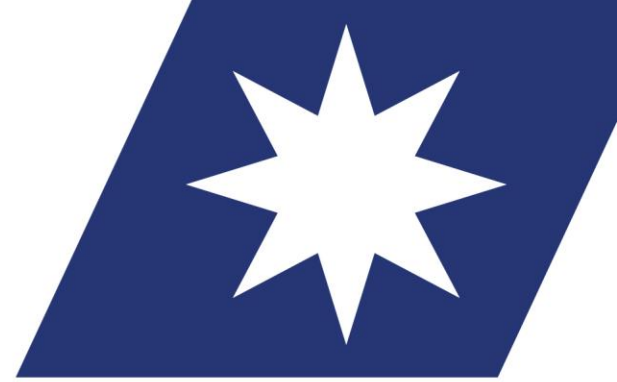


BOB KATTER

Katter's Australian Party

Federal Member for Kennedy



MEDIA RELEASE

31 October 2018

Katter vows to cane government over India sugar dumping

KAP Leader and Federal Member for Kennedy Bob Katter will make government intervention in the sugar industry top priority at the next parliamentary sitting in a bid to initiate an action against India for recently dumping five million tonnes of subsidised sugar onto the world market, a move which breached the World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules and could result in disaster for the local sugar industry.

Since receiving news of India, Mr Katter has been lobbied by industry groups, members of the community and cane farmers to put pressure on the federal government to enforce the rights of the Global Sugar Alliance and protect the vital \$2 billion a year industry.

A livid Mr Katter said Australian governments past and present had a lot to answer for, and that the free trade policies continue to undermine Australian industry and workforce.

"Our country will not survive continuing to be what economist Trevor Sykes called the "only virgin in the brothel".

"Most of my last speeches in Parliament have been what I've hoped are fierce attacks upon the hypocrisy of free trade; upon our industry representative organisations particularly in agriculture. All we've got out of these bodies in Canberra is a clapping of hands for every free trade deal.

"What country on earth free trades? Does anyone seriously believe that China or India free trade?

"I'll tell you how much America free trades; effectively there is no sugar imported into America. I'll tell you how fair dinkum Europe is; there is effectively no sugar going into Europe. Nor into India or Thailand.

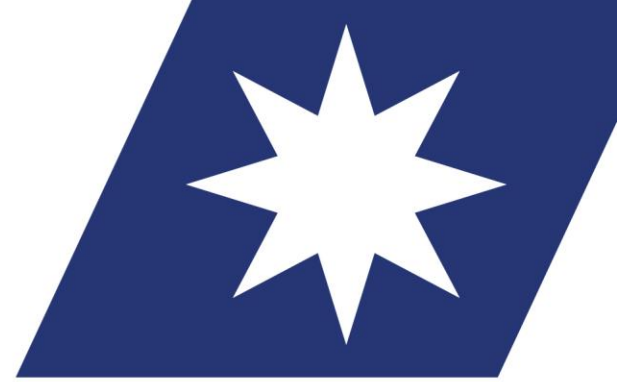
"So the free trade damage was done and it was colossal. And it was done by the Liberal/National government. The National Competition Policy was forced upon the states by the Federal Government. I know this because I was then in that Federal Government and this was one of the major reasons I left.

"The free trade deal with America was about sugar, beef and dairy. As an MP I represent more of those industries than any other MP in Australia. The *Financial Review*, *Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Australian* newspapers all touted that the deal was only about getting these three products into America free of tariff and restrictions.

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"Well the value to the dairying (one of Nth Qld's biggies) was quoted as one free ice-cream a week for each farmer. The cattle industry has 'always' had a fairly good deal on access. And the sugar industry was wiped like a dirty rag. It got nothing.

"Mark Vaile the National Party Minister for Trade said before a negotiations started, 'There would be no deal unless sugar was included.'

"To call anyone in the National Party a liar is not really correct, they are actually jokes. They are not the beer in the bottle; they're the label that tells you how good the beer is.

"When Tony Abbott rose to his feet to congratulate Andrew Robb on securing the free trade deal with China, all the Liberals and their flunkies – the Nationals – stood up and give a standing ovation. I said to the MP next door to me, "Abbott just wrote his own death warrant". A couple of months later, he was gone.

"What they don't tell you on beef, is 'yes', you can get beef into the US free of tariffs (around 2%), but the USA beef 'subsidy' is around 30%. Under the FTA it stays.

"Before *deregulation*, the sugar producer was receiving \$473 a tonne and the price to the consumer was \$1,040 a tonne (104c per/kg). A mark-up of around 100%.

"The "current price" to the producer is \$317 per tonne and the price on the shelf is \$1,750 per tonne (\$1.75 per/kg). Nearly a 600% mark up!

"The supermarket chains have said "thank you, we love you Mr. Government. You have enabled us now to charge the consumers a 600% mark-up instead of a 100% mark-up.

"All this whilst a farmer or farm worker suicides every week.

"American farmers get paid for sugar around \$600 a tonne; French farmers' \$700 tonne, Thailand farmers around \$450 a tonne, and Australian farmers, \$317 a tonne. We have the most poorly paid sugar farmers in the world and that is the outcome of government free-market policies.

"You have to say the people that run our country are the world champion dropkicks, but then again, rich people own shares in Woolworths and Coles don't they? "

—ENDS—

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