

The Politics of Oz Internet Censorship

by Kismo *Thursday, Aug 5 2010, 10:46pm*

national / mass media / commentary

Even demented Oz analysts and commentators (mostly employed by the mass media) would have advised that imposing a [retrogressive 50's policy](#) in 21st century Australia -- mandatory information censorship -- would be suicidal for any political party stupid enough to attempt to implement it. But that FACT was and REMAINS lost on the incumbent, inept, policy failed, Labor Party.

Recall early-doors [Julia 'Joe Stalin' Gillard's](#) attempts to implement snooping into employees personal emails by their voyeuristic Corporate bosses or worse, untrustworthy internal IT 'security' personnel, the stench of totalitarianism forced the public to recoil in horror and the policy was quickly abandoned BUT NOT FORGOTTEN by the guardians of DEMOCRACY and FREE SPEECH in Australia.

Of course there are no secrets regarding whose interests would have been served by the proposed censorship policies, Rupert Murdoch and 'let's go skiing' Kerry Stokes. Those clowns imagine they shape public opinion and rule the country by placing puppet prime ministers in Office, a bitter lesson soon to be demonstrated by mass media support for the preferred slave PM in the final week before the elections!

Notwithstanding the above, what we are clearly faced with in Labor is an autocratic, paternalistic BUT servile to the most undemocratic, vile interests on the planet, Rupert 'CFR' Murdoch and his oligarch cohorts in CRIME.

In an odd twist of traditional ideologies but perhaps re-enforcing the view that politics today is not about ideology but opportunism, the Oz conservative party has taken up the baton of liberalism and free speech and denounced the plan to censor the Internet - it will not do their cause any harm in this information-loving culture.

The bereft Labor Party is deservedly left, you guessed it, B-E-R-E-F-T of any positive, constructive policies to run with - instead it carries a first term (stench) history as the most policy failed, incompetent, paternalistic government the nation has ever known.

Report on conservative party announcement follows:

Libs filter decision applauded

by Fran Foo

THE Liberals have finally spoken and it's music to most internet users' ears.

Joe Hockey's public denunciation of Labor's controversial mandatory ISP filtering plan late yesterday was warmly welcomed by the Greens and others.

The opposition treasury spokesman late yesterday told ABC Radio's Triple J that if elected the Coalition would scrap the filter scheme.

But even if Labor won the August 21 poll, the Coalition would not back the filter legislation.

Mr Hockey said the policy was flawed and the technology doesn't work.

An Abbott government is likely to reintroduce NetAlert, a Howard-era program that offered parents free internet filtering software.

Greens communications spokesman Scott Ludlam said the Liberal party should be congratulated for finally declaring its hand.

The Nationals had previously stated they would not support Labor's plan.

"The decision belongs to the huge number of people who contributed to a tenacious, self-organised campaign that stretched from online civil libertarians all the way up to the US State Department," Senator Ludlam said.

"The ALP should drop the censorship proposal rather than fighting what now looks inevitable.

"The Greens will work with any party in the parliament on constructive cyber safety proposals. At last that debate can start properly," Senator Ludlam said.

Influential lobby group GetUp declared the filter "dead, buried and cremated".

"Regardless of who forms the next government, we know that mandatory internet filter legislation won't pass Parliament, with the Coalition, the Greens and independent Nick Xenophon all opposed to it," GetUp national director Simon Sheikh said.

Mr Sheikh said the internet filter was "quashed by a huge and concerted online campaign", which he described as "probably the biggest Australia has ever seen".

"We're not just talking about a small group of tech-savvy campaigners," he said. "Over 127,000 Australians joined GetUp's petition against internet filtering, and 70 per cent of them are parents and grandparents."

Mr Sheikh urged Labor to redirect funds for internet filtering to online safety education programs for students and parents, and to the Australian Federal Police.

"We all want to protect kids online; it's just a debate about how to best do that," he said. "Filtering the internet just doesn't work, and now the policy is dead, buried and cremated.

"The government should now use that money to invest in education and police instead."

GetUp was not alone in its crusade against the filter proposal.

"This was a coalition campaign including groups as diverse as Save the Children, Australian Lawyers Alliance, National Arts and Culture Alliance, human rights groups including Amnesty Australia and online activists like Electronic Frontiers Australia. Everyone will be celebrating today," Mr Sheikh said.

Labor wants ISPs to block refused classification (RC) web pages on a secret government blacklist but the policy has hit several roadblocks since first pledged in the 2007 election.

In early July Communications Minister Stephen Conroy ordered a year-long review into RC processes and said the filter legislation would not be introduced until the review was completed.

The government has always said it would that at least 12 months after the passage of legislation to implement the filtering scheme.

If Labor is re-elected, ISPs will be forced to start blocking RC content from 2012.

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