

# RONIN FILMS

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Kim Dalton  
Head of Television  
ABC TV

Dear Kim,

In reply to your letter of 16 February confirming your decision to withdraw the ABC's offer to acquire HOPE IN A SLINGSHOT, I would like to make a couple of points.

First, I think your decision is based on a mis-reading of the film, which is why I asked for the decision to be re-considered. The film is obviously a pro-peace film about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Half of the film is dedicated to pro-peace, anti-war Israeli viewpoints.

The film is clearly not anti-Israel. It is anti-war.

If you are convinced you need to balance a pro-peace film with a pro-war film, there are many such films around, and we have already suggested one much-awarded film of this type to your programming staff.

But your letter is especially disappointing because of what it means for the free expression of political opinion in this country through national television. (Radio doesn't seem to suffer the same limitations, as a pro-Palestinian, pro-peace programme recently aired on the ABC's Radio National).

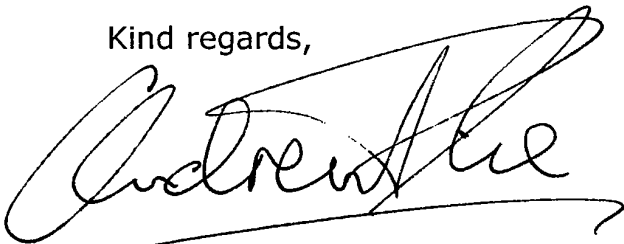
Could I suggest that ABC TV needs to consider ways of allowing opinionated or highly authored documentaries to be shown. On ABC1 or ABC2, could you possibly consider a programming slot, off-peak, that is the equivalent of the "Op Ed" page in most daily newspapers in Australia: a slot in which the ABC could make all the disclaimers it feels it needs to make to be safe from criticism, and which allows filmmakers such as Inka Stafrace (who made HOPE IN A SLINGSHOT) a chance to be heard and seen.

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Such "Op Ed" programmes could be acquisitions and thus low-cost and, by their very nature, would need to be free of the commissioning process. Such a programming slot could accommodate political films like SLINGSHOT but also perhaps documentaries of feature length or highly authored films like the work of David MacDougall (much awarded internationally but never broadcast in his home country).

I offer this idea for you to consider, and live in hope that I can achieve a re-appraisal of HOPE IN A SLINGSHOT.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Pike', with a large, sweeping flourish above the name.

Dr Andrew Pike, OAM

17 May 2010