

Dear Mr Oakeshott,

My name is Jacqueline and I am an eighteen year old university student (doing a minor in politics and international relations). I do not live in your electorate, in fact I don't even live in New South Wales, but I really wanted to thank you for your decision about which government to support and wish you luck in the next three years. I was very impressed by your policies for regional Australia and your presence in general. I find that you, Tony Windsor and Bob Katter represent regional Australia far more than the National party does anymore, keeping in mind that I have the misfortune to live in Warren Truss' electorate (pity me!). I feel that the National party is far too immersed in Liberal party ideals to truly be the Country party anymore, at least at the Federal level, while the Liberal party has turned into a conservative party, as pointed out by Malcolm Fraser, another politician I find extremely impressive (very much looking forward to reading his biography which is sitting on my desk, curse university assessments taking up my time).

I found you, Mr Windsor and Mr Katter to be extremely refreshing politicians who are honest, straight talkers who appear to know, understand and are connected to their electorates. Even your website is an excellent example of this as it is open and warm and not full of political blah blah spin spin spin like some politicians websites I've visited. As I write I am looking at and comparing yours and Wyatt Roy's, as the youngest person to ever be elected to the Federal Parliament you would expect he would have some interesting things to say! Sadly no. While some might call Bob Katter 'mad' and I certainly do not agree with all his policies (climate change, mining tax, gay rights) one cannot deny he knows his electorate and is full of passion about championing their causes, something rural and regional Australia needs.

I must admit to being very disappointed that you had to turn down the Prime Minister's offer of a Ministry, while I do admire a number of the cabinet ministers a great deal, it would have been very refreshing to have someone who both knows regional Australia and is also straightforward without what I call 'politician speech'. I do understand why you did turn it down, of course, and I am overjoyed to hear you are putting your hat into the ring for the position of Speaker and I wish you all the best and have my fingers crossed that all the legal and party wrangling works

out. Really, an independent should be the Speaker to best be able to maintain neutrality and I am amazed that a way for the Speaker to have a vote has not been put in place before this.

Thank you for your obvious care and the painstaking work you put in to choose the best party for the country. I was quite annoyed when some of the polls came out with the public feeling that you, Mr Windsor and Mr Katter took too long to choose a party. Yes, let's pick the next government of Australia on a whim with no consultation or briefings or anything. Just get it done quickly, that's a fine idea! The public has three-four weeks to decide on a party, let's give the new 'gang of four' the same courtesy, eh?

I know the Liberals will not be happy with your decision and will almost certainly start stirring up some trouble for you and Mr Windsor (my mother suggests ear plugs and lots of them!) if their behaviour during the decision time was anything to go on (Downright disgraceful, and they wonder why they lost the 2007 election. Bullies, so many of them). I wish you luck and all the best over the next three years and hope you do not suffer too much fallout because of your decision to go with Labor. Thus ends my ambling letter, with all my best. Good luck!

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jacqueline Burgess". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jacqueline Burgess

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