

Censorship Minister Conroy 'busted' for corrupt dealings

by gan Sunday, Feb 14 2010, 6:17am

international / mass media / commentary

Censorship Minister In \$250m TV Deal Scandal

Didn't we know it from the start! Censorship serves the interests of media corporations that wish to stifle competition from the Internet. With Kevin 'yes Rupert' Rudd as PM and Stephen 'snowing money' Conroy as minister for communications, media moguls have never had it so good! Money is no object, as the mass media is a money machine provided that competition from Internet Independents is managed by very convenient censorship legislation. \$250 million reeks of CORRUPTION -- a FULL INQUIRY is certainly warranted for this overtly corrupt deal -- give us all a break, you servile, incompetent Labor politicians -- pathetic!



Report by Michelle Starr from Smarthouse follows:

The Liberal Party is demanding an explanation from Minister for Communications Stephen Conroy after discovering the Senator went on a skiing trip with Seven Network owner Kerry Stokes just weeks before announcing a massive \$250 million cut to television licence fees.

The handout will cut television licensing fees by 83 per cent over a two-year period. The TV networks paid just under \$300m in licensing fees in the 2008-09 period.

As there are no conditions that the money be used by TV networks for local content, it will go straight to the bottom line of network owners at the expense of Australian taxpayers—in spite of Senator Conroy's assertion that the purpose of the cut was to protect Australian content.

Senator Conroy met with Mr Stokes in Colorado while the Government was considering requests for license fee cuts from the free-to-air networks.

He confirmed the secret meeting with the Sunday Herald Sun, saying that his conduct was "entirely appropriate". Both Senator Conroy and Mr Stokes refuse to say what was discussed.

The discovery of this meeting comes hard on the heels of the controversy over the appointment of Mike Kaiser as the head of the National Broadband Network on a \$450,000 salary. He was appointed

on Senator Conroy's recommendation. The position was not advertised, nor were any other candidates considered, it was discovered at a Senate hearing last week.

Opposition frontbencher Christopher Pyne says that the Colorado meeting is not as big a concern as Senator Conroy's portfolio performance.

"The actual visit and the skiing with Kerry Stokes is not nearly as important as exactly what is going on with the communications portfolio with this minister," Mr Pyne ABC's Insiders.

"The Minister seems to be the minister for good times.

"He's got a \$450,000 job for an old mate in the National Broadband Network. A \$17 million tender for National Broadband Network which ended up going absolutely nowhere and has just lost money ... He's given \$250 million to the commercial television networks.

"He hasn't yet said how he arrived at the figure, what exactly the money is to be used for, and what guarantees he's received from the commercial networks that it will be used for something that the public will see the benefit [in]," Mr Pyne said.

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