



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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MEDIA RELEASE

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When's A Party Not A Party? Despite The Name Change Nothing Has Changed

The Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor, has responded to the attack launched by the National Party on independents at the Federal meeting of the National Party last week.

Mr Windsor said it was no wonder the electorate was more confused than ever about the direction of the National Party with so many contradictory messages coming from the various MP's and representatives of the Party.

"This is the Party that says you have to be in a party to achieve anything in politics yet it removed the word 'Party' from its name," Mr Windsor said.

"This is the Party that says it will listen to country people and have more spending on infrastructure but when it comes to Telstra they don't want to hear what country people are saying and have voted to sell the remainder of Telstra."

"This is the party lead by John Anderson who said at the national conference that he would welcome a full-blown debate on Telstra yet he refused the opportunity to speak in Parliament in the recent debate on the full privatisation of Telstra."

"This is the Party that still says to regional people that it won't sell Telstra until all services are up to scratch and yet it has already agreed to the sale of Telstra with no provisions other than an Independent review process with a 'response' from government guaranteed. Talk about putting the cart before the horse."

"This is the Party that says it does not want to be called a party. As stated at their conference, it is the Party that wants to be represented by local people concerned about local issues. If that not an strong endorsement of for independents then I don't know what is!"

"This is the Party that says the Telstra legislation guarantees a country presence for Telstra into the future. Then admits to the Senate Inquiry that a regional presence is at the discretion of the minister of the day and that in theory a regional presence for Telstra could mean as little as one regional shop in Gundagai and one technician in Kalgoorlie."

"The Nationals, whoever they may be, remain lost still searching for their own regional presence," Mr Windsor concluded.

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