC management - irrespective of its level of conceit - is not authorised by our government to lay down rules as to how the official representatives of other governments are to be treated.

Well, that is enough steam let off. You are to be congratulated on the excellence of the Sydney Institute lectures and I look forward to attending many more.

Best regards.

Sincerely,

E.Brian Dillon

Letter to Kirstin McLiesh from Gerard Henderson – 28 March 2007

Dear Ms McLiesh

You may – or may not – recall that we corresponded last year concerning the ABC TV *Media Watch* program. As far as I am concerned, this matter is still extant. I wrote to the (then) ABC Chairman Donald McDonald about this issue on 17 November 2006. Mr McDonald neither replied to nor acknowledged my letter. However, on 20 December 2006 Mark Scott did write to me concerning my letter to Donald McDonald. I replied to Mr Scott on 5 January 2007 – so far, he has not responded to this letter in writing.

As previously advised, I do not make use of the ABC audience complaint handling procedure because I believe that the process is inadequate. Moreover, from my own experience when *Media Watch* put my disagreement with it into the hands of ABC Audience & Consumer Affairs, I found that the issue was handled in a remarkably unprofessional manner.

Once again, I find that I have been dragged into the ABC's complaints handling process without my knowledge and against my will. Last Monday, E. Brian Dillon forwarded to me a copy of correspondence he has had with the ABC concerning Robert McCallum's address to The Sydney Institute on 7 March 2007. Mr Dillon objected to the behaviour of *The Chaser's War on Everything* at this function. As I understand it, the ABC regards the behaviour in question as an appropriate "stunt".

It seems that E. Brian Dillon's letter to a certain James Palmer was referred to the Audience & Consumer Affairs. Mr Dillon has provided me with a copy of the reply he received from Simon Melkman who, I am advised, holds the position of Senior Audience Liaison Officer in your department and reports to you. Mr Melkman's letter, dated 21 March 2007, reads in part:

The Chaser's War on Everything is a satirical program aimed at provoking debate and providing social commentary on topical issues in politics, news and current affairs and public life generally. The Chaser team acknowledges that its activities may at times cause some disruption, and when planning and filming sketches they endeavour to take appropriate steps to ensure that it is kept to a minimum.

In this case, the program sought to satirise the US Ambassador and the treatment of Guantanamo Bay detainee David Hicks by filming a stunt at The Sydney Institute event at which the Ambassador spoke. The ABC considers that the US Ambassador is a legitimate target of satire; as the ABC's Editorial Policies state, "[t]he groups or individuals most often satirised are those prominent in public life." At all times, the Chaser team is conscious of the requirement, also set out in the Editorial Policies, that "[s]taff involved in satirical content need to consider the potential for satire to cause harm to groups or

individuals." The ABC believes that the conduct of the Chaser crew on 7 March was in line with this requirement.

I understand the crew were upfront and did not hide their intent to film, nor were they asked to leave at any stage. In order to ensure minimal disruption, the crew waited until close to the end of the event before filming the stunt. Chaser comedian Julian Morrow stood up and asked a question after the Ambassador finished a previous answer. While Mr Morrow spoke over another person to ask his question, this was no different to what occurs at press conferences all the time. The host of the event, Gerard Henderson, refused to let the Ambassador respond to Mr Morrow, so filming ceased and the crew left the event.

As you will note, Simon Melkman referred to me in his letter to Mr Dillon. However, Mr Melkman did not correspond with – or speak to – me (or anyone else at The Sydney Institute) before writing to Mr Dillon. This is quite unprofessional.

The fact is that Simon Melkman's letter contains some wilful falsehoods. I use the word "wilful" in a considered way since Mr Melkman could have checked with me before writing to Mr Dillon about me. I have dealt with Simon Melkman's falsehoods below – in the order in which they were uttered.

Claim: Simon Melkman asserts that *The Chaser* "crew were upfront and did not hide their intent to film" the United States Ambassador's address to The Sydney Institute.

Response: This statement is manifestly false. *The Chaser* team was *not* upfront and *did* hide its intention to film the function. Shortly before the event, I was phoned by a man who said he was from ABC television but who declined to provide his name or to state which program he was from. He spoke to me – in my capacity as The Sydney Institute's executive director – and asked about the details of the Robert McCallum function.

I advised – truthfully – that the Ambassador's talk was booked out and that no more potential attendees were being accepted. In response to a specific query, the ABC man said that he wanted to film the event for some future unspecified program. Again, I advised that there was no room available and suggested that he acquire footage from the ABC TV crew which had replied some time ago and which was covering the event for *Lateline* and *ABC News*. In other words, I said that there was room for only one ABC TV camera.

The Ambassador's talk commenced on time at 6 pm. At about 6.10 pm I noticed Julian Morrow – accompanied by a young man carrying a hand-held camera – entering the function room at the [name deleted] office 1 O'Connell Street, Sydney where the talk was held. As you are aware, Mr Morrow is *The Chaser's* executive producer. Clearly Julian Morrow waited until The Sydney Institute's staff (who were outside the meeting room checking off the names

of those attending) had left their post before entering the function. On any interpretation, this was deceptive behaviour involving, as it did, trespass. Clearly I was in no position to ask Mr Morrow to leave the function because this would have interrupted the Ambassador's address. Moreover, contrary to Mr Melkman's assertion, I did not anticipate that *The Chaser* team would crash the Institute's function which was held on private property.

If Simon Melkman had bothered to check the facts with me before writing to Mr Dillon, I would have told him all of the above. It appears that Mr Melkman only sought one side of the story – i.e. the position of Julian Morrow and *The Chaser* team.

Claim: According to Simon Melkman, "close to the end of the event...Chaser comedian Julian Morrow stood up and asked a question after the Ambassador finished a previous answer".

Response: Once again, this comment is simply untrue. In fact, Julian Morrow was already standing up when he interjected – since he had arrived late at the function, which he knew was booked out, and there were no vacant seats. Moreover, Mr Morrow did *not* ask a question. Rather he shouted out some comments, after I had already called the final question from someone else and held up two placards in support of his case.

Claim: According to Simon Melkman, "while Mr Morrow spoke over another person to ask his question, this was no different to what occurs at press conferences all the time".

Response: If Mr Melkman knew anything about The Sydney Institute, he would understand that the Institute does not hold press conferences. Robert McCallum addressed a normal Sydney Institute public function – he spoke for about 30 minutes and engaged in a 30 minutes question/discussion period. As the chair of the meeting, I called the questions. Julian Morrow did not put up his hand to join in the question/discussion period until shortly before 7 pm and there were already three people in the queue before him. I called a woman at the back of the room for the final question and then Julian Morrow decided to butt in. His behaviour was boorish. If everyone engaged in such stunts, it would be impossible to run a question/discussion period at the Institute.

For the record, the Ambassador did do a brief press conference, at his own volition, after the conclusion of his talk to the Institute – but Mr Morrow did not wait around for this.

Claim: In his letter to Mr Dillon, Simon Melkman made the following comment, viz: "The host of the event, Gerard Henderson, refused to let the Ambassador respond to Mr Morrow, so the filming ceased and the crew left the event."

Response: Once again, Simon Melkman's comment is completely untrue. There is television footage, along with podcast of the function, so the events can readily be checked. The fact is that I did *not* refuse to let the Ambassador respond to Julian Morrow. As the record demonstrates, my only comment to Robert McCallum was as follows, viz: "Ambassador, that's a joke from the ABC Comedy team." That's all I said to the Ambassador. I also commented to the general audience – quite a few of who were criticising Mr Morrow's behaviour – that I did not believe that his joke was funny.

The fact is that Mr Morrow's verbal onslaught was almost incomprehensible from the podium, where Ambassador McCallum was positioned. Nevertheless, Robert McCallum did respond – with some humour – to *The Chaser's* stunt when he answered the final question. Julian Morrow did not hear this because he had already walked out in anger but – Mr Morrow's cameraman remained.

This demonstrates yet another false claim in Simon Melkman's letter. Mr Melkman asserted that when the Ambassador (allegedly) declined to "respond to Mr Morrow...filming ceased and the crew let the event". Certainly Julian Morrow stormed out of the function in an obvious angry state, yelling abuse at the Ambassador. However, the young man from *The Chaser* remained in the room and continued his filming until the end of the proceedings. Mr Melkman would have become aware of this had he done any fact-checking of any kind before writing his (erroneous) letter.

In conclusion, I am absolutely staggered at the Audience & Consumer Affairs' lack of professionalism in handling this matter. Once again, Audience & Consumer Affairs has uncritically adopted the position of an ABC employee/contractor without bothering to engage in a proper independent investigation. At the very least, you or your staff should have obtained my side of the story before making claims about me – which are manifestly false – in official ABC correspondence. I do not appreciate being verballled.

I also note that, according to Simon Melkman, ABC Audience & Consumer Affairs regards the conduct of *The Chaser* crew at The Sydney Institute on 7 March 2007 as being in line with the ABC's editorial policies. During his rant directed at the Ambassador, Julian Morrow held up two placards as part of *The Chaser's* stunt. The first said something along the lines of "DAVID HICKS IS FREE" under a photo of Mr Hicks in Guantanamo Bay. The second said: "FUCK HICKS".

Neither sign was funny and the second sign was both meaningless and in extremely bad taste. Yet, according to ABC Audience & Consumer Affairs, this puerile and undergraduate stunt was appropriate satire and completely in accord with the taxpayer funded public broadcaster's editorial policies. Really.

Yours sincerely

Gerard Henderson

cc: Maurice Newman, Chairman – ABC; Mark Scott, Managing Director – ABC; Kim Dalton, Director of Television – ABC; Senator The Hon. Helen Coonan MP, Minister for Communications.

Covering Letter to Mark Scott from Gerard Henderson (With Copy of Letter Sent To Kirstin McLiesh of 28 March) – 28 March 2007

Dear Mark

I have attached a copy of a self-explanatory email which I forwarded to Kirstin McLiesh today.

This is just to keep you in the loop, so to speak. There is no need to acknowledge this.

Looking forward to seeing you at The Sydney Institute's Annual Dinner on Wednesday 2 May 2007.

Best wishes

Yours sincerely

Gerard Henderson

Letter to Gerard Henderson from Kirstin McLiesh – 28 March 2007

Dear Mr Henderson,

I acknowledge receipt of your email.

You will receive a further response in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Kirstin McLiesh
Head, Audience & Consumer Affairs

Letter to Mark Scott from Gerard Henderson – 30 March 2007

Dear Mark

As you will be aware, I wrote to Kirstin McLiesh (Head, Audience & Consumer Affairs) on 28 March 2007 concerning her department's comments on the behaviour of *The Chaser's War On Everything* and other matters – and forwarded a copy of my email to you along with some others. Ms McLiesh has acknowledged receipt of my email.

As you know, last Monday *The Chaser's War On Everything* ran coverage of what ABC Audience & Consumer Affairs has described as an ABC approved "stunt" - when the United States Ambassador to Australia, Robert McCallum, addressed The Sydney Institute and was confronted by *The Chaser's* executive producer Julian Morrow.

The Chaser's Selective Editing

In your position as the ABC's managing director and editor-in-chief of the taxpayer funded public broadcaster, I wish to draw your attention to the following matters relating to the excerpt concerning Ambassador McCallum which *The Chaser's War On Everything* aired in its inaugural program for the year.

- The material which went to air depicted Julian Morrow in the best possible light – i.e. it was not an accurate presentation of what actually occurred when Julian Morrow trespassed on private property and gatecrashed The Sydney Institute function, which was held at the office of [name deleted] at 1 O'Connell Street, Sydney. Mr Morrow and *The Chaser* team have distorted the reality by selectively editing the footage and by the fact that, unrevealed to ABC viewers, Mr Morrow was actually wired for sound by *The Chaser* crew.
- Contrary to what ABC viewers were shown last Monday, Mr Morrow's interruption of proceedings at The Sydney Institute was not unchallenged and his stint did not dominate proceedings. Quite the contrary. His boorish behaviour in shouting down the woman who had been nominated to ask the final question was challenged by myself as chairman of the function and by many members of the audience. This is evident by listening to the podcast of the event which is on The Sydney Institute's website. ABC TV filmed the entire event for *Lateline* and this footage should be available to you and Kim Dalton to do your own checking.
- Contrary to what ABC viewers were shown last Monday, Julian Morrow was not cool and collected during his stunt at The Sydney Institute. In fact, he became quite angry when I publicly told him that his "DAVID HICKS IS FREE" and "FUCK HICKS" placards were not funny. He also got obviously annoyed when Anne Henderson asked what his "FUCK HICKS" placard really meant. Moreover, Mr Morrow became clearly agitated when members of the audience

interjected at him. So loud was the noise, that it was all but impossible to understand what Julian Morrow was on about from the podium where the Ambassador was located and where *Lateline* and the ABC *AM* microphones were situated. Clearly, *The Chaser* wired Mr Morrow for sound so that he only could be heard when the stunt went to air. This is disingenuous behaviour.

- Contrary to what ABC viewers were shown last Monday, Julian Morrow's stunt at The Sydney Institute did not end happily for *The Chaser's* executive producer. The Ambassador remained relaxed at all times. However, Julian Morrow clearly lost his temper and exited the function, before it had ended, yelling at Robert McCallum.

The fact is that ABC viewers last Monday were not given a fair and accurate account of how *The Chaser's* stunt went down in practice.

The ABC and Security: A Serious Double Standard

There is another matter which relates to a serious double standard at the taxpayer funded public broadcaster.

I note that, in recent times, security has been substantially increased at the ABC's head office at Ultimo. This suggests that the ABC is intent on stopping unauthorised people from entering its property and, among other things, disrupting ABC TV and Radio programs. Fair enough.

However, there is an unpleasant double standard here. Imagine what security at the ABC would do if I made an unauthorised entry on to ABC premises and then engaged in a "stunt" by interrupting a live Kerry O'Brien interview on the *7.30 Report*. Just imagine. Yet, according to ABC Consumer & Audience Affairs, Julian Morrow's unauthorised gatecrashing of a Sydney Institute talk, and his unsanctioned interruption of proceedings, is completely in accordance with the ABC's Editorial Policies document which you recently released.

Some Questions

I specifically ask – do you as ABC managing director and editor-in-chief agree that Julian Morrow's stunt at The Sydney Institute is completely in accordance with the ABC's Editorial Policies?

If so, on what basis does the ABC justify its journalists/contractors trespassing on the private property of others while it enhances its own security to prevent trespass on the ABC's taxpayer funded public property at Ultimo and elsewhere?

Why does the ABC regard it as appropriate behaviour for Julian Morrow to interrupt a Sydney Institute function when the ABC would clearly regard it

inappropriate if anyone interrupted a live ABC program or a meeting of ABC senior executives?

Finally, how does the ABC justify the use of taxpayer funds by *The Chaser* team to trespass on private property and disrupt the lawful proceedings of Australian taxpayers who fund the public broadcaster?

I am interested in your response to all four questions. In the meantime, I await a reply from Ms McLiesh to my letter of 28 March 2007.

Best wishes. Looking forward to seeing you at The Sydney Institute's Annual Dinner with Tom Friedman on Wednesday 2 May.

Yours sincerely

Gerard Henderson

cc: Maurice Newman, Chairman – ABC; Kim Dalton, Director of Television – ABC; Senator The Hon. Helen Coonan MP, Minister for Communications.

Letter to Gerard Henderson from Mark Scott – 12 April 2007

Dear Gerard,

I am writing in reference to your letter of 30 March, outlining your concerns about the episode of *The Chaser's War On Everything*, which first aired on Wednesday 28 March.

I know you have written to Kirstin McLiesh in our Audience and Consumer Affairs Department, following up issues raised in correspondence with a member of The Sydney Institute. She will be back in touch with you on those issues in due course.

We discussed some of the matters raised in your correspondence at your lunch with the Chairman which I joined, which was held after the filmed incident at the address by the US Ambassador and prior to the event being broadcast.

As I said at our lunch, I had not heard of the incident. You described it in detail to me, including the chronology of your function. Having spoken at The Sydney Institute twice, I know one of the virtues of the events you run is that you start and end on time. It does appear that Julian Morrow's intervention in proceedings came when you were seeking to allow someone to ask the final question of the night, on the eve of 7pm, after the Ambassador had completed his address in full and all but one question had been asked and answered. I can understand your frustration at the disruption, albeit late in proceedings. I am glad to read in your letter that the Ambassador remained relaxed at all times. I know that you were disappointed and some members

of your audience would have been disappointed that the final question was not asked. I fully appreciate that many members in your audience were not receptive to Mr Morrow's intervention and accept your description of his reaction to their response.

Of course, members of The Chaser have been turning up at events over the nation for years, usually unannounced. It is hardly a new technique. The footage of Norman Gunston on the steps of Parliament House on November 11, 1975 comes to mind. Some of the techniques they use with the public on the street have been seen on television since the days of Candid Camera. Some of these interventions are in public places, others are not. By definition, a lot of what they do is what you would describe as "unauthorised gatecrashing" or an "unsanctioned interruption of proceedings". It is the nature of the comedy they do, as typified by the wide media coverage of the appearance of one of the Chaser performers at a press conference for Peter Debnam.

Your letter suggests that somehow having Julian Morrow miked was disingenuous. I am surprised this would be your view, as in this kind of comedy, the talent is usually miked, because, by definition, the environment has not been prepared for their intervention. They need to be heard. And it goes without saying, that when the segment is broadcast, it has usually been edited for effect. The entire segment, as seen on the Chaser website, lasts about a minute – with only half of that actual footage from the Institute function. The Chaser is a comedy program and all the footage collected in their filming is edited in an effort to entertain an audience. This is not a news program, nor a documentary. All the filming they do is a construction in an effort to get moments on film the audience will find entertaining and engaging.

When the Editorial Policies were released at the end of last year, there was much discussion as to whether the policies would mean the end of satire on the ABC. We were at pains to point out this was not the case. Of course, the nature of such performance is a challenge for editorial policies to cover and codify. Just like a cartoonist may bring humour and insight to a large audience, the person in the cartoon may not enjoy the experience too much. The groups and individuals most often satirised are those prominent in public life, as our Editorial Policies have pointed out. From what I could see on the tape and from your comments, the patience and good nature of the Ambassador suggests he understood this. There are few in public life that have been exempt from attempted comedy like this. And the best smile about it and move on.

I do not accept that there is an 'unpleasant double standard' that exists with what happened at your function a few weeks ago and the upgrading of security at Ultimo. We have upgraded security after an audit and professional advice, given the risk profile of the ABC and its role as a public broadcaster. Of course, the Chaser team can provide challenges for our own security team

on occasions. But the security upgrade was recommended after an assessment of risks of a different nature.

I suspect, Gerard, we may be at cross-purposes on this one. You were clearly unhappy at Mr Morrow's actions at The Sydney Institute. You can see no humour or satire in what happened there. I know you take great professional and personal pride in running events efficiently and effectively and you do get a remarkable roll-up of guests and audiences. And now, in a painstaking way, you are exercising logic and analysis to the events of that evening seeking to demonstrate why the events were wrong.

With no disrespect, I need to approach it differently. I am not going to deconstruct every attempt at generating humour undertaken by The Chaser. I know what they do. They operate under standards set in our Editorial Policies and by the management of ABC Television. Part of what they do is satire involving public figures, like the Ambassador (and people like you and me for that matter). When they come our way, we are most likely to feel aggrieved. Nobody likes being laughed at or being made fun of, and this style of humour is certainly not to everyone's taste. However it is remarkable how few complain or seek to engage around the issue. At times, we may fail to reach appropriate standards and the work will need to be reviewed. As you would be aware, after an event last year involving The Chaser, we reviewed some internal approval policies.

All comedy is hit and miss. Of course there are times when I think scenes from the program lack taste or wit or humour. Others will disagree with my assessment, others will share it. Notwithstanding, we need to consider whether, despite the inevitably equivocal nature of the work, the program is hitting the mark: adhering to our standards and connecting with an audience.

The episode you discussed resulted in The Chaser achieved an audience in the capital cities of 1.2 million – a 50% increase on their highest audience last year for us. When you add the audience who watched the repeat on Friday night and then on ABC2, and the fact that it is the most popular download from Apple iTunes, the Chaser team has had remarkable success in connecting with an audience. It is doing what a performance program, based on satire is designed to do.

Perhaps rather than exchanging lengthy correspondence on this matter we may have had a more productive exchange on this had we spoken on the phone. If you have concerns in the future, please feel free to call me.

Kind regards

Mark Scott

Letter to Mark Scott from Gerard Henderson – 18 April 2007

Dear Mark

I refer to your letter of 12 April 2007.

As you are aware, I did not initiate any complaint about *The Chaser's* gatecrashing of Ambassador Robert McCallum's address at The Sydney Institute on Wednesday 7 March 2007 – although I did mention it to you at the private lunch which Maurice Newman hosted on 14 March 2007.

My involvement came about when ABC Audience & Consumer Affairs wrote to a complainant about this matter and, without checking with me, made inaccurate references to both me and the function. I wrote to Kirstin McLiesh about this on 28 March 2007. Three weeks later, I have received nothing more than an acknowledgement from Ms McLiesh. I understand from you that a reply will be made in what you refer to as "due course".

In response to your letter of 12 April 2007, I make the following comments:

- It is disturbing that you justify and rationalise the actions of *The Chaser* team in trespassing on *private property*. I agree with you that "members of *The Chaser* have been turning up at events over the nation for years, usually unannounced". However, the only specific instances you cite involve *public places* – i.e. *The Chaser's* involvement "with the public on the street" and the recent Peter Debnam press conference in Sydney. You also refer to Norman Gunston's performance in 1975 outside Parliament House in Canberra – another public place. I am *not* objecting to *The Chaser* team, or Garry McDonald, doing gags in public space. You should understand this.

Your letter simply glosses over my comment about *The Chaser* gatecrashing functions held on *private property* – and ignores the possible consequences of such unlawful actions. Once again, I stress that I am referring here to unauthorised entry on to private property – where access has not been negotiated.

- In my letter of 5 January 2007 (to which you have not responded in writing), I drew your attention to the fact that you had supported the *Media Watch's* program disagreement with me over the correct interpretation of the Victorian Court of Appeal's decision in *R v Thomas (No 2)* – without you, or your office, having read the court's decision. In your letter of 20 December 2006 you also defended the decision of Ms McLiesh to support *Media Watch's* interpretation of *R v Thomas (No. 2)* – despite the fact that she, too, had not read the decision – and instead put her name to a document which, in fact, had been written by Peter McEvoy, *Media Watch's* (then) executive producer.

There is now another such occurrence. In your letter of 12 April 2007, you maintain that I and some members of the Institute's audience were

“disappointed” with Julian Morrow’s interruption of proceedings during the question/discussion period with Ambassador McCallum since “the final question was not asked”. Once again, you appear to have accepted a version of events by an ABC employee/contractor without checking the facts. Had you – or your office – viewed the ABC tape, you would be aware that there was no such “disappointment” – since the final question *was* asked. The fact is that Mr Morrow missed the final question – since he left before it had been asked, yelling abuse at the Ambassador on the way.

I know how busy you are. However, the ABC has recently appointed a Director of Editorial Policies –who, as I understand it, is tasked to do research for you about ABC activities. He and his staff should have the time to check basic facts – and to advise you accordingly.

- Contrary to the implication in your letter, I *do* support the ABC’s decision to upgrade security at the Ultimo headquarters to prevent unauthorised entry on to ABC premises. My point is this. How does the ABC justify its decision to prevent trespass on its own property when the ABC’s managing director and editor-in-chief rationalises and excuses *The Chaser’s* trespass on the property of others? There is an unpleasant double standard here.

- Finally, I should emphasise that I do not have a problem with satire on the ABC. Moreover, neither I nor Robert McCallum was personally agitated by Mr Morrow’s juvenile antics at The Sydney Institute. In fact it was Julian Morrow (*The Chaser’s* executive producer) who left in an agitated state, yelling abuse. The Ambassador and I remained at our posts, relaxed. If you doubt my recall of the events – get your staff to check the tape.

The point in my letter to you was a different one. Namely, it was intellectually dishonest for Mr Morrow to deliberately distort what happened at the Institute – by the selective use of microphones and editing – in order to present himself in the best light for a gag which, in the words of one senior ABC journalist, flopped miserably on the night. My comment that Mr Morrow’s “Fuck Hicks” sign was not funny was edited out – as was the derision directed at him by some members of the audience. In fact the person made fun of on the night was *The Chaser’s* own Julian Morrow – although viewers would not know this from viewing Mr Morrow’s edited version.

In conclusion, I reiterate that it is disturbing to learn that the ABC, at the highest level, approves of *The Chaser* team trespassing without notice on private property. That’s all.

Best wishes. There is no need to reply to this. I await Ms McLiesh’s (promised) reply with interest.

Yours sincerely

Gerard Henderson

PS : I appreciate your suggestion that, in future, I should phone you if I have concerns about the ABC. However, as a former journalist, you will understand the importance of the documented record – especially in a case such as this when ABC employees have made incorrect and inaccurate statements.

cc: Maurice Newman AC; Senator Helen Coonan

Covering Letter to Gerard Henderson from Kirstin McLiesh (With Attached Letter below) – 9 May 2007

Dear Mr Henderson,

My response to your email is attached.

I regret the delay in replying to you.

Yours sincerely,

Kirstin McLiesh
Head, Audience & Consumer Affairs

+++++

Dear Mr Henderson

I write in response to your email of 28 March 2007 regarding a stunt filmed by the Chaser team at The Sydney Institute. Your letter refers specifically to ABC Audience & Consumer Affairs' response to a complaint from Mr E. Brian Dillon regarding the Chaser team's conduct at the event. In preparing this response, I have had regard to:

- (1) your correspondence;
- (2) a response from the Chaser team; and
- (3) I have viewed footage of US Ambassador Mr Robert McCallum Jr's address to The Sydney Institute on 7 March 2007.

You object firstly to this statement in the response to Mr Dillon: *"I understand the crew were upfront and did not hide their intent to film, nor were they asked to leave at any stage."* This statement referred to the conduct of Julian Morrow and his cameraman at the event on 7 March and not to any earlier contact with you or the Institute. The accuracy of this statement has been checked again with the Chaser team who advise that Mr Morrow and a cameraman arrived at the venue shortly after the event commenced, that Mr Morrow stood at the side of the room for the duration of the Ambassador's talk, and that the camera was visible. This account of events at the Institute on 7 March is compatible with the version you give in your letter: *"At about*

6.10 pm I noticed Julian Morrow – accompanied by a young man carrying a hand-held camera – entering the function room at the office at 1 O’Connell Street, Sydney where the talk was held.”

As to whether Mr Morrow *“stood up and asked a question”*, I have reviewed footage of the event which shows that Mr Morrow was leaning against the wall and stood up and away from the wall to address his question to the Ambassador. His question was: *“Ambassador, the ‘Bring David Hicks’ home campaign is gaining a lot of strength in Australia. Do you think you should have a campaign to put your position about David Hicks? What about David Hicks is home in Guantanamo? Do you think that would help persuade people to your position?”* The footage of the event does not support your assertion that Mr Morrow did not ask a question but *“rather he shouted out some comments”*, although it does appear from the footage that the Ambassador had difficulty hearing Mr Morrow’s question. The Ambassador also appears to have had difficulty hearing the question from the audience which was taken immediately afterwards. Certainly, Mr Morrow spoke over another audience member who was also asking a question in order to execute the stunt. The ABC’s response to Mr Dillon acknowledged this. My viewing of the footage indicates that Mr Morrow did not shout, but that he asked his question at an appropriate volume to enable the Ambassador to hear it.

You also refer to the statement: *“The host of the event, Gerard Henderson, refused to let the Ambassador respond to Mr Morrow, so the filming ceased and the crew left the event.”* You are correct to point out that the cameraman did not leave the event at the same time as Mr Morrow. I am advised that the cameraman left when the Ambassador’s address finished, some minutes after Mr Morrow had left the room. As to events that took place after Mr Morrow asked his question, I have sought further information from Mr Morrow about his recollection of events. He responds to your criticism as follows: *“Gerard basically ran interference on my attempt to ask a question. It seemed to me that he had no intention to let the Ambassador respond. He continued to speak over me as did his wife and others. Rather than prolong the scene – and the disruption – I made an offhand comment and left, enabling the proceedings to resume.”* It is clear from the footage that during and after Mr Morrow’s question, there was reaction from members of the audience and the Ambassador did not hear Mr Morrow’s question. The Ambassador said *“Beg your pardon?”* and Mr Morrow restated his question. You stated to the Ambassador that this was a joke from the ABC comedy team and then went on to take a question from another person in the room. The ABC is satisfied that its response to Mr Dillon succinctly summarised these events. It is clear from the footage that you quickly moved the event on after Mr Morrow’s disruption and the Ambassador took the next question.

I understand the Managing Director has written to you separately about the Chaser’s conduct at this event and responded to your concerns about the merits of the stunt.

Yours sincerely

Kirstin McLiesh
Head, Audience & Consumer Affairs

Letter to Mark Scott from Anne Henderson – 23 May 2007

Dear Mark

While Gerard and I were overseas in the past couple of weeks, Gerard received a letter from Kirstin McLeish in response to his email of 28 March regarding the Chaser team's behaviour at The Sydney Institute's function at the [name deleted] offices on 7 March this year with the US Ambassador Mr Robert McCallum Jr.

While I have not been involved to date in this matter, I do feel that I should respond to comments quoted by Ms McLeish in her reply to Gerard. This relates to a brief reference to me by Julian Morrow – one that says more about the Chaser team, in fact, than me.

Ms McLeish writes:

As to events that took place after Mr Morrow asked his question, I have sought further information from Mr Morrow about his recollection of events. He responds to your criticism as follows: "Gerard basically ran interference on my attempt to ask a question. It seemed to me that he had no intention to let the Ambassador respond. He continued to speak over me as did his wife and others. Rather than prolong the scene – and the disruption – I made an offhand comment and left, enabling the proceedings to resume."

Firstly, as you would immediately notice, Julian Morrow's reference to me as "his [Gerard's] wife" is out of order. I am the Deputy Director of The Sydney Institute and have been for well over a decade – certainly long enough for Julian Morrow to know. My presence at The Sydney Institute function had nothing to do with being Gerard's "wife". I am surprised that a senior executive like Ms McLeish at the ABC would regard such a response as adequate and professional.

The Chaser team has always appeared to me to have many of the qualities of a 1950s boys own adventure album – and Julian Morrow's reference to me only confirms my suspicions of The Chaser's chauvinistic world view. I would have thought by 2007, the Chaser team might have realised that women do function in public as more than their husband's side kicks.

Secondly, I take issue with Julian Morrow's version of me speaking over him as he tried to ask his question. My recollection is somewhat different. At first, I continued to watch silently as Julian Morrow interrupted an otherwise ordered and professional discussion. As he continued to speak against the

wishes of the MC – something that does not happen at Sydney Institute functions which run smoothly for the benefit of speaker and audience – I saw Julian Morrow hold up, and for the Chaser camera only, a sign saying “Fuck Hicks”. At that point, as the sign was waved madly in the air, I interjected in a voice only Morrow and those near me would hear, “Why don’t you; we don’t want to.” An obvious reference to the words on the sign. I said this a couple of times and then gave it away. By then the Chaser team had taken proceedings to such a disruptive level, it wasn’t worth the breath. Even Julian Morrow admits, in the above, that he had to leave before the proceedings could resume.

It doesn’t take too much imagination to know that the sign “Fuck Hicks” was meant to be inserted into the Chaser program at a time where it would be implied that this was what the US Ambassador felt about Hicks. My interjections probably made that part of the footage unusable in unedited form. But, as you know, the Chaser team edited out my comments and gave a false impression. As a taxpayer, I would rather my eight cents a day be better used.

Yours sincerely

Anne Henderson
Deputy Director
The Sydney Institute

CC Senator The Hon Helen Coonan; Maurice Newman AC, Chairman ABC;
Kirstin McLiesh

Letter to Anne Henderson from Kirstin McLiesh – Written on behalf of Mark Scott

Dear Ms Henderson,

Thank you for your email. The Managing Director has asked me to respond on his behalf.

Please be assured that your comments have been noted and your views on the conduct of the Chaser team have been conveyed to the relevant staff.

Yours sincerely,

Kirstin McLiesh
Head, Audience & Consumer Affairs

Letter to Kirstin McLiesh from Gerard Henderson – 7 June 2007

Dear Ms McLiesh

I refer to your email of 9 May 2007 in response to my email to you of 28 March 2007. I accept your "regret" for "the delay in replying". However, I should point out that your letter of some 790 words took 28 working days (excluding the Easter holidays) to compile. We are all busy – but this works out to fewer than 30 words a day. It is a matter of fact that such a delay by an ABC executive in responding to correspondence has the inevitable result of diluting the immediacy of an issue – to the benefit of ABC presenters and producers who are involved in a dispute.

Background

In your email of 9 May 2007 you wrote that, in preparing your letter, you had regard to my correspondence along with "a response from the Chaser team". You also wrote that you had "viewed footage of US Ambassador Mr Robert McCallum Jr's address to The Sydney Institute on 7 March 2007".

As you will recall, during our phone conversation on 25 May 2007, I asked you precisely what footage you had viewed. You replied that you have viewed two lots of footage – i.e. that taken by *The Chaser* team and that taken by the ABC TV *News/Lateline* crew.

However, in response to my specific questioning, you were not able to advise which parts of your response had come from *The Chaser's* footage and which parts had come from the *News/Lateline* footage. There is a significant point here. As you should be aware, *The Chaser's* executive producer Julian Morrow was miked-up for the occasion. So what would be evident from viewing *The Chaser's* footage would not necessarily be evident from viewing the *News/Lateline* footage. In view of the fact that Mr Morrow was the only person at the event who was miked-up, viewing *The Chaser's* footage would give a distorted view of what took place at The Sydney Institute on 7 March 2007 – in that it would indicate that Mr Morrow's comments were audible when, in fact, this was not the case.

In your letter you wrote: "My viewing of the footage indicates that Mr Morrow did not shout, but that he asked his question at an appropriate volume to enable the Ambassador to hear it". Well, you would say that – if you had viewed *The Chaser's* footage of the miked-up Julian Morrow. But you would not say that if you had only viewed the *News/Lateline* footage. Leigh Sales viewed the latter footage for her report which went to air on ABC TV *News* on 8 March 2007. She told me at the time that Julian Morrow's interruption was so unclear on the *News/Lateline* footage so as to be unusable. The fact is that Mr Morrow's interjections were not audible on the night.

Your Justification For Trespass

In view of the time taken to compile your response, I expected that your reply would be considered and would cover all the points raised in my letter of 28 March 2007. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Your latest letter

confirms my past experience that – as Head, Audience & Consumer Affairs – you essentially rationalise and justify the behaviour of ABC presenters and producers.

I was in North America when your email arrived and had a lot of work to catch up with when I returned to Australia. Consequently, it is only now that I have had the opportunity to make a few points for the record – concerning the omissions and evasions in your letter.

- In my letter of 28 March 2007, I pointed out that your staffer Simon Melkman had written to a certain E. Brian Dillon about, inter alia, *my* actions at The Sydney Institute on 7 March 2007 – without checking my account of the occasion. In other words, Mr Melkman only contacted *The Charter's* executive producer Julian Morrow before completely accepting his interpretation of events. I can only assume, from the fact that you avoid this issue in your response to me, that you regard Mr Melkman's selective approach to "fact-finding" as appropriate.
- In my letter of 28 March 2007, I documented the misleading behaviour of *The Chaser* team in the lead-up to Robert McCallum's address to The Sydney Institute – including an anonymous and deceptive phone-call seeking to elicit information from me about the function before it was gate-crashed. Your letter does acknowledge that there was "earlier contact" by *The Chaser* with me and the Institute – but you then avoid the issue. I can only assume that you regard such misleading behaviour by *The Chaser* as appropriate.
- By effectively ignoring this matter, you are able to avoid the fact that *The Chaser* team was advised by me in advance that the function was booked-out and that the only place available for an ABC camera crew was the one that had been already allocated to the *News/Lateline* crew. Your avoidance makes it possible for you to completely gloss over the fact that Julian Morrow and his cameraman gate-crashed a private function and, in doing so, engaged in an act of trespass on private property. I can only assume that you regard trespass on private property by *The Chaser* as appropriate.
- Your evasion on this issue also enables you to also gloss over precisely why Mr Morrow and his cameraman arrived at the venue *after* the event (which had a 6 pm starting-time) had commenced. The reason why Mr Morrow gate-crashed the function at about 6.10 pm turned on the fact that he knew that he was trespassing and took advantage of the fact that Institute staff at the registration desk had left their post by 6.10 pm. In your letter you rationalise *The Chaser* team's deceptive behaviour.

You also support the comment made earlier by Mr Melkman to the effect that "the crew were [sic] upfront and did not hide their intent to film, nor were they asked to leave at any time". Conveniently, you gloss over the point that – since Mr Morrow deliberately arrived late at the function – I could only have asked *The Chaser* team to leave if I had interrupted Ambassador McCallum's

talk, which was already ten minutes under-way. Once again, you are simply justifying trespass.

- You also gloss-over Mr Melkman's comment that "while Mr Morrow spoke over another person to ask his question, this was no different to what occurs at press conferences all the time". As I pointed out in my letter, Robert McCallum's address to The Sydney Institute – which took place between 6 pm and 7 pm – was *not* a press conference. In fact, the Ambassador did conduct a brief press conference after the conclusion of his address – by which time Julian Morrow had already stormed out of the event. Once again, you simply support Mr Melkman who supported Mr Morrow.
- In your letter you simply repeat Mr Melkman's false assertion that I "refused to let the Ambassador respond to Mr Morrow". As I have previously documented, this statement is completely untrue. Moreover, in spite of your claim that you have viewed the footage of the Ambassador's address, you are not able to support your assertion with any evidence – or with any quotes from me. The fact is that it was impossible to hear Mr Morrow's interruption so the Ambassador was in no position to respond in any detail, even if he had wanted to.
- Despite having viewed the footage, your description of Mr Morrow's behaviour at The Sydney Institute in your letter of 9 May 2007 covers only his comment which accompanied the following sign viz: "David Hicks Is Free". You do not quote any of Mr Morrow's comments which accompanied his showing of *The Chaser* sign which read "Fuck Hicks". In fact, you did not even mention the "Fuck Hicks" sign in your letter. How convenient. How disingenuous.

In view of Audience & Consumer Affairs' habit of uncritically accepting the position of ABC presenters and producers, there is little point in continuing this correspondence. However, I am disturbed by the dexterity with which you are able to assert that Mr Morrow "stood up" when, as you acknowledge, he was already standing.

Moreover, I am genuinely surprised by your support for Mr Morrow's statement, viz: "Gerard basically ran interference on my attempt to ask a question". You support *The Chaser's* executive producer's assertion that I interfered with his comments – despite the fact that Mr Melkman has acknowledged that Mr Morrow "spoke over another person" who already had the call and despite the fact that (as your own letter indicates) even Mr Morrow has acknowledged that his intervention resulted in "disruption". In the face of all the evidence, you support Mr Morrow's grievance that I interrupted him.

In your concluding paragraph you wrote as follows: "I understand the Managing Director has written to you separately about the Chaser's conduct

at this event and responded to your concerns about the merits of the stunt". Mr Scott wrote to me on 12 April 2007. I replied to the ABC managing director on 18 April 2007 expressing concern that, in his letter, he had rationalised the actions of *The Chaser* team in gate-crashing private functions by trespassing on private property. I also drew Mr Scott's attention to a significant factual error in his letter to me – which demonstrated that neither he nor his staff had viewed the footage before writing to me.

I have attached a copy of my letter to Mark Scott for your attention. Mr Scott has not refuted my suggestion that the unintended consequence of his letter to me is to justify trespass. It is not clear to what extent ABC management has examined the legal implications of ABC staff/contractors trespassing on private property – along with the possible breaching of health/safety/welfare provisions which may result from such unlawful activity. It is as if ABC management is oblivious to issues of public liability.

Your Justification For Plagiarism

On another matter. As you are aware, I wrote to the (then) ABC chairman Donald McDonald on 17 November 2006 – concerning your decision to plagiarise *Media Watch* executive producer Peter McEvoy's interpretation of the Victorian Court of Appeal's decision in *R v Thomas (No. 2)* and to present it as your own finding about what was deemed to be my complaint concerning *Media Watch*. Mr McDonald did not reply to my letter. However, Mark Scott wrote to me about this matter on 20 December 2006. On 5 January 2007 I responded to Mr Scott's letter. So far, the ABC managing director has not responded to my letter in writing – although the matter was raised during a conversation on 14 March 2007.

During our phone conversation on 25 May 2005, you claimed that you had read the judgement in *R v Thomas No. 2* before writing to me. I accept your assurance. As indicated, I came to the conclusion that you had not read the decision because – in your email to me dated 25 October 2006 - you did not claim to have read the decision. You wrote to me as follows:

...when I received your complaint I asked Mr McEvoy for his comments. I am obliged to do so under the ABC Editorial Policies. I also watched the programs of 4 September and 28 August and considered the points that you had raised in your correspondence. As the ABC Editorial Policies specifically state in relation to complaints investigated by Audience & Consumer Affairs: "Depending on the complaint, the Audience and Consumer Affairs investigation may involve simply reviewing the complaint and proposed response and judging its reasonableness." In this instance, having reviewed all of the material, I was satisfied that the program's proposed response to your comments was reasonable.

Since you did not claim to have read *R v Thomas No 2* before coming to your conclusion, I assumed that you had not read the case. Also, I did not expect that you would simply copy Peter McEvoy's reply and present it as your own if you had actually read the case in the first place. Obviously, I was mistaken on both counts.

The fact is that any two lawyers would give two somewhat different interpretations as to the obiter – as distinct from the ratio – of any legal decision which they had read. I understand from our discussion that you have not studied law. To this I would simply add that any two reasonably educated non-lawyers would also come to somewhat different interpretations as to the obiter – as distinct from the ratio – of any decision which they had read. In other words, I am not at a loss to explain why you would simply copy Mr McEvoy's interpretation of the reasons for the decision in *R v Thomas No. 2*, and present them as your own, if you had actually read the case.

I do not know what Mr Scott will write when, or if, he answers my letter of 5 January 2007. In response to your questioning during our phone conversation, I should state that – in a conversation last March – the ABC managing director did not accept my word usage that you had “plagiarised” Peter McEvoy's work. However, Mr Scott did acknowledge that your decision to pass-off Peter McEvoy's statement as your own raised important issues of what he termed “transparency” concerning the way in which Audience & Consumer Affairs operates.

As I understand our conversation, the ABC Managing Director felt that, in writing to me on 22 September 2006, you should have indicated that you supported Peter McEvoy's defence of *Media Watch's* position in this instance – rather than put your name to a report which (unbeknown to me at the time) Mr McEvoy had actually written. Hence Mr Scott's apparent concern about Audience & Consumer Affairs lack of transparency in its handling of this matter.

Conclusion

As the written record demonstrates, I did not approach Audience & Consumer Affairs about either *The Chaser* or *Media Watch* matters. My first-hand experience in dealing with you justifies my decision in not lodging complaints with your department. As these two case studies show, Audience & Consumer Affairs seems to specialise in excusing the behaviour of ABC staff. That's all.

Yours sincerely

Gerard Henderson

cc: Mark Scott, Managing Director, ABC; Maurice Newman, Chairman, ABC; Kim Dalton, Director of Television, ABC; Senator The Hon. Helen Coonan, Minister for Communication Technology & the Arts.

Covering Letter to Mark Scott, Maurice Newman, Kim Dalton & Senator Helen Coonan with Copy Of Letter to Kirstin McLiesh (7 June) – 8 June 2007

I've attached a letter which I've written to ABC Audience & Consumer Affairs concerning *The Chaser* and one other matter.

The letter is self-explanatory. However, I remain surprised that ABC management and ABC executives continue to justify trespass on private property without any apparent regard to health/safety/welfare regulations or public liability concerns.

Best wishes. Have a good (long) weekend.

Gerard Henderson

Letter to Gerard Henderson from Kirstin McLiesh – 13 June 2007

Dear Mr Henderson,

I acknowledge receipt of your letter.

Yours sincerely,

Kirstin McLiesh
Head, Audience & Consumer Affairs

* * * *

Mark Scott did not respond to Gerard Henderson's letter of 8 June 2007. Kirstin McLiesh did not respond to Gerard Henderson's letter of 7 June 2007 beyond the one-line acknowledgement printed above.

Until next time.