



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Windsor invites Alston to do his own Telstra Survey

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor has invited the Minister for Communications, Senator the Hon Richard Alston to conduct his own survey of the people of the New England electorate to gauge the level of feeling on the full sale of Telstra following an angry 2 page media release criticising the survey Mr Windsor is currently undertaking on the issue. Mr Windsor has also issued a challenge to Senator Alston to debate the issue in any forum.

“If Senator Alston doesn’t like the wording of my survey, then I invite him to do his own survey of the people of the New England electorate.

Senator Alston has the resources to undertake the task and I would encourage him to do it.

What’s he got to be afraid of ? – finding out what the people want!

That’s what democracy is all about – finding out what the people want and representing their views in the Parliament and I challenge Senator Alston to debate the issue in any forum,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor says Senator Alston’s comments in his release actually reinforce his argument against the full sale of Telstra.

“The good Senator keeps referring to legislation being able to guarantee in law the future actions of a fully privatised Telstra.

His comments are at odds with that of his Prime Minister who has stated that one Parliament CANNOT constitutionally bind any future Government.

So the only way to safeguard future services in the country is to have it maintained in majority Government ownership and that is what my survey is telling me in overwhelming numbers,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor believes Senator Alston’s release is typical of his arrogant view of country Australians best illustrated in a story in the Canberra Times on 15th July wherein it says “... Senator Alston said key National Party officials now saw the sale of Telstra as inevitable...” The story went on to quote Senator Alston saying, “You’ve now got the Federal president Helen Dickie also indicating that she thinks that privatisation is inevitable..... Whilst I’m sure there’ll still continue to be pockets of resistance, I think overwhelmingly, sentiment in the joint party room, and that was both Liberals and National Party members, who of course represent pretty much all of the rural seats around Australia, was that service levels have improved out of sight.”

“As of this morning nearly 5,000 people have replied to my survey with only 101 wanting the Government to proceed to full privatisation.

That’s a pretty big pocket of resistance Senator Alston!

If you don’t believe me or like my wording find out for yourself,” Mr Windsor said.

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