



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Media Release

10 August 2005

Barnaby won't be isolated because he represents his people

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor believes that new National Party Senator Barnaby Joyce won't be isolated in the Parliament because his pro-country stance represents his people.

Mr Windsor was referring to Senator Joyce's first joint party room meeting in Canberra where it is reported that he was given 'advice' by the Prime Minister and others about toeing the party line with the Prime Minister's comment, "Whatever affiliations you have, your first loyalty is to this party room."

Having recently spent some time in Queensland, Mr Windsor believes Senator Joyce's position is well supported.

"Senator Joyce is the only National Party Member of Parliament articulating the real views of country people and if he continues down this path, he will never be isolated by those who matter most, the people of Queensland who voted him into the Senate.

The rest of the National Party MPs, including their new Liberal commission man, Mark Vaile are searching for snake oil electoral bribes to con country people and country people are seeing through this sleight of hand strategy," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor congratulated Senator Joyce for embracing the constitutional reason for having a Senate – that of representing the State that has elected him.

"I congratulate Senator Joyce on his stance and urge him to maintain his integrity on issues such as Telstra, Voluntary Student Unionism and renewable energy and ignore the sell-out merchants like Bill Heffernan and Ian Causley.

Senator Joyce is articulating what country Australians are saying and he deserves support from those he represents not vitriol from his colleagues who get elected on the back of country votes and then arrogantly ignore their interests," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor believes media reports suggesting the Prime Minister's strategy for dealing with Senator Joyce 'is to remind the Nationals that they do not have clout with voters' could have the opposite effect.

"The Nationals may not have clout with voters at the moment because the Nationals have continually rolled over on issues that have had a detrimental effect on country people particularly related to the embracing of National Competition Policy and industry deregulation.

The Nationals only hope for survival is for more of them to behave in the manner Senator Joyce is signalling and truly stand up for country people on policy issues rather than rollover again for trinkets," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor is calling this Parliament, the "No excuses" Parliament because there is no excuse now for poor country policy.

"The National party can't blame the Greens or the Democrats for policy positions as they have in the past.

There are NO excuses in this Parliament.

Senator Joyce has recognised this and I will support him in his stance," Mr Windsor said.

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