LEADER OF THE BANNED

Rudd wants to see big cash taps turned off

SHARRI MARKSON

UNION and corporate donations should be banned, former Labor prime minister Kevin Rudd says, to prevent corruption in the political process.

In the wake of the recent US presidential election, Mr Rudd said Malcolm Turnbull needed to undertake radical donation reform where union and corporate donations were banned, individual donations were capped at $1000 and there was a cap on how much could be spent at an election which instead should be publicly funded.

"The truth is corporate donations, if you look at what's happened in the United States, ultimately corrupt the politics of a country and we have an opportunity now to do something radical about it," said Mr Rudd (pictured) in an exclusive interview with *The Courier-Mail.*

"I would strongly urge Turnbull to consider this Canadian reform.

"The Canadians brought on campaign finance reform in the early days of the Harper conservative government and the Canadian reforms essentially abolish corporate finance for donations to political parties, impose a cap on how much an individual can donate and most critically impose a cap on the total amount that can be spent nationally and within each Canadian electoral district for each national campaign."

Mr Rudd's comments go further than Opposition Leader Bill Shorten's call this week to ban foreign donations.

His remarks are likely to irritate Labor which relies heavily on donations from the union movement.

Mr Rudd criticised Mr Turnbull's decision in opposition to vote against political reform which would have capped individual donations at $1000.

"Turnbull could have changed the face of Australian politics nearly 10 years ago had he had the guts to back my government's legislation for political reform then," Mr Rudd said.

"Had we done that then, then you would have had a fairer and transparent system of campaign donations in this country than we currently have including reducing this ridiculous $10,000 limit down to $1000."