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RELOCATING BERRIMAH PRISON SHOULD BE A CRIMINAL OFFENCE BASED ON INSANITY

Gerry Wood, the Independent Member for Nelson, says that the decision by the Government to relocate Darwin Correctional centre to an unknown destination just to allow for housing at the Berrimah farm is a sick joke.

Gerry says that certainly Berrimah Prison needs upgrading but why move it?
If the Government policy is still to have only 2 prisons why move this one?

Gerry says that the Government should come clean on how much will it cost to pull the prison down and re-establish it in an unknown place in the Darwin region?

Why have they announced this without telling the public where the new prison would go?

Gerry says the prison should stay where it is because
  • the gov has just recently spent $2m to build a medium security wing at Don Dale in Nov 2004 and $7.8m to build a low security facility at the Berrimah jail in August 2006 and the Minister says the Government will be still spending millions of dollars to upgrade Berrimah over the next 3 years– so all this money and infrastructure will be wasted.
  • the prison has all the services it needs – water, power, sewerage
  • it is accessible by public transport which is important for families visiting
  • it is relatively close to the courts so that prisoners or people on remand can be quickly taken to or from the prison
  • it is not near a major residential area but is close to industrial estates
  • there is plenty of land to expand or build a new complex on the site
  • the cost of pulling the prison down will be added to the price of residential land if it is ever released

Gerry says that to move the prison elsewhere just because the Government wants to put housing on the Berrimah Farm is a continuance of the NT Government’s 5 minute planning strategy. The land at Berrimah Farm could be developed as industrial land which would make sense because of its proximity to the port. That would mean that the prison could stay where it is.

Gerry says any new housing developments should now be started at the new town of Weddell not at the Berrimah ghetto.

This is another poorly thought out plan (done in exactly 5 minutes) which seems to indicate that an election is coming sooner not later. After all why would they announce such a plan today for something not to be operational till 2011/12?

As for wasting taxpayer’s money on insane ideas this takes the cake or perhaps was it off a cake packet that Government got this idea in the first place?

Cessi foro gallinarum sed surgo