

THE STANDARD

SE news
HD **Failing the 'pub test': Alan Jones blasts Tony Abbott over government's free trade deal with China**
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If Tony Abbott thought radio host Alan Jones would provide him with a sympathetic forum to bask in his successful hosting of the G20 summit on Monday, he had another thing coming.

While congratulating the Prime Minister on his defence of the coal industry at the weekend, the post-summit radio interview on Monday morning took a turn as Jones attacked the federal Renewable Energy Target and went on to declare that Mr Abbott was failing the "pub test" with his imminent free trade agreement with China.

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"You know that wind turbines are a fake and heavily subsidised by the taxpayer. Global warming is a hoax, we've had nothing for 18 years," the 2GB breakfast host thundered.

"People listening to you now say, well he's talking economic growth, but hang on, the cost of energy with renewable energy targets is crippling economic growth. They're saying to me 'we used to have the cheapest energy in the world. Now because of all of this, we actually cannot afford to go on doing what we're doing, and jobs are being lost here'. Doesn't economic growth start at home?"

Indeed it did, the Prime Minister agreed, and thanks to the abolition of the carbon tax, Mr Abbott said, power prices had seen their biggest drop on record last quarter.

"I still think they're high" one of the reasons we want to scale back the Renewable Energy Target is because we want to further reduce power prices," he said.

"I can't work miracles Alan, there is no magic wand."

Jones would not be pacified.

"There are people driving to work today listening to you and they are saying, well, no one subsidises anything I do. I'm on my own here, but if you own a wind turbine and you come from Qatar or South Korea or China or India and own wind turbines, you're getting billions of dollars in subsidies from the taxpayer. That doesn't make sense to them," he said.

"We don't need renewable energy targets unless you believe that carbon dioxide is a poisonous pollutant."

Sensing an opening, the PM reminded Jones that he had defended coal to G20 leaders.

"And perhaps it wasn't the most popular point I made

"No, but good on you for making it," Jones cheered.

Jones' rage turned to US President Barack Obama for upstaging his G20 host with an "absolutely meaningless" climate pact with China.

"We're supposed to have a wonderful alliance, some sort of mate," Jones fumed.

"The left and the Abbott-haters here have loved it ... I'll tell you what, if I was Tony Abbott I'd be pretty angry about all that stuff."

"Well Alan, look, it's pretty easy for the President of the United States to attract more attention than the Prime Minister of Australia " that's kind of the natural order of things," the Prime Minister replied.

China and the US were the world's biggest emitters "by miles", so "good on them for having a go at reducing them", he said.

"I think I have a very good personal relationship with President Obama as indeed I think I have with President Xi and Prime Minister Abe of Japan and Prime Minister Cameron of the United Kingdom and we've just got Chancellor Merkel of Germany in Australia, I had the most marvellous dinner with her last night in Sydney. So I think Australia's relationships with important world leaders are in excellent repair."

If he thought Jones might congratulate him on sealing a free trade deal with **China**, an agreement a decade in the making, Abbott was bound to be disappointed.

"To win an election " and you're not worth two bob in opposition " to win an election, you've got to pass the pub test," Jones lectured.

"I can tell you that the **board** here this morning is in meltdown."

"Why can't we see this Free Trade Agreement" we don't believe the people who are elected to represent us are speaking our language."

Jones said the promised benefits of the deal, such as tariff-free access to **Chinese** markets for Australian **dairy** farmers and **wine** producers didn't stack up.

"Hang on" **China** are giving us nothing. The **dairy** farms are owned by **China**," Jones cried.

In Western Victoria, Jones shouted, 50 **dairy** farmers had already signed deals to sell to **China**.

The Van Diemen's Land **Company**, a big Tasmanian **dairy** outfit, was also preparing to sell to **China**.

"By this time next week, who is going to own little Tasmania," Jones asked.

"The public are very, very angry Prime Minister about this I can tell you."

Seeking to calm his interrogator, the Prime Minister said he could understand people being anxious about the issue, but no buyer could **buy** unless the owner wanted to sell, and an owner would only want to sell to a foreign investor because they offered a better price.

But there was a double standard, Jones challenged.

"Can Tony Abbott go and **buy** a farm in **China**? No, the answer is no Prime Minister, the answer is no he can't, nor can he **buy** a coal mine, nor can he **buy** a steel mill."

"Prime Minister I'm telling you out there, they are on fire, in the pubs, they don't swallow this.

"You've got this **China** Bright Food crowd, they're going to spend \$2 **billion**, they admit it, purchasing **dairy** farms, wineries and other agricultural assets, so the free trade agreement will say 'oh well, tariffs are off, when you're selling **dairy** produce to **China**, and wineries', well of course it's off, **China** own them.

"And their factory manager said" we'd like to start with **dairy** and move to all other foods from Australia. God help me!"

Lowering his voice, Jones warned: "PM you don't have a mandate for this."

"The people who vote are the masters, aren't they? They have given you whatever authority you've got " they don't agree with this."

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