

MEDIA RELEASE



The Hon **David Hawker** MP
Federal Member for Wannon



11 November 2009

CANBERRA CALLING

It's confirmed. Kevin Rudd is Australia's most over-sensitive and controlling Prime Minister ever.

Rather than deal with the numerous problems of his own creation, Prime Minister Rudd is now using taxpayer's funds to shut down any criticism of his Government.

He has created a taxpayer funded government censorship bureau to silence Opposition MPs from communicating with their constituents about his government's reckless spending, border protection chaos and other muck ups.

Prime Minister Rudd's censorship bureau has so far prevented the Opposition from using words such as "disgraceful", "reckless" and "inept" in letters to constituents about Labor policies.

I have even had a local newsletter article disapproved because I directly quoted a Labor-dominated Victorian Government Parliamentary Committee report which was critical of Rudd's city-centric Youth Allowance changes!

Prime Minister Rudd obviously does not want Pyrenees residents to be reminded of the consequences of his own failed softer border protection policies and realising you'll pay higher interest rates because of Labor's reckless spending, but this sort of Government censorship is beyond belief in a democratic country.

At the very least the Prime Minister should ensure that Labor Ministers play by the same rules that apply to backbenchers when it comes to entitlements.

In Australia, we believe in the 'rule of law' – one rule for everyone, irrespective of status or rank.

Yet under the new entitlements rules, while Coalition, independent and minor party MPs are prevented from criticising government policy, Government Ministers are able to openly attack them.

The new rules:

- Prohibit strong criticism of the government and its policies;
- Mean that Labor Ministers could get access to draft Coalition, independent and minor party material before it is even published;
- Will not allow even for the posting of a Hansard to a constituent, if the Hansard contains strong criticism of the Government or its policies!

If Prime Minister Rudd feels these ridiculous rules are fair for backbenchers, then he should have to apply them equally to his own Ministers and their departmental resources.

- ENDS -

Media contact: Jane Templeton (03) 5572 1100

The Hon **David Hawker** MP Federal Member for Wannon

Hamilton Office 190 Gray St, HAMILTON VIC 3300 **Warrnambool Office** 73 Kepler St WARRNAMBOOL VIC 3280

Freecall 1300 131 692 **E** David.Hawker.MP@aph.gov.au **W** www.davidhawker.com.au