



## Senator Barnaby Joyce

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Leader of the Nationals in the Senate

Please find below an opinion piece written by Senator Joyce which was published in The Canberra Times on 2 May 2013.

### Political fiasco drawing to an end, but the pain will linger on

It feels like the political show is rolling the credits and the crowd is leaving the cinema on this Green-Labor-independent matinee.

One evening this week, Tony Windsor flagged one evening his inclination for a same-sex marriage referendum; then, the next morning, he said he was not going to raise it with the Prime Minister, nor was he going to vote for it.

This was followed by some incredulous babble about Facebook, social media and all in all translated to utter confusion.

Julia Gillard told us that the economy was going so well that the deficit had blown out to \$12 billion. The debt went up by another half a billion and now the earnest scribes who swore black and blue that the debt was not a problem are now looking earnestly at the camera saying it is. Meanwhile, Labor delivered a similarly confused explanation from the Windsor book of high Athenian rhetoric.

But we do have one cost that is proportionally going down and that is unfortunately, our defence spending, which is now at its lowest level since 1937. I find that the most powerful tool to engage the electorate is to suggest what would happen to our nation if we let this Green-Labor-independent political fiasco continue in the job.

At the current Wollomombi Falls trajectory, there would not be much among the rocks at the bottom to pick up.

The Greens want everything ever dreamt of in their Kubla Khan, Xanadu euphoria, otherwise known as party meetings, to be paid for by a mining tax. The fact that they can never nominate a mine they support or wish to expand seems irrelevant in the land of little pink clouds of happiness and chatty tea parties with hesitant girls, tardy rabbits, and mad milliners.

From our side of the political debat, my friend Clive has not been helping out. Clive, please, starting a party is what Bob Katter has made into an art house film. Why join him on the set? It is a little more difficult than what is first anticipated and new parties gather new ideas at about the same rate as they gather self-appointed messianic figures who wish to grace Australia with their unrecognised talent.

Business is sitting back biting their nails. Business wants certainty, sanity and honesty; it sees the government crab walking to a new tax to cover the National Disability Insurance Scheme because they have no money for its promises.

It is a genuinely essential program to look after those severely disabled, but to be genuine in your belief in this, the government must suggest what current plans would be cut to pay for it. Anything recurrent you borrow for is a sign of bad management and temporary in its sustainability.

Taxes are always a drag on economic growth. If you keep putting on a little new tax that won't hurt you, you will ultimately get to one that, in combination with all the others, economically kills you.



# AWGA - News Update

At this juncture my feelings are not excitement at what the polls say is an impending election win; my choice to stand in New England makes my participation in that event a lot less likely. My feelings live somewhere between apprehension and anger.

How did this harlequin political crowd manage to formulate such a financially disastrous voyage? If they had done nothing more than continue on from where the Coalition left off, if they had basically gone on holidays, giving instructions that nothing much should happen beyond the set course of 1997, then our position would be vastly better than it currently is.

I remember very well the excited glee as Labor members went around a barbecue in the Parliament House courtyard at the start of the global, but actually more US and Europe - financial crisis. They proclaimed that government had to "go hard, go early, go household".

I remember thinking they should have added "go off your head and go broke". It was like the kid who had just learnt a rude word in a foreign language and was showing all in the school yard how smart they were.

They had no knowledge or desire to genuinely delve into the vast complexities of the financial grammar or even to undertake the sober step backwards, to have a good sleep, cold shower and observe the situation and our very minor global role soberly.

Now, Michael Chaney, chairman of National Australia Bank and Woodside Petroleum, is comparing our financial fate to that of Ireland. I wish him better luck than I had a few years ago.

Barnaby Joyce is the Nationals' Senate Leader and the Opposition Spokesman for Regional Development, Local Government and Water.