



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

TONY WINDSOR MP
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

MEDIA RELEASE

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O'Farrell's judgement poor and logic flawed

The extraordinary use of the Annual Conference of the Local Government Association in Tamworth this week by the NSW Leader of the Opposition Barry O'Farrell to attack the Independent Member for Tamworth, Peter Draper displays poor judgement and exhibits flawed logic which does not auger well for a potential Premier of NSW according to the Independent Federal Member for New England Tony Windsor.

Mr Windsor believes that choosing this forum to suggest that the Government won't change at the next election unless the seat of Tamworth is won by the Coalition when the audience is all from out of the electorate and wanting to hear what Mr O'Farrell is going to do for Local Government if elected displays very poor judgement.

"On Mr O'Farrell's own logic, he defeats his own argument.

"To suggest that the Government won't change without the seat of Tamworth changing is to say he believes there will be a hung Parliament after the next election with Independents holding the balance of power.

"What a great result for Tamworth!

"There could not be a better result for the Tamworth Electorate.

"Mr O'Farrell was a staffer in the Greiner Government when I was the MP for Tamworth in a hung Parliament.

"He used to come to my office regularly to relay messages from his boss, the Minister for Transport, Bruce Baird.

"Mr O'Farrell would know well that for years the Liberal/National Party and prior to them the Labor Government had promised new police stations, new courthouses, new schools etc and failed to follow through until Tamworth elected an Independent," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor believes that for Mr O'Farrell to suggest a change in Tamworth is required for the 'city's wellbeing' raises judgement issues as well.

"To which city is he referring?"

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“The seat of Tamworth includes other communities outside of Tamworth.

“Is he also suggesting that if the people of Tamworth re-elect Peter Draper and the Coalition win, that they will renege on their commitments.

“Mr O’Farrell should remember the voters of this area don’t respond well politically to blackmail.

“Why would the people of Gunnedah, Nundle, Werris Creek, Kootingal, Moonbi, Bendemeer, Woolomin, Dungowan, Attunga, Manilla, Barraba and Tamworth want to revert to the dark ages of being taken for granted again,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor said that all country electorates can and should aim high but under anyone’s judgement, the Tamworth region is doing particularly well with extraordinary growth in real estate and business activity coupled with many new public facilities.

“The Mayor of Tamworth Regional Council, Clr James Treloar commented recently at a forum that if it wasn’t for outside media reports about the Global Financial Crisis taking place we wouldn’t know about it such is the strength of the area.

“Mr O’Farrell’s judgement over the ‘city’s wellbeing’ is further contradicted by the Local Government Association itself which awarded Tamworth Regional Council the highest accolade in NSW, the Bluett Award.

“Perhaps Mr O’Farrell is suggesting that the LGA got that wrong too.

“Mr O’Farrell demeans the hard work of the various Councils, community groups and others who live in the country (not in the city) to progress their area,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor believes that Mr O’Farrell’s attack on Mr Draper may come back to bite Mr O’Farrell.

“Mr O’Farrell may do well to remember that if his prophecy of a hung Parliament comes true, and Mr Draper’s hard work is rewarded by the people of the Tamworth Electorate, then Mr O’Farrell will have to negotiate with Mr Draper and other Independent MP’s over who will be supported to form Government in NSW.

“The Nationals threw everything at Mr Draper at the last election yet his support from the people of the electorate increased.

“Attacks by Liberal Leader Mr O’Farrell certainly won’t make for friendly negotiations.

“Mr Draper is doing a great job in representing the needs of people and communities large and small and I’m sure that his efforts and results will be recognised and rewarded by the people of the Tamworth Electorate on election day,” Mr Windsor said.