



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Barnaby sells out Telstra AND country people after 1 week in Senate Nationals not only prepared to offer bribes but accept them as well as

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor is disappointed but not surprised that new National Party Senator Barnaby Joyce has rolled over on the full sale of Telstra.

“I was hopeful that at last the National Party had someone with some spine to truly stand up for country people but how wrong could I have been.

After just one week of the new Parliament, Senator Joyce has rolled over and accepted a bribe and then has the audacity to claim it as a victory for country people despite indisputable polls showing people don't want Telstra sold.

It just shows that the Nationals are not only prepared to offer bribes but accept them as well.

Senator Joyce can gloss it up however he likes about his support for the full sale of Telstra but when it is all boiled down, he is a total hypocrite and should not be trusted on any other issue that he holds out as being tough on – the Liberals have his measure now and will play him as they do the other Nationals.

People should now see through Senator Joyce's tough talking as just being the same rhetoric of the other spineless Nationals as they have already voted three times to sell off Telstra despite their constituents telling them clearly that they don't want it sold.

Senator Joyce will become another Ron Boswell – big when he's out in the electorate but a Liberal poodle in Canberra.

It's no wonder Boswell didn't say that he would cross the floor,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor's support of Senator Joyce only last week in the face of heavy pressure from the Coalition Party room has changed to one of total distrust.

“Senator Joyce was copping a lot of flak for his position on Telstra, VSU and Industrial Relations and I, like many others thought this bloke might have had what it took to really make a difference for country people in the new Government controlled Parliament.

Unfortunately Senator Joyce, with his rollover on Telstra, has gone from being the Nats Messiah to a Judas goat.

Country Australians have been looking for political representation that will express their views in the Parliament not bring home the Government's message to them and tell them that this is the best we could do for you when they know in their hearts that they've rolled over again and justifying their position by pointing to a bucket of money.

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30 pieces of silver is now worth \$30 billion and the National Party should be condemned for their acceptance of such a sellout.

Only last week, I said, '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.

Well it turns out that that is all Senator Joyce was doing - articulating the real views of country people but when crunch time came, Senator Joyce hasn't converted articulation into true representation," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor again points to the new Telstra CEO Sol Trujillo's seeking of \$5 billion only last week to upgrade Telstra infrastructure as an admission that country telecommunication services are in need of immediate attention in a big way as a result of a lack of re-investment since the Government decided to sell Telstra to reduce Government debt.

"Last week Senator Joyce wanted expert input into the real figure it would cost to improve telecommunication services in the country up to parity of price and parity of service and to do anything without this expert input makes a mockery of any deal that may be done.

The closest thing to expert input so far is from new Telstra CEO Sol Trujillo who last week put a plan to the Government requesting a \$5 billion upgrade program which is a long way above the \$1 billion injection plus \$100 million per year from a trust fund of \$2 billion that is now on the table.

At that rate, the rate that the National Party is saying is now acceptable to them, it will take 40 years to reach what Mr Trujillo is saying is needed now and this doesn't take into account any access to new technology rollout in the future.

Telstra generated \$2.2 billion for the Government in the year just gone so it's not as though the Government doesn't have the ability to reinvest its share of the profits back into upgrading the service and even if it only put back the 40% share of this profit – the share for the 7 million Australians that the National Party purports to represent – then this is still \$880 million per year that could be utilised and Telstra would not need to be sold at all," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor believes that any future tough talking by the National Party can't be trusted.

"Country people should be very wary of trusting any future tough talking because at the end of the day, the junior Coalition partner, the National Party will always sellout their constituents and whilst they may not be isolated in the halls of Parliament, I hope that country people will see the National Party for what they are, - sellout merchants and therefore isolate them in their seats and rid them at the next election.

The full sale of Telstra will become the National's version of the Democrats GST.

The National Party only have to look at the Democrats decline after doing a deal to see the introduction of the GST to see what happens to those who sellout their constituents and I will certainly be reminding country Australians about the National Party's sellout on Telstra at the next election," Mr Windsor said.