

INQUIRY INTO ILLEGAL TOBACCO TRADE

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

Good afternoon,

I was watching the news report on Sky News from the 20th of May.

When a police officer asks Mark Butler if the government would consider dropping the tobacco tax so the police didn't have to deal with daily firebombings, shootings and even murders over tobacco, Mark Butler stated that dropping the price would be 'letting the criminals dictate the price of smokes'.

How did Mark Butler make it this far and this high up in government without knowing basic economics? It's not the criminals dictating the price. It's the market. Consumers simply won't pay the extortionate prices that Mark Butler wants to charge for cigarettes. The criminals have just met the market and are giving the consumer what they want at the price it's worth.

How has Mark Butler made it this far in life without a basic understanding of math?

$\$50 \times 0 = \0

$\$50 \times 0$ does not equal \$5 billion.

Charging \$50 for a packet of cigarettes that no one will buy won't gain any tax excise.

It seems Mark Butler won't be happy until 40% of the population smokes illicit tobacco, with 60 tobaccoists to every 1 McDonald's, smoking rates have sky rocketed. None of that money goes to the treasury for health care. Billions of dollars goes to criminal gangs instead.

If these excessive price rises keep happening and there is no reduction in the tax excise, \$0 is exactly what the health care system will get from tobacco, while dealing with the increased cost of looking after so many smokers, who not only smoke more than ever because it's so cheap, but smoke illegally imported tobacco that has no regulatory standards.

I am at a loss as to how Mark Butler could look at that police officer, who has no doubt seen first hand the violence caused by the excessive tax on tobacco, and say such stupid things.

I would also like to point out that Mark Butler very clearly said 'criminals selling tobacco' so what is the inquiry for? Isn't this inquiry asking the question 'if' criminals sell illicit tobacco, as the government is not aware how these illegal shops that sell only illicit tobacco products operate and who operates them?

Once July 1st comes and NSW Health give all known illegal tobaccoists licenses to sell illicit tobacco it will be very obvious that this government is happy for criminals to own the tobacco industry. This government has made it clear they are fine to receive little to no tobacco tax excise in favour of allowing criminal run shops have access to children and sell them chop chop and vapes. Mark Butlers insatiable greed for tobacco tax excise has already caused murders, daylight executions and an incredible amount of violence on our streets. Beyond what is visible to the public there is much more heinous crimes being funded by the money made by these criminal gangs such as human trafficking. There has been zero enforcement measures against the sellers and importers of illicit tobacco. Mark Butler has not put any effort what so ever into stopping the illicit trade but will vehemently defend his extreme tax rises. Will Mark Butler continue to raise the price of tobacco, while continuing to allow criminals to use the proceeds of illicit tobacco to traffic children into sexual slavery?

Regards