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READER CALCULATES THAT ELECTRICITY TRUST OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA (ETSA) IS 75% OWNED BY CHINA

Dear Editor,

I am somewhat confused by the advertisement placed in the paper concerning ETSA stakeholder feedback. Maybe I am out of touch but my remembrance was of ETSA being South Australia's Electricity Trust, thus the name ETSA.

My nephew who dabbles in stocks has now shown me 'substantial' evidence that the 'trust' is in fact 75% Chinese owned. As a humble pensioner it considered that my taxes over the years were being spent securing the electricity network for the people of South Australia. One document indeed shows ETSA Utilities is 51 percent owned by Cheung Kong Infrastructure Holdings Limited and Hongkong Electric Holdings, which form part of the Cheung Kong Group of companies. The remaining 49 percent is owned by Spark Infrastructure.

And further... "the manager and responsible Entity of Spark Infrastructure Group is 50% jointly owned by Cheung Kong Infrastructure (CKI) and RREEF Infrastructure (RREEF)".

I suppose this is why we sponsor our children to attend Scotch College or the like. His discovery raised a comment that such an arrangement should have been reviewed by the Australian Competition Watchdog, the ACCC, or is it now the ACC?

It does appear that the ACCC has'nt exactly found its teeth in the last few years so why it would be bothering itself with a Chinese electricity monopoly operating in South Australia, indeed!

My nephew is no Rhodes scholar, but does he have a point here?

I will in fact give this ETSA Utility whatever a good bit of advice publicly, since they asked for it. I dont know who you are or how you got your sticky fingers on our assets but you really have no business here, and if the premier is reading he should be taking dramatic steps to re-instate such an important service back into the hands of South Australians where it jolly well belongs. I may well be a half worn out pensioner but I can still smell a rat from a fare radius and this has a stench.

If this enquiry has any merit it should direct itself toward integrity and autonomy of critical services in this southern state. Anything less than this dear sir, and I am sure most would agree, would be an absolute scandal!

Caldwell Malt
Adelaide Hills

OPEN LETTER TO HON JAY WEATHERILL FROM MINTABIE FAMILY

**Open Letter to:
The Honourable Jay Weatherill
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs &
Reconciliation,
Parliament House, Adelaide S.A. 5000**

Dear Sir,

Three years ago, after 30 years of self employment and raising a fine family, my wife and I decided to abandon the fast lane and make a "desert change" to Mintabie opal field in the far north of S.A.

We sold our family home near the city and moved here with the intention of semi retiring to a quiet, peaceful and healthy lifestyle cruising into old age with dignity. We bought a small camp and began to make a home for ourselves amongst the many local characters of the bush.

We knew that things would be more expensive and simple plans much more difficult to achieve when you are 1200 km from the capital city, but accepted the challenge with our usual gusto for life, at the same time providing a base for our family and friends to visit central Australia from.

With the current proposal of introducing a police check for everyone who intends to stay here longer than 24 hours (Anangu people excepted for some reason) it will inflict a \$50 per person fee on them, as well as a four week delay and take away our right to spontaneity in our lives. Our visitors alone will have to contribute about \$1500 to a Govt that's proven to be wasteful, ignoring the small people while bending over backwards for their mining and oil interested mates.

Our Progress Association, local community and business owners have put a lot of time, money and effort into the facilities and infrastructure that will attract tourists to our tiny town and now that our hard yards are working well these unfounded proposed restrictions from out of the blue which are totally un-Australian have the potential to place this town along with it's families, who currently have stability, into a stressful and precarious lifestyle.

On top of that when our family and friends have paid the fees suggested, waited four weeks for approval and some driven over 2000 km to come and see us, we wouldn't have the privileges others have of offering them a drink when they get here because of the proposed new rules.

2 + 2 = 3 ON APY LANDS

The outback listened with great interest to regional radio last week after public comments by APY Lands General Manager, Ken Newman that if the Mintabie residents didn't like the new lease "agreement" then they could leave.

During last Friday's interview Mr. Newman then said he didn't want the retired residents to leave!! What does Mr. Newman really want - more time to shape up?

Regional communities have a close relationship with Mintabie. Outback communities have an integrated and two way non-racist relationship with our hosts, the Anangu people of the region.

It was a surprise to hear a relative newcomer passing the buck in what appears to many as a failure by the General Manger of the APY Lands himself and his committee elect, to make a difference to a race of people who "still remember" and drink to forget!

Conditions on the APY Lands appear to have gone downhill since around 2002.

I would also like to suggest that the APY Lands are in fact not dry by any stretch of the imagination.

If Mr. Newman believes that individuals full of alcohol entering the Lands (whether it be an ordinary Anangu or a board member), are not bringing alcohol with them, then he may need to reassess what he is trying to keep dry, the Lands or the Anangu and perhaps consider posting a breathalizer at each entry point to keep alcohol, hidden in Anangu's tummys, out. Maybe ankle bracelets when they leave?

It could be argued that it would be safer and more "homely" with a regulated "wetness" on the Lands. The statistics on accidents are conclusive and point to APY Lands management.

APY residents driving under the influence has a great impact on the rescue services of our communities

They'll need to get back in their vehicle and drive down to the pub for any refreshments. Many of our friends prefer not to frequent pubs!! I wish I could get some shares in ours as that's the only business that's got any thing to gain from all these changes. You would be forcing us to pay \$5 per beer at the pub when it costs about 50c to make our own. Everyone outside our town is asking what part of China, Mintabie is in that we wouldn't be "allowed" visitors without Govt approval and if they're allowed in we can't offer them a drink in our own home. If this is the future of South Australia, God help us all.

I know the aboriginal lands are dry, (self imposed) and when I work out there, I respect that and comply happily, but the Mintabie opal field was pegged out declared and inhabited long before Don Dunstan and his mates rightly gave some of their lands back to the Anangu people.

Mintabie is just like any other part of Australia and shouldn't have the self imposed laws of the nearby communities inflicted upon everyone residing here. It is perceived that power mongers are working to their own agenda which will become clearer if these plans are successful. As far as I'm aware no aboriginal people live within the mining lease but live about 50 km away from here. Some live much further away. Anangu can get grog anywhere along the Stuart Hwy they care to pull in, so why make a 40km detour to come here?

Anangu have to go somewhere for provisions that their own communities don't have, like quality fresh fruit, vegies and meat etc at reasonable prices with the store owners allowing some of them credit refused by their own people. If any of them are under the influence of anything illegal it's been sourced outside of Mintabie. All the trouble reported in the media seems to be a smoke screen instigated by non-ordinary Anangu residents.

If this precedent is set and imposed upon normal law abiding citizens of Australia on a "government lease" area, this current government will have made enemies of any who have voted Labor in the past and they will be committed to work vigorously against this party in forthcoming elections for fear of what may happen to their own basic civil rights in other parts of the country at any given time.

**Yours faithfully,
Lee & Sharlene Craggs
P.O. BOX 30 Mintabie opal field
S.A. 5724 08 86705041.**

*Margaret Mackay
resident, Cooper Pedy*

and small towns who unlike Mr. Newman are unpaid volunteers.

Does the APY Lands have a volunteer rescue service to cater for its accidents or do they live off the backs of small communities?

Our volunteers are attending to road accidents predominantly for people that Mr. Newman is paid to make a difference for.

The suggestion to force the Mintabie people to "party at the pub", will then place another section of our community in danger of having one too many in a social environment and then driving home!! This is not about Anangu is it?

So in 30 years Mintabie has had one conviction and a couple pending. This is a pathetic case and won't excuse yet another failed "committee" to control their own large backyard for any longer than the next summer when residents will evacuate the Lands once again. Not for Mintabie, but for Coober

Pedy, Port Augusta and Alice Springs, where Anangu have families and friends!

As for the outback being a harbour for criminals and child molesters - how many of these do we eventually find hiding in institutions, on benches and quite frequently behind the pious words of do-gooders?

We then heard from Jonathan Nichols, "Indigenous Spokesperson", from Uniting Care Wesley.

After stating that he'd never been to Mintabie proceeded to reel off data from another era that he seemed to have a fixation on.

The most concerning observation was that Mr. Nichols who works for Uniting Care, was less than caring as he passed judgement, repeated gossip, made unfounded statements and spoke recklessly about a community of people.

Mr. Nichols might find some real facts by simply having a police check and visiting Mintabie for a week and avoid making defamatory statements in the future!