












Computer Hacking In NSW Parliament 2001

by Dr Amy McGrath - 26 September 2001

Sequence of events

	The staff of Hon. T. Kelly, Deputy President of the NSW Legislative Council, Chairman of Committees and leader of Country Labor, informed the IT staff of NSW Parliament House of a machine fault in his computer on July 24, 2001. The Hon. Meredith Burgman, President of the Council was slow to act.
	The IT staff, finding Kelly's computer had files from the computer of Charles Lynn, secretary of the Opposition's shadow Cabinet, which carried a range of confidential Liberal Party matters, informed the Clerk of the House next day.
	Kelly said he would not know the first thing about hacking, but stepped aside. Mrs Chikarovski, leader of the Opposition complained they had been surprised how ready the government was for particular questions in question time.
	Mr Carr's spokeswoman confirmed Mr Carr had used a confidential hard copy Opposition memo and e-mail in question time on May 31.
	Kelly admitted training as a computer programmer in 4 languages 1974-85 while computer manager at the Wellington Council, and holding the position of chairman of the Parliament's technology advisory group; and that his son, John had often used his computer in Parliament House.
	Kelly's son, John, a top computer studies student in year 12, works for barrister Ron Hoenig, Mayor of Botany, who defended Mekong Club barman ALP member Duy Dinh, in the John Newman assassination trial.
	An independent IT report by Melbourne firm eSec found a number of computer programs and games had been loaded on the computer on weekends and in the early hours; and that unauthorised "password-sniffing" LANguard software had been installed and used several times to launch computer scans. However Mr. Lynn's name and computer IP address had been "accidentally put on the computer" by IT staff.
	Andrew Tuny, managing director of eSec. said "there has been a tremendous expansion in the number and sophistication of hacking software available on the internet." (SMH 9-Aug-2001)
	A computer industry magazine said Parliamentary staff were warned two years ago hacking would occur unless security was drastically improved. (SMH 9-Aug-2001)
	Premier Carr delayed handing over other computers to the police Computer Crime Agency as under parliamentary privilege. Sceptics say the delay would enable anyone else to wipe out any evidence of sharp practice.
	Mrs Chikarovski, Leader of the Opposition, and Mr Lynn, said investigations had raised more questions than they answered. The police report said "questions remain over how opposition files got into Mr Kelly's computer."