



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

TONY WINDSOR MP
INDEPENDENT
FEDERAL MEMBER FOR NEW ENGLAND

Shop 5
259 Peel Street
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

All Mail: PO Box 963
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

Ph: (02) 6761 3080
Toll Free: 1300 301 839
Fax: (02) 6761 3380
e-mail: Tony.Windsor.MP@aph.gov.au
Web Page: www.tonywindsor.com.au

MEDIA RELEASE

10 September 2008

‘Noodle Nationals’ criticism opens up serious debate

Independent Member for New England Tony Windsor has thanked Nationals Senator John Williams for fuelling the debate on the serious problem of regional representation and delivering the best outcomes for regional Australia.

Mr Windsor said the failure to deliver the best possible outcomes for the bush is why the Nationals continue to lose seats. He believes the answer to stopping the rot lays in comments by WA National leader Brendon Grylls on the ABC 7:30 Report last Monday night.

KERRY O'BRIEN: 'You keep talking about the new Nationals. What is the message you identify for National Party officials, and MP's, and machine, on the east coast?'

BRENDON GRYLLS: Very simple; community first. The community before the party, the community before the positions of office or ministerial positions - Back the community.

The message that I've got loud and clear is that country people have felt disenfranchised from government of persuasions, coalition government or Labor Government.

They feel they haven't been getting a fair share, the Nationals campaigned that we would put them first, that we would try to get into the political arena to deliver them an outcome, and we've been overwhelmed by the support they've given me.'

“Mr Grylls is right when he put ‘community before the party, the community before the positions of office or ministerial positions.’

The trappings of office and the loss of the spoils has made the Nationals in coalition frightened and in doing so they have turned their backs, not only on rural and regional constituents but the members of the their own party.

“They went missing in action with the US Free Trade Agreement and their own Senator Barnaby Joyce sold out country people with his vote to sell Telstra. The Nationals presided over 10 interest rate rises in a row and did nothing in solving the nation’s water crisis. The ‘weapons for wheat’ scandal was on their watch along with the equine influenza outbreak and somewhere near Goondiwindi there is single stake driven in the ground by then Nationals leader John Anderson for the new inland rail. It’s rusting and he’s gone, along with their next leader Mark Vaile and former Minister Peter McGauran,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor said all energies should be directed in ensuring that both the Federal and NSW Government have got the message about better regional representation.

“Independents will continue to take seats away from the parties because the community knows who really is fighting for them. It doesn’t matter who is in government, Independents have only one master.....the community.

If Senator Williams takes issue with what I’ve said he should revisit what he said about the Western Australian ‘Independent’ Nationals on Monday,” Mr Windsor said.

For further information contact Tony Windsor, Ph (02) 6761 3080 or 0427 66 8868