

Tony Windsor MP

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Media Release

17th January 2002

Show sincerity to Regional Forum Report by funding National Equine Centre - Windsor

Federal Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor has said that the real test of the sincerity and integrity of the recently released New England North West Regional Forum Report was the Federal Government's funding of the National Equine Centre.

Mr Windsor said the Equine Centre concept fitted perfectly with all of the guidelines set out in the report delivered to Deputy Prime Minister, John Anderson by Chairman of the Forum, Professor John Chudleigh.

"The \$14M project has the support of all user groups, the local community and Council, the New South Wales State Government, interstate equine and livestock organisations as well as the support of international horse event organisers," Mr Windsor said.

"All that is now required is the Federal Government to fund the final \$3.5M.

The State Government has agreed to its share of \$3.5M. Tamworth City Council has agreed to participate and loan funds have been organised," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor, a member of the Committee set up to assess the feasibility of the National Equine Centre was optimistic that the final funding leg would be met.

"If the rhetoric expressed in the Forum last year and the document as presented to John Anderson stand for anything, the Equine Centre should get the green light.

Mr Windsor urged the Federal Government to expedite its decision making process so the project could proceed as quickly as possible.

"There is a window of opportunity that needs to be kept open by a positive timely answer.

The already committed National, International and Local user groups need to be given the ability to plan their future events in the knowledge that this facility will become available for use at a specified time in the near future, otherwise they will have to commit to other arrangements at lesser quality venues," Mr Windsor said.

Further information from Tony Windsor on 6761 3080 or 0427 66 8868

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Media Release

11th February 2002

Federal Government reps on Equine Centre Board inept

Federal Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor is dismayed at the comments made by National Party Senator, Sandy Macdonald about the circumstances surrounding the slowness of an answer from the Federal Government on the funding of the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre proposed for Tamworth.

“It appears that even though Senator Macdonald and the former Member for New England, Stuart St Clair were both on the Steering Committee for the Australian Equine and Live stock Centre, that they did not give the Committee the correct advice on how to obtain Federal Government funding,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor was speaking about the belief of the Committee that it had made application to the Federal Government via the appropriate then Minister for Sport and Tourism, the Hon Jackie Kelly.

“The Committee, represented by its Chairman, Peter Botfield and Tamworth City Council Senior staffer, Paul Anderson attended a meeting set up by Senator Macdonald with one of Minister Kelly’s Senior Advisers at which they discussed the project and left a copy of the report and a request for Federal Government funding of the project.

Further, John Anderson, Minister for Transport and Regional Services as well as Deputy Prime Minister, has been given three copies of the submission.

To now have a spokesman for the National Party in Canberra claim that no formal submission had in fact been lodged is just an excuse to delay proceedings,” Mr Windsor said.

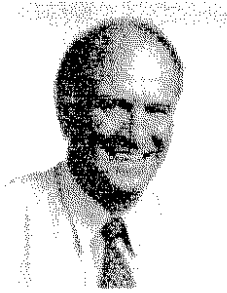
Mr Windsor, the convenor of the original meeting of the user groups and a member of the Committee, believes that Senator Macdonald should have been fully aware of the requirements and guided the Committee to do it right the first time.

“For Senator Macdonald to say that the problem had been compounded by the fact that some people apparently did not know that applications for federal funding usually had to be made via such channels as the Regional Assistance Program or the National Heritage Trust but that it had been deemed more prudent to seek the necessary funding via a pre-budget submission is just splitting hairs.

If the Committee should have made the submission to the Budget Policy Division, the Committee should have been informed by the two National Party representatives on it. Why didn’t they? They were there to help get through the maze to the Federal Government funding as I was to obtain State Government funding.

Any other explanation is just an excuse for their ineptitude,” Mr Windsor said.

Further information from Tony Windsor on 0427 66 8868 or 6761 3080



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MEDIA RELEASE

2nd May 2002-05-02

Positive major projects nearing decision time - Windsor

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor is hopeful of positive outcomes on a number of major projects within the electorate over the next few weeks.

The National Livestock and Equine Centre proposal for Tamworth is nearing final consideration by the Government with the recent visit to Tamworth by Professor John Chudleigh.

“Professor Chudleigh is in the process now of reporting back to the Government as to the feasibility and desirability of this nationally significant project.

Having met with him during his visit, I was impressed with his knowledge of the project.

I am confident that Professor Chudleigh will give a positive report to the appropriate funding bodies,” Mr Windsor said.

The New England Regional Indoor Sporting Complex proposed for Armidale is also receiving positive attention from the Regional Solutions Program co-ordinators and is nearing decision time.

“The New England Regional Indoor Sporting Complex has already been allocated \$700,000 by the NSW Government and has excellent Local Government and community support and will provide the region with a large all weather indoor gymnasium/multi purpose sporting facility located at the Armidale High School and available for use by the broader regional community,” Mr Windsor said.

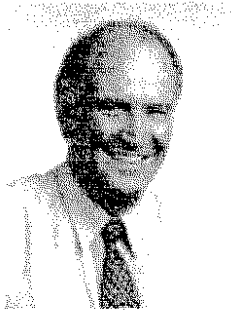
The Glen Innes Open Learning Centre recently received \$200,000 from the Commonwealth Government, via the University of New England, towards the completion of the centre.

“I am hopeful that on reconsideration of the 2001 Business Plan and with the participation of the various academic, government and community groups, that Glen Innes will achieve its goal.

I would particularly recognise and thank Professor Ingrid Moses for her role in committing these funds to the project as part of the University of New England’s 2003 and 2004 funds from the Federal Government’s Capital Development Fund to establish ten regional access centres in communities with a TAFE but not a University presence,” Mr Windsor said.

“All these projects will enhance the lives of people in the region and I trust that the Federal Government will see their value and fund them appropriately,” Mr Windsor said.

Further information from Tony Windsor on 0427 66 8868



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MEDIA RELEASE

30th May 2002

Windsor disappointed but not surprised at Equine Centre knockback

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor has today expressed his disappointment at the Federal Government's refusal to assist with the development of a National Livestock and Equine Centre at Tamworth, but he is not surprised.

"The Federal Government and particularly the National Party has spent the past eighteen months trying to find ways of preventing the project going ahead rather than embracing the need for a 'State of the Art' livestock and equine centre in Australia," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor believes that it was now time for the Group to reassess its position in relation to funding options, review some of the comments made by Professor Chudleigh and move forward.

"It was obvious from the report done by Professor Chudleigh that the assessment did not take into account any possibility of growth in the industry once a modern well-equipped facility of international standard was developed.

The public utterances that Professor Chudleigh made in recent weeks since his visit to Tamworth have all been very positive so I am a bit surprised at the negative perspective taken in his report.

It is regrettable that the Federal Government have delayed progress for so long but that does not mean that other sources of funds or a slightly downsized facility could not go ahead," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor thought a more constructive path to have taken if Professor Chudleigh found fault with the Report would have been to place conditions on the release of any Federal funds.

"Professor Chudleigh was critical of the lack of visible industry contribution to the project. By placing a condition of Federal funding on the proviso of obtaining industry funds for the project would have challenged the industry groups to come in behind its funding and therefore assure its success," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor was critical of the New England North West Area Consultative Committee in relation to its conduct and politicisation of the issue.

"The ACC funded the initial feasibility study for the group and accepted it.

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MEDIA RELEASE

21st February 2003

Windsor urges all Equine Centre groups to remain focussed on end result

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor has today urged all groups involved in developing the National Equine & Livestock Centre in Tamworth to remain focussed on the final outcome.

“Everyone involved in the industry wants to see the National Equine & Livestock Centre project come to fruition.

Since the Chudleigh Report was released, I have been meeting with the various user groups, senior P & A Association representatives and Tamworth City Council representatives working with these people to look for ways of achieving this outcome.

I am extremely encouraged by the positive attitude of the industry and user groups.

I believe that we are closer now than ever before of achieving a positive outcome.

In discussions with the Premier of NSW, Bob Carr during his visit to the Country Music Festival, assurances were given that the State Government funds were still on the table.

In my opinion, there will be an equine and livestock centre based in Tamworth but it will be achieved a lot quicker and more smoothly with the support of all of the players.

As the original convenor bringing the over 40 user groups and interested parties together whilst the NSW State Member for Tamworth, Mr Windsor has maintained his focus on working with all of the groups to achieve the end result of having the best indoor horse sports facility in Australia, capable of holding National and International events.

“It is vitally important to the success of the project that everyone involved remains united in our approach and I look forward to overcoming the anxiousness that some people are feeling to bring about this much needed facility.

Projects like these are never easy however, given the desire of all concerned to develop a facility, we should get there if we work together,” Mr Windsor said.

Further information from Tony Windsor - Mob 0427 66 8868 or 02 6761 3080

This was then used by the Group to successfully convince the NSW State Treasury to contribute over \$3m to the project and now the project is knocked back following a Federal Government sponsored review of the Report.

The Area Consultative Committee also recommended the Group apply for funding under the Regional Tourism Grants program just before the last Federal election, knowing full well that there was a maximum of \$100,000 available when over \$3m was being sought and in fact had a total amount of \$4m available for all of Australia," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor was also critical of the duplicity of the Minister responsible for the Regional Solutions Program, John Anderson.

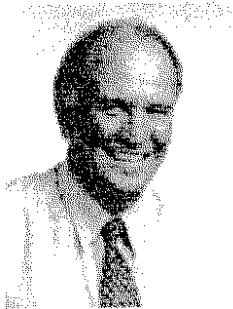
"Mr Anderson says that the Government can't fund this project because 1 out of 3 feasibility studies cast doubt on its viability when in the past month, the same Minister has allocated \$4m to the Stockman's Hall of fame in Longreach.

Mr Anderson would be aware that the Stockman's Hall of Fame has made a net operating loss for the year 2000/01 of \$585,375 on top of a loss for the previous year of \$545,734.

Mr Anderson should have the decency to at least be consistent in relation to spending of Federal, taxpayer money.

Mr Anderson may like to also release the feasibility study relating to the funding of the Fisherman's Hall of Fame in Hervey Bay in Queensland.

That would also makes for interesting reading!" Mr Windsor said.



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MEDIA RELEASE

11 March 2003

Major step forward for National Equine and Livestock Centre

Member for New England, Tony Windsor, has conducted a further meeting yesterday with representatives of equine and livestock groups concerning a proposal for the construction of a National Equine and Livestock Centre in Tamworth.

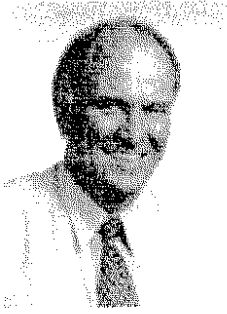
Mr Windsor said the purpose of the meeting was for the various groups to report back following the previous meeting held on 18 February, 2003 regarding this proposal.

Mr Windsor, who chaired the meeting, said the Boards of the various industry groups had endorsed the construction of the proposed Centre on a green-fields site near the City of Tamworth.

"It was also the belief of the meeting that the industry would be able to raise in the vicinity of \$1 million towards the construction of the Centre and all groups present noted they had received the approval of their Boards for the Centre's concept," Mr Windsor said.

"It was further decided that I should approach Tamworth City Council, the community of Tamworth and the Premier of New South Wales, Bob Carr, with a view to constructing a financial package to build a National Equine and Livestock Centre in Tamworth on a green fields site," he said.

Mr Windsor said he was very pleased with the progress being made with this proposal and said the industry's commitment and sense of unity towards this project would play a key role in ensuring this much need facility becomes a reality.



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MEDIA RELEASE

31 October 2003

Federal Submission To Follow Successful State Equine Meeting

The Independent Member for New England, Mr Tony Windsor, was delighted with the strong unity displayed by the local Government, State, Industry and community representatives at yesterday's meeting with Premier Carr over the proposed National Equine and Livestock Centre for Tamworth.

Mr Windsor said, "After the successful meeting with Premier Bob Carr regarding unified funding for the development of a greenfields site for a new equine and livestock centre for Tamworth an application will now be made to the Federal Government for Regional Partnership funding for the proposal."

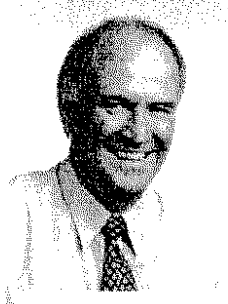
Mr Windsor who has chaired the industry-working group that prepared the document put to Premier Carr yesterday said, "He was delighted with the Premier's response to yesterday's delegation and hailed it as a major step forward for the Industry and Tamworth."

The group who met with the Premier consisted of Peter Draper, State Member for Tamworth, Tamworth Mayor, James Treloar, Tony Windsor, Federal Member for New England, Country Labour MLC, Christine Robertson, Councillor Ray Tait of Tamworth City Council and CEO's from the NCHA, AQHA and the ABCRA, Gail Ritchie, Hunter Jones and Rosemary Harmer.

Mr Windsor said, "The unified approach and the commitment by the Industry itself to partially fund the centre was the key to the successful meeting."

"The working group will now prepare plans to present to the relevant commonwealth agencies and to industry and local business groups to finalise the funding process," Mr Windsor concluded.

For further information contact Tony Windsor, Ph (02) 6761 3080



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MEDIA RELEASE

20th April 2004

Windsor welcomes Equine Centre funding confirmation and announcement of Board to drive it

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor has welcomed the confirmation of the untied NSW Government funding of \$3.35M by NSW Premier Bob Carr in Tamworth today and the announcement of the Board of the National Equine and Livestock Centre to drive it forward.

“The confirmation of the NSW Government financial commitment not tied to any Federal Government funds is a very positive sign for the establishment of the National Livestock and Equine Centre.

I thank the Premier and the NSW Government for showing such a solid commitment to the project and further recognise the support of the horse industry groups, the Tamworth Regional Council, the business community and the broader community for seeing the value of such a facility to the region,” Mr Windsor said

The inaugural Board of the National Livestock and Equine Centre was also announced during the ceremony.

The Board is made up of major horse industry representatives, business people and community representatives and includes Mr Greg Maguire (Chairman) Mrs Gail Ritchie (National Cutting Horse Assoc) Mr Hunter Jones (Australian Quarter Horse Assoc) Mrs Rosemary Harmer (Australian Bushmans Campdraft & Rodeo Association) Mr Scott Higginbotham, Mr Terry Keating, Mr Dick Cameron, Mr James Treloar (Administrator Tamworth Regional Council), Mr Ray Tait (Community Representative), Mr Paul Anderson (Tamworth Regional Council), Mr Peter Draper (Member for Tamworth) and Mr Tony Windsor (Member for New England).

“The Board is an excellent mix of people with a good understanding of the horse industry, with strong business experience and with links to the broader community.

This group is now charged with getting this \$10M project completed as quickly as possible so that the events that bring so much value to the region can be maintained and expanded,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor believes that the spin off from the project will pay big dividends to other sectors of the community too.

“The announcement took place at the property of Mr Jim Lyons at Nemingha where the Premier saw the type of investment in the horse industry that can be expected to grow further with the completion of the Equine Centre.

New sheds are being built, earthworks being undertaken, high quality horse transporters in use and people being employed to work with the horses and livestock.

It will prove to be a pivotal project for the region,” Mr Windsor said.

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Media Release

12 May 2004

Glen Severn Learning Centre should get Fed funding soon

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor is confident funding for the Glen Severn Learning Centre will soon be made available from the Federal Government.

Mr Windsor made the comments following confirmation in the Budget Papers that the funding source, the Regional Partnerships Program had been maintained.

"The revised Business Plan was nearing completion. It will then be forwarded via the New England North West Area Consultative Committee's assessment officers to the Government for final consideration for the funding," Mr Windsor said.

The project has already been endorsed by the Glen Innes and Severn communities and has been supported by the Glen Innes and Severn Councils, the NSW State Government, TAFE and the University of New England.

The Federal Government has made a contribution through the University of New England.

"The Community has confirmed its support at a recent public meeting held at the Town Hall which is vitally important for the Federal Government to look favourably upon this application for assistance.

The project will benefit the community both local and regional by enhancing access to education opportunities in Glen Innes," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor has also received encouraging advice from members of the Government.

"The Liberal Party in particular have been very supportive of the project with Senator John Tierney and Education Minister Brendon Nelson keen to see the revised Business Plan

I'm also pleased to see the change of heart taking place within the National Party to the project after they had been opposed to the concept at the last Federal Election.

It is good to see that the State National Party candidate, Peter Bailey's view that Glen Innes didn't deserve a Learning Centre has been overtaken by more constructive thinking," Mr Windsor said.

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MEDIA RELEASE

27 June 2004

Windsor welcomes Maths & Science Centre for UNE

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor has welcomed the announcement by the Federal Government to establish the National Centre for Mathematics, Information Technology and Science Teaching at the University of New England in Armidale at a cost \$4.95million over 3 years.

“The announcement of the National Centre for Mathematics, Information Technology and Science teaching is great news for the University of New England and those behind the push for its establishment.

“I am very pleased that the Federal Government has responded to the lobbying by the University staff and the broader community to help address the needs of isolated teachers in rural areas of Australia.

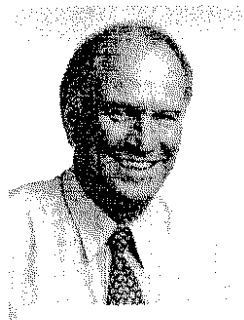
“I particularly congratulate Professor Victor Minichiello, the Dean of the Education Health and Professional Studies, Professor Peter Flood, Dean of the Faculty of Science and Debra Panizzon, the Senior Science Education Lecturer for their efforts in bringing about this very valuable addition to the UNE,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor was also happy to see a step forward on another resolution made at the Vision New England Summit in October last year.

“The proposal for the Centre gained broad community support at the Vision New England Summit last year.

“It was unanimously supported by the 67 community groups represented at the Summit which has further enhanced the understanding of the need for the Centre and I’m sure has gone a long way to reinforcing the University of New England’s case it was able to put to the Government,” Mr Windsor said.

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I thank the Premier and the NSW Government for showing such a solid commitment to the project and further recognise the support of the horse industry groups, the Tamworth Regional Council, the business community and the broader community for seeing the value of such a facility to the region,” Mr Windsor said

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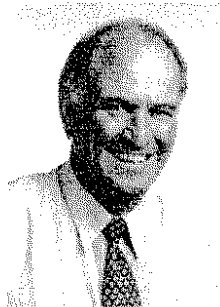
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MEDIA RELEASE

1 September 2004

National Party backflip on Glen Severn Learning Centre welcome Now announce the funding for Learning Centre & Equine Centre

Independent Member for New England Tony Windsor has welcomed the backflip by the National Party on their support for the Glen Severn Learning Centre but says it's now time to stop dangling the carrot and show the community the money.

"It has taken a long time but I am very pleased to see the National Party support for the Glen Severn Learning Centre.

The former National Party Member for New England, Stuart St Clair was against the project in the lead up to the last Federal election in 2001 and the National Party candidate for the State seat of Northern Tablelands, Peter Bailey went so far as to say that Glen Innes did not even deserve a Learning Centre.

This was a disgrace at the time but the backflip by the National Party now just goes to show what political competition can do in helping to elevate worthwhile projects up the funding priority list," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor has had meetings with the previous Glen Innes Council and the now Administrator Mr Frank Willan on getting the funding submission to the Area Consultative Committee into the acceptable form as well as having meetings with the Liberal Senator for the region, Senator John Tierney.

"Senator Tierney has always been helpful and positive about the project and given sound advice to me and to the Glen Innes Council in their attempts to meet the funding criteria.

Now that the National Party has had a change of heart with regard to the Glen Severn Learning Centre, I call on them to commit to funding this important community facility regardless of the outcome of the election.

To have a conversion on the road to an election is just amazing.

Well, 'show us the money' and prove the commitment to the project is more than just an election carrot," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor said that a similar situation exists with the funding for the National Equine and Livestock Centre in Tamworth.

"The National Equine and Livestock Centre in Tamworth has been around for as long as the Learning Centre and has received an untied State Government funding commitment of \$3.35million as well as Local Government, community and industry support.

The Federal Government knocked back an application despite this support for it both financially and morally.

It's time for these projects to get the recognition they deserve by an announcement of a commitment to fund them both – not just words of support from the candidate.

Talk's cheap, money provides community infrastructure," Mr Windsor said.

For further information contact Tony Windsor, Ph (02)6761 3080 or 042766 8868



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MEDIA RELEASE

21 September 2004

Equine Centre groups rewarded for remaining focussed on end result

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor has today congratulated all groups involved in developing the National Equine & Livestock Centre in Tamworth for remaining focussed on the final outcome.

"Everyone involved in the industry has wanted to see the National Equine & Livestock Centre project come to fruition.

The announcement today by the Deputy Prime Minister, John Anderson that the Federal Government will contribute \$6 million to the National Equine & Livestock Centre is a very welcome result which recognises the value of the current equine and livestock industry to the region and also importantly recognises the potential for growth that it has with a facility like the one to be built.

I thank the Federal Government for the announcement of their contribution and particularly praise the efforts of the New England North West Area Consultative Committee in working with the Board, user groups and Council to formulate the final submission.

I also thank the NSW State Government and Premier Bob Carr for their untied \$3.35 million grant given early in the piece, the former Tamworth City Council and now Tamworth Regional Council, the Australian Quarter Horse Association, National Cutting Horse Association, Australian Bushman's Campdraft Rodeo Association, Tamworth P & A Association and private business and community for both their financial and moral support," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor praised the groups for their united approach to the project.

"Without the united approach of the user groups, there would not have been the capacity to call the facility 'The National Equine and Livestock Centre'.

It is truly 'National' when the major National industry groups call it 'Home'," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor also congratulated the National Equine & Livestock Centre Board and particularly Greg McGuire for his tireless efforts as Chairman and former Steering Committee Chairman Peter Botfield as well as all the people who over the years who have campaigned for a modern Equine Centre and those in the Tamworth P & A Association who initiated the process many years ago and created the business for Tamworth.

It's a great result for Tamworth and the region.

Projects like these are never easy however, given the desire of all concerned to develop a facility, we got there by working together," Mr Windsor said.

For further information contact Tony Windsor, Ph (02) 6761 3080 or 0427 668868



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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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MEDIA RELEASE

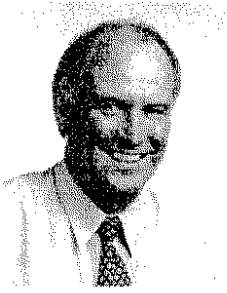
27 September 2004

Windsor discusses inducement allegations with Federal Police

The Independent Federal Member for New England, Tony Windsor, MP, met with Federal Police this afternoon to discuss allegations that he was offered an inducement by an intermediary on behalf of two political representatives some months ago not to contest the seat of New England at the upcoming Federal election.

Mr Windsor said he was pleased to assist the Police with their investigation and had named the people responsible.

The matter is now in their hands and undergoing the due process of the Australian Electoral Commission.



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Media Release

19th November 2004

Statement from Tony Windsor MP Member for New England

In relation to matters that I raised in the Federal Parliament this week, I will not be adding anything further to the Statement I made in the Parliament.

No one is disputing that a meeting did take place with Mr Greg McGuire.

There are differing accounts of what was said at that meeting.

I am calling on the Director of Public Prosecutions to now act immediately and investigate the allegations and accounts of events to bring this matter to a conclusion.

Thank you

Tony Windsor MP
Member for New England



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Media Release

21st November 2004

Statement in response to the Prime Minister - Hon John Howard MP

from

Tony Windsor MP
Member for New England

In response to a call from the Prime Minister of Australia, the Hon John Howard MP for me to apologise to the Deputy Prime Minister, John Anderson and National Party Senator Sandy Macdonald over comments I made in the Parliament last week, I ask the Prime Minister to support the establishment of a Senate Inquiry into the matter.

I would welcome any inquiry into this matter and ask the Prime Minister to immediately support a Senate inquiry where all the participants can put on record their views and a public adjudication be made.

It is important for all concerned that they be given the opportunity to tell their stories under oath and be available for cross examination so that the truth will out.

Whilst the Prime Minister may fully support his Deputy, I would hope that he also fully supports our system and therefore will support the transparency of a Senate Inquiry into this matter.



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Media Release

22nd November 2004

Statement by Tony Windsor MP Member for New England in response to the Australian Federal Police statement

- I welcome the release of the AFP's statement
- I am pleased that the AFP have acted quickly since my statement to the Parliament last week
- There is no surprise in the statement by the AFP given the differing versions of the conversation
- The AFP does not say what actually happened or pass any judgement - it merely concludes that none of the versions of the conversations related by any of the witnesses can amount to an "offer to give or confer" a benefit.
- The indication from the AFP is that there is insufficient evidence to sustain a charge under the Commonwealth Electoral Act
- I will be maintaining my position
- The release of the AFP Statement now clears the way for the establishment of a Senate Inquiry or even a House of Representatives Inquiry so that all those involved can give their evidence publicly and be cross examined and broaden the scope of the Inquiry beyond the narrow terms of reference of the AFP investigation.

ADJOURNMENT: Federal Election: Member for New England

Mr WINDSOR (New England) (7.30 p.m.)—The House would be aware that the Australian Federal Police have referred an alleged breach of the Commonwealth Electoral Act to the Director of Public Prosecutions for determination relating to an inducement offered to me not to stand for re-election at the election just held. The House would also know that the Prime Minister has called on me to name the names of those people involved in the attempt to bribe me.

I would like to place on record an account of a meeting that took place on 19 May 2004 at 10.30 a.m. at the office of Tamworth businessman Mr Greg Maguire in the Powerhouse Motorcycle Museum. The meeting was attended by Mr Maguire, Mr Stephen Hall, my campaign co-chairman, Ms Helen Tickle, my campaign secretary, and me. I have had many meetings with Mr Maguire in the past relating to the development of the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre, and Mr Maguire has also assisted with advice during previous election campaigns.

It was assumed that the meeting was to be about the upcoming election and progress that Mr Maguire had made in relation to the equine centre concept and planning which was being developed for federal funding. Prior to that issue being raised, Mr Maguire indicated that he had spent four to five hours the night before in the company of the Deputy Prime Minister John Anderson and National Party senator Sandy Macdonald and a black-haired woman whose name he did not recall.

Mr Maguire made a number of points regarding the previous night's meeting, and I would like to go through those points: John Anderson was paranoid about me and the demise of The Nationals and the rise of Independents; Mr Anderson asked Mr Maguire to meet with me and give me some messages, which Mr Maguire was then doing; Mr Anderson said that if I tried to get any credit for the funding of the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre the funding would not take place; Mr Anderson was also concerned about my continued association with the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre, given my political position; Mr Anderson and Senator Macdonald asked Mr Maguire what it would take to get me to not stand for re-election and indicated that there could be another career for me outside politics, such as a diplomatic post or a trade appointment, if I did not stand for the seat of New England. Senator Macdonald said, 'Offer him whatever it takes, we can deliver.' One of the them also said, 'The government makes about 500 political appointments, it can be done.' Senator Macdonald also said, 'Windsor has a pension, why does he want to hang around anyway?' Apparently, he was referring to my 10 years in state parliament.

I know Greg Maguire quite well. My response to Mr Maguire was, 'Greg, you should know I'm—there was an expletive put in here—'offended by that and you should know full well that I would not consider any such appointment.' Mr Maguire replied, 'I know, mate, I've just been asked to deliver the message.' My response was, 'I cannot understand these guys and the lengths that they will go to to get rid of me—to think that I would even consider such an offer.' I apologised to Ms Tickle for my swearing. My further comment to Mr Maguire was, 'I believe'—and I still do believe this—that this is an act of stupidity and desperation to regain the seat. Tell Anderson and Macdonald I'm not interested.' Mr Maguire responded with 'I still want you to get in touch with Anderson. Anderson is saying you won't talk to him,' which I agreed to do. The conversation took place in this very spot a couple of weeks later.

I believe that Mr Maguire was acting only as a messenger for John Anderson and Sandy Macdonald. The matter became public knowledge as a result of discussions which I had with Tony Vermeer of the *Sunday Telegraph* relating to my role in a hung parliament. The matter was subsequently mentioned in an article by that journalist in the *Sunday Telegraph* on 19 September 2004. I would like to point out that Mr Maguire is a very well-regarded businessman in Tamworth. He has been the prime mover in promoting the concept of the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre. I congratulate him on his success and thank him for his efforts. In my view, Mr Maguire is—
(Time expired)

The SPEAKER —The member will resume his seat.

GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S SPEECH: Address-in-Reply

Mr WINDSOR (New England) (11.37 a.m.) —I would like to raise a number of issues in relation to the address-in-reply. I thank the Governor-General for his attendance in this place the other day. I congratulate all the members of parliament who were re-elected and, particularly, the newcomers to this place. Having served in another place, the New South Wales state parliament, for 10 years, I can say with some degree of comparison that this is a more friendly place to be, even though some of last night's happenings might not have indicated the friendship—

Mr Murphy —Warm, perhaps.

Mr WINDSOR —the warm friendship—that we share. It is great to see people prepared to nominate for the political process and have a go. I think the maiden speeches have reflected very well on all the people that I have heard so far, irrespective of which side of politics they come from. I think what the new members are really saying is that they come from the electorates that they represent and they are proud to be here and represent those people.

I also congratulate the new Speaker on his appointment. Obviously I did not have a vote in the Liberal Party rooms in relation to that but I was hoping that David Hawker would receive the nomination. I think, because of his nature and character, that he will gain the respect of all of us in this chamber. I have a personal regard and respect for him and I wish him well. I also pay my compliments to the former Speaker, Neil Andrew. Having served under a number of speakers in two parliaments, I can say without a doubt—and I have said it before in his presence—that in my view he was a very good and, in the main, very fair Speaker. I hope that the new Speaker carries on in that vein.

I would also like to thank the people of New England for my re-election. I was very pleased with the swing towards me that occurred in the election campaign. It was a fairly hard fought campaign. All the other candidates—and I do congratulate them—were very good in their personal demeanours and their conduct towards each other. It was probably the most friendly campaign at a candidate level that I have had. A lot that was not friendly went on behind walls and doors from time to time, but I congratulate all the candidates that stood and thank the electorate for the endorsement that they gave me. [start page 34]

I think my seat received the highest swing of any seat in Australia. I am very pleased about that and congratulate my campaign committee and the many people who have helped throughout the years, particularly my staff. I do not think people recognise the work that our staff and office people put in in relation to our presence in this place. I would like to recognise my staff and thank them for the way they have represented their community. One of the things that I am proudest of in relation to my staff is that they deal with everybody that comes through the door without prejudgment of who is right and who is wrong or of whether people are likely to have voted for me at the last election, and people do not get different treatment if they come from a certain station in life. You cannot buy that; you cannot employ people to do that, it has to be part of their nature. I have been very lucky to have had very caring staff who have been genuinely concerned for the people within the electorate.

Mr Deputy Speaker Wilkie, as you would be aware, I spoke last night in the adjournment debate on an issue of alleged bribery in relation to my candidature for re-election in the seat of New England. Only having five minutes last night, I was fairly rushed to get some of the factual detail before the parliament. I would like to complete a few comments on that issue.

I note with interest that in the media this morning some degree of attention was being paid to the players involved in the allegation. I would like to point out, and I am sorry that I did not have the time to do it last night, that a man at the centre of this debate—and I think there are many media people in Tamworth at the moment looking for this gentleman—is a very well regarded businessperson in Tamworth. I refer to Mr Greg Maguire. Greg has been a prime mover in a lot of

very positive things in our region. He is a lateral thinker, he is a doer and he has worked very hard in promoting the concept of the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre, which I spoke about last night. I would like to congratulate him on his efforts for the centre, which have drawn a number of players together. In other circumstances, these people probably would not have come together. That is why I spent some time last night talking about the funding and promotion of the equine centre and about the people who were involved on the board as being central to the meeting that took place in Mr Maguire's office essentially about me but also about the planning and funding arrangements for the centre.

It is my view that Mr Maguire is the victim of an approach from Mr Anderson and Senator Macdonald and that he, like me, was not aware that he was actually contravening, or potentially contravening, the Commonwealth Electoral Act. I would like to place on record my support for Greg Maguire and to say to the media that, even though this man is in the spotlight at the moment because of the structure of the Commonwealth Electoral Act, in my view he has committed no sin. I think it would be a great travesty of justice if the real villains in this case—the ones who are the architects of the message—were allowed to flutter off into the sunset rather than the messenger.

Mr Maguire has delivered a message to me in the company of two other witnesses. I have absolutely no reason to disbelieve Greg Maguire. I have had a lot of to do with him over many years and I have a very high regard for the man. I have every confidence that what he said to the three of us on that particular day, 19 May, was as he understood the meeting that he had had with Senator Macdonald; the Deputy Prime Minister, John Anderson, and a dark-haired woman, whom the Deputy Prime Minister has now identified as Wendy Armstrong and as being present at that meeting.

There is some conjecture over the date of the meeting between Mr Anderson, Senator Macdonald and Wendy Armstrong, who I believe was there for a portion of that meeting, and Mr Maguire. I would like to spend a little bit of time on that particular issue. There is no denial that that meeting took place. It was my understanding, through the commentary that Mr Maguire was giving to me, that the meeting had taken place the night before. The Deputy Prime Minister has suggested that it took place some nights before that particular date that I nominated in my speech.

The Deputy Prime Minister has spent a lot of time in my electorate, particularly during that part of the process. When it became public that I had made some comment about an intermediary approaching me with an inducement, it was quite odd how both the Deputy Prime Minister and Senator Macdonald seemed to drift back into the woodwork in terms of a role in the election campaign with New England. They drifted off to Kennedy and other places in the Far North, which indicates to me again that they were very well aware of what was actually going on. If the Federal Police were doing their job correctly they would be able to ascertain through a whole range of vehicles the players, the process and the times and dates on which this occurred.

I was interested to hear last night—or it might have been in today's press—that the dark-haired woman that I referred to and that Greg Maguire referred to, because he could not remember her name, has been identified as Wendy Armstrong. As I am sure all of us know, she does have very dark hair. At that particular time I assumed it was her but I was not certain. I am now certain. I believe, and it could be verified through travel and accommodation records, that they were accommodated at the Quality Powerhouse Hotel and that the meeting took place in the Powerhouse Motorcycle Museum, which is a beautiful building that Greg Maguire has constructed and in which he has his office. I have had many meetings with him there on a whole range of issues. I believe that that meeting took place for something like four or five hours. That is what I was told by Mr Maguire. [start page 35]

I was interested that the Deputy Prime Minister actually mentioned Wendy Armstrong, because I think what we are going to see is a little bit of play in terms of her presence in the room. The Deputy Prime Minister might like to flesh it out in question time today, but my belief is that Wendy Armstrong was in that meeting for some period of time until—

Mr Abbott — Give us your evidence.

Mr WINDSOR — The Federal Police have that evidence. My belief is that Wendy Armstrong was in that meeting for some period of time until Mr Anderson and Senator Macdonald asked her to leave the room. It was after she had left the room that the detail of the deal was discussed. So Mr Anderson should not be running red herrings that a member of staff was in the room. She denies any of the Windsor allegations because she can quite correctly do that: she was there for part of the meeting but she was not there for the portion of the meeting where the arrangement was struck with Mr Maguire to ask me the questions, to see if I was interested in some career outside politics, to ask me what it would take to get me to vacate the seat. I bring those points of interest to the parliament and note that the Deputy Prime Minister has confirmed that a meeting did take place with those players in a particular room. To give people a great understanding of this matter, I would like to spend a little time on the history of it, because there are some questions about why I did not raise it at the time.

This came about through a conversation I had with a *Sunday Telegraph* journalist called Tony Vermeer. I was sitting outside on a stool in Tenterfield, when I got a phone call. I was asked, 'What if there was a hung parliament? What would you do? Have you been offered the Speaker's job? Would you accept it?' I said, 'No and no, I am not interested.' The Minister for Health and Ageing seems to think that is quite funny. The conversation that developed was about how I had been in a hung parliament before and about the numbers of offers that were made from day one, from the Sunday after I was elected.

Over that period of four years there were offers to join parties, to become a minister and to do a whole range of other things. This general discussion was about some of the things that had happened in those early years. I also said that in 1998 the Prime Minister sent Senator Bill Heffernan to Tamworth on two occasions. I am not condemning Bill Heffernan; I like Bill but I know that some of us in here do not. 'The bosses ask: "Would you be willing to run as a Liberal in the 1998 election?"' On those two occasions I thanked him for his interest, said that I was not interested and that if I ever contemplated running for the federal seat I would do it as an Independent, because I believe I can be more faithful to my people.

In the conversation with Tony Vermeer I mentioned that only a few months ago I had been approached by an intermediary who offered me an inducement to vacate the premises. Tony Vermeer wrote an article in the Sunday paper about a hung parliament. There were about three lines in there that mentioned this intermediary and an approach that had taken place some months prior. When the story broke and when people asked, 'Why wasn't this mentioned? Why didn't you do it straightaway?' I said my view was—as it was in that room with Greg Maguire and the witnesses Stephen Hall and Helen Tickle—that this was an act of political stupidity and desperation. I used an expletive about the introduction by Greg Maguire, who was passing on the message and he said, 'Mate, I know, but I have been asked to pass on the message.'

I left that meeting more concerned about the equine centre than Anderson's and Macdonald's stupidity, but when I was in a discussion with Tony Vermeer and these issues came up about approaches, inducements and et cetera, I mentioned them in passing. When the Labor Party—and, I think, the Liberal Party—referred it to the Electoral Commission and I was asked whether something like that had happened, I was not going to lie and say it had not. The easy way for me would have been—and it would protect Greg Maguire, who is in the spotlight now—to lie about the meeting, but I was not going to lie. I did not like doing it. One of the reasons I have been reluctant to name the names is that there are people who are going to be damaged by this who should not be—and the people who should be damaged will most probably be able to fly away and hide behind the Chinese wall of an intermediary. I do not think that is fair and I do not think that is what this parliament would indicate as fair to an individual.

So I would say to the press: 'Be fair to Greg Maguire because he is the inadvertent and innocent

victim in a process where he has been put up to delivering a message in full knowledge that the political players could distance themselves from the impact.' And that is what is being played out in this particular stadium at the moment.

I would also like to place on record that I do not believe the Prime Minister had any knowledge of this. I would be very surprised. I would support the Prime Minister—and I did at the time. I made the point in an interview on Sky Channel that I did not believe the Prime Minister had any knowledge. I think maybe he did a few days later, because his demeanour about me naming names changed quite dramatically. He called on me to name names and then stopped dramatically.

I am proud that we have a parliament where people can actually raise these issues. This is an issue that will potentially damage some people. It is not about trying to gain political heads, but it is about representing what actually happened. I know the truth; I know what happened. There were witnesses there who know what happened, and I hope that all the players in this will, over the next few days, consider their positions and tell the truth on this matter. [start page 36]



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Question without Notice: Federal Election: Member for New Englar

Date	18 November, 2004	Database	House Hansard
Questioner	Latham, Mark, MP (Werriwa, ALP, Opposition)	Responder	Anderson, John, MP (Gwydir, Deputy Prime Minister, NATS)
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Question without Notice: Federal Election: Member for
New England is available as a PDF file



Federal Election: Member for New England

Mr LATHAM (2.15 p.m.) —My question is to the Deputy Prime Minister and Acting Minister for Trade. Does the Deputy Prime Minister recall speaking to the member for New England in this chamber at the end of question time in the sitting fortnight following 19 May? Did the Deputy Prime Minister mention to the member for New England his contact and conversations with Mr Greg Maguire? How is this consistent with the Deputy Prime Minister's claim yesterday in the House that he knew nothing about this matter, including inducements of trade and diplomatic jobs, until it became public in the election campaign in September?

Mr ANDERSON —Again, I thank the honourable member for his question. Yes, I was walking out of this place—I think it was probably during June on one of those 24 occasions when the House sat after this alleged bribery attempt was made, during which the member for New England, of course if he had been so concerned about these matters, could have raised them under parliamentary privilege—and on the way out he motioned me over and said, 'I understand you might want to talk to me.' I said: 'No. What? I don't know anything about it.' I have no understanding whatsoever as to why he thought I might want to talk to him about it. I still don't. I said to him: 'No. If I want to talk to you at some point in the future, I'll get in contact.'

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PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

Mr WINDSOR (New England) (3.21 p.m.) —Mr Speaker, I wish to make a personal explanation.

The SPEAKER —Does the honourable member claim to have been misrepresented?

Mr WINDSOR —Yes, I do.

The SPEAKER —Please proceed.

Mr WINDSOR —Before making the personal explanation, I would like to concur with the comments of the member for Page. That photograph was taken when he was talking to me about the health of the Hon. Bob Katter before question time. In question time on 18 November 2004, in answer to a question from the Leader of the Opposition to the Deputy Prime Minister about comments made to me in a conversation with me in this House relating to his contact with Mr Greg Maguire, the Deputy Prime Minister misrepresented this conversation. He said:

Yes, I was walking out of this place—I think it was probably during June ... and on the way out he—
meaning me—

motioned me over and said, 'I understand you might want to talk to me.'

The Deputy Prime Minister's version of his response was:

'No. What? I don't know anything about it.' I have no understanding whatsoever as to why he thought I might want to talk to him about it. I still don't. I said to him: 'No. If I want to talk to you at some point in the future, I'll get in contact.'

Those are the words that the Deputy Prime Minister misrepresented in this House last week. This is a misrepresentation of that conversation.

The SPEAKER —Order! The honourable member has explained where he has been misrepresented.

Mr WINDSOR —No, I have not. My recollection of that conversation was that I said: 'John, I understand you want to talk to me. People are saying in Tamworth that you are saying I won't talk to you. I'm more than happy to talk to you at any time.' Mr Anderson then said, 'You mean my meeting with Mr Maguire,' to which I said, 'Not only Greg Maguire but others in the community.' This is a correct account of that conversation.