

Westfield Mega-Shopping Centre Empire pays only 10% Tax

by Heath Aston via shirl - The Age *Wednesday, May 28 2014, 12:43pm*

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While lying Abbott screams 'debt' to impose an AUSTERITY economy on Oz, the mainstream media finally begins to publish facts about TAX AVOIDING large corporations that starve government of revenue.



Frank Lowy with his former political servant and Abbott mentor, John Howard

It has been revealed that former co-owner of the heavily insured -- only months before -- NY Twin Towers, the same that were bombed by 'terrorists,' Frank 'Mossad agent, Zionist Jew' Lowy, of the Westfield shopping empire presides over a corporation that only pays 10% Tax on its HUGE income in Oz, and Australians wonder why the government can't make ends meet and are forced to target the most vulnerable in society.

Notwithstanding Abbott's despicable and COWARDLY budget -- targeting the most vulnerable -- his servility to TAX AVOIDING plutocrats, which prevents him from applying a FAIR TAX BURDEN ACROSS THE ENTIRE SPECTRUM OF OZ SOCIETY is NOW well known.

His lies and obfuscations relating to the Oz economy are endless but now that the mainstream media has shown a modicum of courage and published what the alternative media have been publishing for years, we may get some FAIR action regarding policy. If not, then at least enough evidence to force a plebiscite and throw Abbott into the political wilderness forever.

The Oz gov has a REVENUE problem due to its aversion to TAXING major corporations and the Transnationals that are raping our nation at speed. In view of the latest info it makes one laugh to hear Abbott constantly parrot that 'everyone must share the burden' of his budget -- yea, Tony, everyone except the highest earners and largest corporations pilfering our national wealth and not shouldering their responsibility to AUSTRALIA.

We sincerely hope that Abbott maintains his intransigent attitude after it has been revealed that his

emperors have no clothes. Continue lying and remain obstinate and help facilitate your ejection from office Mr. zero INTEGRITY, LIAR and errand boy to the plutocrats,' Tony Abbott!

Those that wish to accompany Abbott into political oblivion, Hockey and Cormann, are welcome.

Report from The Age follows:

Westfield pays 10% tax

Frank Lowy's Westfield shopping centre empire pays less than a third of the corporate tax rate, a report has found, sparking calls for a government inquiry into the tax contribution of Australia's biggest companies.

An analysis of Westfield's financial results over nearly a decade by a university academic found the taxman has forgone as much as \$2.6 billion from Westfield if the 30 per cent company tax rate had been enforced.

The report by Dr Roman Lanis, a senior lecturer in accounting and tax at the University of Technology Sydney, found the combined arms of Westfield pay an "effective corporate tax rate" of just eight cents in the dollar - far below the official 30 per cent.

On average, the top 200 stockmarket-listed companies in Australia pay 22 cents in the dollar.

The report does not allege Westfield has done anything illegal - and nor does Fairfax Media.

Westfield, which is due to face shareholders at its annual meeting on Thursday, said the report was meant to "embarrass" the company as it was funded by United Voice, the union representing cleaners at Westfield's 38 malls.

The union and the company are locked in a dispute over conditions for cleaners, who are paid a basic \$17.50 an hour.

"Far from being embarrassed, Westfield is proud of its record of tax compliance," said Westfield spokesman Mark Ryan.

Dr Lanis' report found that over nine years between 2005 and 2013, Westfield paid an average annual tax of just \$140 million on pre-tax profits of \$1.7 billion.

The Westfield Retail Trust, a listed offshoot valued at nearly \$10 billion, paid an effective rate of zero, his report concluded.

"If [both arms of] Westfield had paid tax at the statutory rate of 30 per cent it could generate additional annual tax revenues of \$541 million," Dr Lanis found.

A report by the Uniting Church last year identified Westfield, along with the major banks, for its use of tax havens and low-tax jurisdictions. Westfield's highly complex corporate structure includes more than 50 entities registered in tax havens such as Jersey, Luxembourg and Singapore.

The listed property sector, of which Westfield is by far the biggest player, is among the most "aggressive" in terms of tax minimisation, Dr Lanis said.

He said it would take public pressure to get the government to act on wider corporate tax avoidance despite commitments by Prime Minister Tony Abbott, who has vowed to use Australia's leadership of this year's G20 meeting to push for a co-ordinated international crackdown on tax-avoidance by global corporations.

"The government said the pain would be shared but, if you look at the budget, there was very little pain aimed at the corporate sector," said Dr Lanis. "Surely there is a way to make companies pay their fair share."

Westfield declined to confirm its actual Australian tax contribution but said the report was "flawed and so obviously written to grab cheap media attention" by United Voice.

"The 'report' has been generated as part of a long-running industrial campaign to achieve over-award payments for cleaning staff in Australia," Mr Ryan said.

David O'Byrne, national secretary of United Voice said a "major" inquiry into corporate tax, combining all political parties, corporate Australia, academics and the community sector was needed.

Commenting on Westfield's tax arrangements, he said: "It's not illegal but it's immoral."

"When the government is launching this attack on ordinary Australians it is important that they have done all the work that can be done on the revenue side. Joe Hockey said the age of entitlement is over - well, over for who?"

Mark Zirnsak, of the Tax Justice Network Australia, said it was hard to get to the bottom of corporate Australia's tax affairs but said a review of nine years' results by Dr Lanis was "robust". "Tax law is very secretive," he said.

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See also:

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB1023224393597080560>



Disingenuous Abbott lying through his teeth as usual

<http://www.theage.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/westfield-pays-10-tax-20140528-394t8.html>

Jungle Drum Prose/Poetry. <http://jungledrum.lingama.net/news/story-1157.html>