

With yet another round of the Barnaby Joyce affair distracting the government, the next question will be whether the beleaguered MP runs again in his New England seat at the election.

In this interview with The Conversation, Nationals leader and Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack pointedly avoids saying Joyce should do so.

“That’ll be a matter for him and that’ll be a matter for the National party in New England. That’ll be a matter for a branch to nominate him and then that’ll be a matter for the branch members in New England as to whether or not they decide if he nominates or if anybody else nominates,” McCormack says.

“Then it becomes a preselection process as to who they think would best represent them going forward”.

McCormack also speaks about the reception for the government’s tax plans in regional Australia, lashes out at those city-dwellers “sipping lattes” who’d close down live animal exports, and declares “trust me, I am no pushover for anybody”.

Michelle Grattan does not work for, consult, own shares in or receive funding from any company or organisation that would benefit from this article, and has disclosed no relevant affiliations beyond their academic appointment.

Authors: Michelle Grattan, Professorial Fellow, University of Canberra

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