Dr Richard Lim
Deputy Leader of the Opposition
Chairman, Policy Development Committee
Shadow Treasurer,
Shadow Minister for Education, Employment & Training,
Racing, Gaming & Licensing, and Central Australia

Charles Darwin University missing in action
21 October 2004

The current unrest with the Charles Darwin University deteriorated further today with Alice Springs, students in Business Studies being told that as of next year, their courses will be delivered on-line only, CLP Shadow Education Minister Dr Richard Lim said today.

"There will be no more face-to-face classes. It is absurd," Dr Lim said.

"Why would any student want to pay full fees and only receive lessons via the internet, downloading their lessons and then studying at their own time?

"It would be cheaper and more convenient for the student to buy a book and study that at his/her own leisure or enrol with a university that has a full External Studies Department which will provide printed material and personal assistance for students.

"This year, the Charles Darwin University, with a lot of fanfare, announced it was delivering its Law Course online for Alice Springs students. At the start of the year there were 25 students who enrolled. I understand that over 20 of the students have dropped out of the course because the online mode of delivery was unsatisfactory.

"And yet, the Minister for Education has not done anything about the situation, typical of the Martin Labor Government which is only concerned about the northern suburbs of Darwin.

"It is not good enough that those of us living in Central Australia are forgotten by the Darwin centric Martin Labor Government.

"Matters at the Charles Darwin University are getting worse, with students and staff complaining and ready to take industrial action and all the while the Minister for Employment Education and Training not anywhere to be seen acting to prevent deterioration of the situation.

"All Territorians should be concerned that our premier educational institution is lurching from one problem to the next and it seems without any hope for improvement in the near future and the Minister for Education is seemingly not concerned about the increasing level of student and staff frustration over the university's administration.

"Staff of the CDU have been frustrated over the slow progress of their EBA with the university and are now threatening industrial action.

"Students have complained of poor facilities to conduct their studies and other activities. Not surprisingly the Minister is hiding in his Parliament House office."

Ends