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ACMA SHOULD BE SHUT DOWN: FREEDOM OF SPEECH UNDER THREAT

“The Australian Communications and Media Authority is a threat to freedom of speech and should be shut down,” said Chris Berg, Research Fellow with the Institute of Public Affairs, a free market think tank.

“ACMA’s finding against Alan Jones today shows that the regulator is being used for political purposes to attack conservative views.”

The communications regulator found that Alan Jones breached the Commercial Radio Codes of Practice by not making “reasonable efforts” to “present significant viewpoints”.

The investigation was in response to a complaint that the broadcaster described bureaucrats from the NSW Department of Environment as “scumbags that run around preying on productive people”.

“This is an obviously political attack on freedom of speech. It is not up to the government to decide what viewpoints should be broadcast on political matters and in what quantity,” said Mr Berg.

“2GB is a private company and Alan Jones is a private individual. They should not be forced by the government to air views they disagree with.

“Freedom of speech also means freedom not to speak.”

The Federal Government’s Independent Media Inquiry is investigating the possibility of enforcing similar regulations on newspapers.

“This recent finding against Alan Jones underscores how threatening to freedom of speech forcing ‘balance’ can be.

“ACMA’s remaining powers managing the broadcast spectrum should be handed to the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy. The regulator should then be shut down,” said Mr Berg.

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