

Rear Window

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Bonding over booze snooze

Rear Window has previously pointed out the subliminal role played by one Stokes, Kerry Stokes, in the latest James Bond flick Skyfall. But it's not only product placement we need to keep an eye out for. Just ask Australia's own Dr No, Mike Daube, whose self-starting Alcohol Advertising Review Board has received a complaint from one Manuka movie-goer in the nation's capital. Apparently they were unhappy about an ad for the beer Corona which screened before the Bond film, rated M, and showed a couple of Rastafarians enjoying a quiet frothie and presumably just seeking a Quantum of Solace after a nice surf. Never one to Live and Let Die, Daube's code requires that alcohol ads are only shown before films rated R18+ (mainly soft porn, right?). Seems patently absurd given

you could doze through three-quarters of the iniquitous **Sam Mendes** blockbuster and still see Bond necking Heinekens (on which the cameras shamelessly linger), shooting nips of Macallan whisky with M and getting out of his mind at a beach bar on tequila, where he even played a drinking game involving a scorpion.

If Daube had any sense he'd see that the greatest alcohol-related risk these films pose to minors is them leaving the cinema wrongly believing there's anything couth about ordering a shaken martini (I knew the truth on that one before I was old enough to see *Toy Story 2* unaccompanied).

Is the way forward to make all Bond films adults only to meet the AARB standard? We can all attend in dark glasses and trenchcoats.

Stokes Ita-mised

count ACT Chief Minister Katy Gallagher (which

The woman

Michele Flournoy could, in coming weeks, be named America's first female defence secretary. And she says a devolved model of leadership is the new nature of a world superpower, writes **Tony Walker**.

ichèle Flournoy laughs when you ask whether she is on a fact-finding mission to Australia before her appointment as US secretary of defence, one of three great departments of state in America's government, the others being Treasury and the State Department.

The question has a serious intent. Flournoy is reportedly on a final shortlist to replace Leon Panetta, who wants to return to his walnut farm in California, as the first female defence secretary in US history. Others in the reckoning include former Nebraska senator Chuck Hagel, a Vietnam veteran, and Ashton Carter, now No. 2 at the Pentagon.

US President Barack Obama is considering new appointees for his second administration, including a replacement for Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

Senator John Kerry, also a Vietnam veteran, is in the mix for both State and Defence, but there are concerns about a Senate vacancy in Massachusetts, where Democrats could not be certain of holding Kerry's seat should he join the cabinet.

All this seems a long way from the Hyatt Hotel in Canberra, where a jet-lagged Flournoy, now working for Boston Consulting Group, is talking over scones and cream about US-Australia relations, the rise of China, a rebalancing of US forces in the Asia-Pacific region, and American decline —

still unmatched by any measure," she says.

Flournoy then refers approvingly to Foreign Minister Bob Carr's observation that the US is "one budget deal" from getting on top of its economic problems.

This might be a bit of a stretch, but US officials — or former officials in Flournoy's case — are nothing if not optimists when it comes to assessing the future in the way that committed sales people tend to emphasise the positive at the expense of the negative.

"I really believe, once we get a budget deal, you will see an unlocking of the American economy," she says. "There's so much cash on the balance sheets of corporations. Once we get a budget deal and predictability the floodgates will open and you will see the economic recovery really take off and the narrative of decline will fade very quickly."

Well maybe, but Flournoy would also admit that the world is changing in ways that are shifting the strategic calculus for countries such as Australia, that are linked to the US by alliance arrangements but face the reality of the rise of a competing superpower.

"The nature of what it means to be a superpower is changing," she says. "American strategy, certainly under this administration, has understood that and it is wielding American power in a way that I think is the right way to lead in the 21st century.

"You need not just to be out front and alone. You lead in a way that enables others to join and make common cause with you and