



**TONY WINDSOR B.Ec MP**  
INDEPENDENT  
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The Editor  
The Northern Daily Leader  
PO Box 525  
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

Dear Sir

The ever erratic Barnaby Joyce's comments relating to the New England Electorate deserve some comment.

Senator Joyce says nothing got done in the New England in terms of infrastructure referring to the recent spending announcements by the Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd. The Ardglen Tunnel project happens to be in the New England Electorate and will receive \$290 million out of the \$1.2 billion announced for NSW. Senator Joyce may be interested to know that I chaired the Murrurundi Tunnel Taskforce in 2006. At that time the Taskforce included Clr Gae Swain - Mayor of Gunnedah, Clr Steve Toms - Mayor of Glen Innes Severn Council, Clr Meryl Dillon - Moree Shire Plains Councillor and Chair New England North West Regional Development Board and Mr Keith Ross - Whitehaven and Werris Creek Coal Mines will join with Clr John Tait - Lord Mayor of Newcastle, Ian Pedersen - Hunter Newcastle Business Chamber Director and Institute of Engineers and Glenn Thornton - Chief Executive Officer - Hunter Newcastle Business Chamber who also acted as co-ordinator of the Taskforce.

The recent Ernst & Young assessment of the Inland Rail concept identified the Hunter/North West/New England as handling 110 million tonnes of freight out of 220 million tonnes in the total Eastern States, which highlights the need to prioritise the upgrade of the Ardglen Tunnel.

Compare this to the much talked about Melbourne Brisbane Rail link which the same report identified as 4.5 million tonnes of potential freight.

Senator Joyce would also be aware that his former colleague, John Anderson, announced the Inland route would go ahead some years ago, but nothing has happened.

Senator Joyce suggests Gunnedah is missing out on infrastructure due to "political motive" and says "what are the political ramifications for not helping this area. Nothing".

Gunnedah is not in the New England Electorate as Barnaby infers. I suggest Senator Joyce take the issue up with his Federal National Party Colleague, Mark Coulton, the Member for Parkes, to ascertain the political motive.

Gunnedah was represented previously by the former Deputy Prime Minister, John Anderson, prior to the seat being abolished due to population decline.

Based on Barnaby's own logic one would have assumed that a Deputy Prime Minister would have had the "muscle" to make these things happen.

Regrettably not the case.

Senator Joyce suggests Tamworth would be an ideal spot for biofuels. I agree, but only recently the Nationals argued that agricultural land should be used for food production, not trees or biofuels.

Erratic and confused, that's Barnaby.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tony Windsor". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a faint, light-colored rectangular stamp.

Tony Windsor MP  
Member for New England