

Senator IAN MACDONALD (Queensland) (5.52 pm)—I will start my contribution on this matter of public importance by, strangely enough, agreeing with just one thing that Senator Forshaw said—that is, what a fantastic organisation the CSIRO is and has been for a long period of time since it was set up by a Liberal government in years gone by. They do some very good scientific work. It is pretty clear, and many of my colleagues from all sides in this debate have pointed this out, how under this government a lot of scientific work has become subject to either direct or indirect censorship. The indirect censorship is of course the wink and the nod from a minister in charge, like Senator Carr, who is often humourously called ‘Red Kim’ from the politburo. He is known for his very extreme left-wing views. The thought going around, as my colleagues have mentioned, is that Senator Carr, the relevant minister, makes it clear that if any researcher wants money then they had better make sure that they are toeing the government line.

The instance that has been raised of Dr Clive Spash is a case in point. Perhaps Senator Forshaw was correct when he said there was no directive issued by the minister, but any bureaucrat, any administrator of CSIRO, would know that promoting someone who has a different view to that of the government, whether it is a view I agree with or not, means that research funds might dry up and means that, in one way or another, the organisation may be penalised. Any of those who have followed Senator Carr's history, and I could perhaps talk about the Victorian Right in the old days, would know that when Senator Carr wants to get into bullying mode he is a pretty formidable opponent. I guess that is why the Right in Victoria have now folded in with him—rather than trying to bully each other they have got together.

Senator Jacinta Collins interjecting—

Senator IAN MACDONALD—Sorry, Senator Collins, it is a different right in Victoria, is it? You would know what it is all about. This debate is about censorship, specifically of the CSIRO. As my colleagues have quite clearly pointed out, this government make censorship one of its platforms. We know that in the Labor Party—and this is a case of no names, no pack drill—there are one or two senators who are totally opposed to an emissions trading scheme. But dare they so much as mumble a word in this chamber about their opposition to the emissions trading scheme and they will be kicked out of the Labor Party.

We know that the last person who chose to disagree with the Labor Party was then Senator Shayne Murphy. He had a different view. He did not like what the Labor Party was doing in his home state of Tasmania, and he said so. He voted against something that was particularly contrary to his beliefs and against what he thought was right for his constituency. As a result of that he was ex-

elled from the Labor Party, because the Labor Party is all about control and censorship. You cannot say what you like; you have to say what the view of the heavies at the top is—in this case Mr Rudd. And if you are brave enough to have a view that is not to Mr Rudd's liking then you will not be in the Labor Party for very long. That is what this is all about. As one of my colleagues mentioned, this has come through in the recent directive from Mr Rudd, administered I think somewhat reluctantly by Minister Ludwig, to try and say that if anyone in this chamber wants to write something in a newsletter or in a dispatch or wants to send material to a constituent then they have to run it by the ALP censorship regime. If you do not allow your material to be censored then you could be in a lot of trouble. According to the Labor Party, I could not, for example, send out to my constituents a copy of the speech that I am giving now because it would be treated as being critical of the government. I cannot post material out with a postage stamp provided as part of my means of operating if it is deemed by the government censor to be electioneering or a political campaign.

We all know the Labor Party cannot manage money but it is also becoming increasingly obvious—with this example in CSIRO that we are talking about, in relation to communication between members of parliament and their constituents, and in relation to holding back their own members from having a view contrary to that of Mr Rudd—that the Labor Party is all about control. It is all about censorship. It is all about keeping the thoughts of all of us pure, and that means in line with Mr Rudd's view of the world. The debate before us at the moment on the Rudd government's censorship of CSIRO is just the latest example of how Mr Rudd tries to manipulate public opinion and indeed the opinion of scientists and politicians.

The ACTING DEPUTY PRESIDENT
(Senator Ryan)—Order! The discussion on
the matter of public importance has con-
cluded.