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28th January 2005

Mr. A. Sands,
Secretary,
Finance and Public Administration Committee,
PARLIAMENT HOUSE ACT 2600

Dear Sir,

I write in response to your advertisement for submissions related to the proposed **Senate Inquiry into the Regional Partnerships Programme**.

I advise as follows:

1. I reside at 150 Carthage Street, Tamworth NSW 2340;
2. I am a Chartered Accountant and currently practice as a partner of Forsyths Chartered Accountants, 127 Marius Street, Tamworth NSW 2340;
3. I was the Campaign Manager for Tony Windsor, Federal Member for New England in the Federal Election held on Saturday 9th October 2004.

My submission includes an account of various telephone conversations and meetings between Mr. Greg Maguire, Mr. Tony Windsor, Miss Helen Tickle and myself relating to the National Livestock and Equine Centre and other related matters, made up as follows:

WEDNESDAY 19TH MAY, 2004

Meeting between Greg Maguire, Tony Windsor, Helen Tickle and Stephen Hall

On the morning of the 19 May 2004, Greg Maguire telephoned me and asked me to coordinate a meeting with Tony Windsor, Helen Tickle, Greg Maguire and myself at the Powerhouse Hotel. I advised Greg Maguire that I would speak to Tony Windsor and Helen Tickle and advise him when we would be available.

As a result of this conversation I contacted Tony Windsor and Helen Tickle and arranged a meeting at the Powerhouse Hotel at 10.30am on that day and telephoned Greg Maguire back and confirmed the meeting.

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Tony Windsor collected me from my office and we drove to the Powerhouse Hotel and met with Helen Tickle and the three of us proceeded to Greg Maguire's office, which is located above the Powerhouse Motorcycle Museum.

Greg Maguire greeted us at his office and we sat at the board table.

Greg Maguire told us that he had a meeting the night before with Deputy Prime Minister – John Anderson, his personal assistant and Senator Sandy MacDonald.

Greg Maguire advised us that John Anderson's personal assistant had gone to bed and then there was a conversation between himself, John Anderson and Sandy MacDonald. John Anderson had said that he was greatly concerned about the demise of the National Party and that he had told Greg Maguire that if Rob Oakshott stood against Mark Vaile in the up coming Federal Election and if Mark Vaile lost the seat, it would probably be the end of the National Party. Greg Maguire told us that John Anderson was paranoid about Tony Windsor and that he blames Tony Windsor for the demise of the National Party.

Greg Maguire said to Tony Windsor that the independent movement has not worked and asked Tony Windsor would he consider rolling over to the party system or leaving politics altogether. Greg Maguire asked Tony Windsor what it would take for him to consider leaving politics and would he be interested in a Diplomatic or Trade Posting overseas. Greg Maguire said that either could be arranged as the Government makes 500 such appointments a year.

Tony Windsor said to Greg Maguire that he should know him fucking better than that – as he said that he looked at Helen Tickle and apologised for swearing. Tony Windsor said to Greg Maguire that he was offended by the suggestion and that John Anderson and Sandy MacDonald and the National Party should also know better then to have the proposition put to him. Tony Windsor advised Greg Maguire that over the years he had been made many offers including Ministerial appointments and that he was not interested in discussing the suggestion made to him by Greg Maguire.

The conversation then led onto the National Livestock and Equine Centre and Greg Maguire told Tony Windsor that the application for funding for the centre was proceeding but John Anderson had told him that he was concerned that if he approved the funding that Tony Windsor would take the credit and limelight for the funding. Tony Windsor advised Greg Maguire that he was more interested in the success of the project and getting the funding and that the credit and limelight should be given to those that have worked on the project to make it a success.

The meeting finished at approximately 11.15am to 11.30am. I left the meeting with Tony Windsor and Helen Tickle. Tony Windsor delivered me back to my office after going via Farrer Agricultural High School.

MONDAY 20TH SEPTEMBER, 2004

Approx 6.45pm I arrived home – as I am coming in the back door, my mobile phone rings and it is Greg Maguire

Greg Maguire *I don't know why I ever trusted you, Windsor and Tickle – You are all a bunch of fucking amateurs*

Stephen Hall *What are you talking about?*

Greg Maguire *You know what it is – you as Campaign Manager would have put the strategy together for Windsor*

Stephen Hall *I don't know what you are talking about*

Greg Maguire *Fucking Windsor is going to tell the press about Anderson's offer. Watch the 7pm ABC news and you will see it all*

Stephen Hall *I am not aware of it*

Greg Maguire *It will be the end of me – I am resigning in the morning as Chairman of the Equine Centre and Anderson will probably pull the funding*

Stephen Hall *I will ring you back with Tony Windsor's mobile number and also I will ring Tony Windsor and get him to phone you.*

Greg Maguire *I never want to speak to you again and never step into my hotel again (Greg Maguire then hung up on me)*

Stephen Hall *I then went to turn on the television to watch the 7pm ABC news. As the news and the Windsor story came on, Greg Maguire telephoned back on my mobile phone and said "are you fucking watching it on the ABC news" and hung up.*

Stephen Hall telephones Tony Windsor

I telephoned Tony Windsor to tell him what had happened and that Greg Maguire was threatening to resign as Chairman of the Equine Centre Board. I asked Tony Windsor to telephone Greg Maguire, which he agreed to do.

Stephen Hall telephones Greg Maguire

I telephoned Greg Maguire and gave him Tony Windsor's mobile number and advised him that Tony Windsor would also be calling him.

When I rang Greg Maguire at home, Twiggy Maguire (Greg Maguire's partner) answered the phone and told me that Greg Maguire was not there and when I said I had just spoken to him at home she went and got him.

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TUESDAY 21ST SEPTEMBER, 2004

Meeting between Stephen Hall and Greg Maguire

At approx 11.30am, Greg Maguire telephoned me and requested a meeting at the Powerhouse Hotel.

I drove straight to the Powerhouse Hotel and met with Greg Maguire in his office.

Greg Maguire apologised to me for his outburst the night before but said I must understand how pissed off he was. I told him that I could understand that he was upset.

Greg Maguire asked if I had sent Les Dowe to the Equine Centre funding announcement to which I replied yes.

Greg Maguire advised me that after the announcement of the Equine Centre funding earlier that day, he and John Anderson went quietly off for a walk – away from his minders - to talk. John Anderson told Greg Maguire to get a message to Tony Windsor to back off, as this was bigger than both of them. Greg Maguire asked me to convey the message to Tony Windsor and that I needed to work out a strategy with him and Tony Windsor to resolve the matter.

Greg Maguire then told me that he would not be the person who brings down the Deputy Prime Minister of Australia and that he would lie to protect the Deputy Prime Minister, himself and the funding for the Equine Centre.

The meeting concluded with me agreeing to co-ordinate a meeting between Greg Maguire, Tony Windsor and myself.

WEDNESDAY 22ND SEPTEMBER, 2004

Greg Maguire telephoned me approx 7.30am

Greg Maguire telephoned me on my mobile phone at approximately 7.30am

Greg Maguire asked me when the meeting with Tony Windsor was going to take place.

I advised him that I was trying to co-ordinate the meeting for later in the week. Tony Windsor was to check his diary and get back to me.

I agreed I would be back in touch with him.

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THURSDAY 23RD SEPTEMBER, 2004

Meeting with Greg Maguire, Tony Windsor and Stephen Hall

In the afternoon a meeting took place at the Powerhouse Hotel.

Tony Windsor outlined to Greg Maguire how the whole matter unfolded.

Greg Maguire said that we needed to work out a strategy to resolve what is going to be said to the Federal Police.

Greg Maguire advised Tony Windsor and myself that in his discussions with John Anderson that John Anderson had asked him to tell Tony Windsor to back off as the matter was bigger than both of them.

Greg Maguire also advised Tony Windsor and myself that if he was interviewed by the Federal Police, that he would lie to protect the Deputy Prime Minister as he would not bring him down and also he needed to protect the funding for the Equine Centre.

I advised that I would take legal advice.

Greg Maguire also said that he would speak to John Anderson about backing off on calling for the names and get Trevor Khan (Nationals Candidate for New England) and all National Party supporters to also stop calling for the names and Tony Windsor would agree not to pursue the matter further during the election.

FRIDAY 24TH SEPTEMBER, 2004

Telephone conference with solicitor

Tony Windsor and myself attend telephone conference with Mr Chris Zucker – Solicitor – seeking legal advice

MONDAY 27TH SEPTEMBER, 2004

Greg Maguire telephones me

At approximately 7.30am, Greg Maguire telephoned me on my mobile and advised me that he had spoken to John Anderson who had agreed to stop calling for the names.

I agreed to talk with Tony Windsor about not pursuing the matter for the rest of the election.

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FRIDAY 1ST OCTOBER, 2004

I am interviewed by Federal Police – initial interview lasted approximately half an hour – mainly to confirm with them that I had attended meeting with Greg Maguire in the company of Tony Windsor and Helen Tickle on the 19th May 2004 and what was discussed at that meeting.

THURSDAY 7TH OCTOBER, 2004

Greg Maguire telephones me

At approximately 9am Greg Maguire telephoned me at my office.

Greg Maguire advised me that the Federal Police had interviewed him on Saturday (2/10/04) and that he knew Helen Tickle had been interviewed on Friday (1/10/04) and that I was going to be interviewed today (7/10/04).

Greg Maguire advised me that 'Windsor dumped on me'.

Greg Maguire told me that the Federal Police had accused him of lying.

Greg Maguire told me that he had advised the Federal Police

- *it was a misunderstanding*
- *he had been a supporter of the independent movement, independents and Tony Windsor can't deliver*
- *Tony Windsor should look at an overseas appointment*

Greg Maguire then asked me to corroborate with his story. He said it was the only way out of it and the easy way out for Tony Windsor and John Anderson and it would protect the funding of the Equine Centre.

Greg Maguire said to me that if I did not support him on this – 'I will finish you'.

I advised Greg Maguire that I will tell the Federal Police the way I saw the meeting and that I will tell the truth and not be a party to a story to fix a problem.

I also told Greg Maguire that he had to do what he had to do but he will have to live with himself.

Greg Maguire advised me that the Federal Police were to call into the Powerhouse Hotel later that day to collect documentation from the hotel.

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Australian Federal Police Announcement

MONDAY 22ND NOVEMBER, 2004

Greg Maguire telephoned me

At approximately 7pm on the night that the Australian Federal Police made their statement public, Greg Maguire telephoned from his mobile phone to my mobile phone. I recognised the number and did not answer and Greg Maguire did not leave any message.

Greg Maguire has not tried to make contact since.

Should you require any further information or clarification please contact me.

Yours faithfully,


Stephen Hall.