



MEDIA RELEASE

Euthanasia Group to black out website in Australia Day Internet Protest

Voluntary Euthanasia group, Exit International, headed by Dr Philip Nitschke will join Electronic Frontiers Australia for their Australia Day Blackout of the Internet (see <http://www.internetblackout.com.au/>).

As Australia's No. 1 ranked Voluntary Euthanasia website (based on website rankings week beginning 11 Jan 2010), <http://www.exitinternational.net> will be voluntarily taken off the air as part of the national campaign protesting the Government's mandatory Internet censorship plans.

"The Clean Feed is a joke. I see little evidence that this plan has anything to do with child pornography. Rather, it is about silencing any range of moral issues with which the Government takes issue. The history of VE in Australia shows that we are right in Government's firing line.

The concept of the Internet Blackout is to show Australians how websites will look and feel once the Government passes its Clean Feed legislation (tipped for debate in August 2010).

Exit International says that in blacking their site out, it hopes its members and the general public will be outraged by this government intrusion into the very private issue of dying well.

"It is a fact of life that as people age, they want information about how to die the most peaceful and dignified way possible. They might not ever use this information but they want to know what to do, should the need ever arise. Preventing rational adults access to such information is not only undemocratic but it is inhumane" said Dr Nitschke from Darwin.

While the Minister for 'Clean Feed' Stephen Conroy has been widely reported as only interested in banning material which is already rated RC (refused classification), Dr Nitschke argues that the banning of *The Peaceful Pill Handbook* was an act of political interference on the part of the former Attorney General, Philip Ruddock.

"When *The Peaceful Pill Handbook* was initially published, it was given a 18+ classification which we also believed it warranted. Within a month and on appeal from the Attorney General and Right to Life, the *Handbook* was banned.

"The Classification Review Board is housed within the Attorney General's department. There is no independent umpire. The issue of censorship in this country is about a lot more than the Internet. It is about the role and ability of Government to silence those with whom they disagree.

"This is not the Australia that we should be celebrating on Australia Day 2010".

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