Gerry Wood, the Independent Member for Nelson, says the NT Government’s policy on restricting alcohol using Alcohol Protection Orders (APOs) seems to be 99% spin, 1% practicality. It’s really gammon.

Gerry says the CLP when in opposition claimed that the Banned Drinkers Register would not stop people accessing alcohol through secondary supply. The same question could be asked of the Alcohol Protection Orders. How will the Government stop people on APOs accessing alcohol through a secondary supplier?

He says that without an ID system how are owners of licensed premises going to know who is on an Alcohol Protection Order? Does that mean that we are going to have a photo of everyone who is on an APO, stuck up on a ‘shame job’ wall at every licensed premises in the NT? And would that mean photos would have to be changed regularly putting new people on and removing those who had completed their orders?

Gerry asks, so what happens to people who break an APO even if it is for only entering a licensed premise eg a restaurant or the local footy club after a match? Do they automatically go to gaol? If so where are we going to put them because they will be added to the extra numbers imprisoned under the new mandatory laws which are already filling up the prisons?

Gerry says that the APO idea is an attempt by Government to deflect criticism that it has received from Territorians for scrapping the BDR. The BDR was already being used for alcohol related offences such as driving over the limit. The problem is that in their panic to look like they’re doing something, being tough on crime and to reach the promised 10% reduction in crime, the Government is just locking up more people and doing bugger all to tackle the problem at the front end eg advertising, trading hours in Mitchell Street, alcohol sponsorship of sport, pricing, attacking the culture of binge drinking and drunkenness.

Gerry says the NT Government is never going to tackle the alcohol industry – they wouldn’t want to upset them. They might be accused of running a nanny state!

This fundamentally important issue should be tackled by the Parliament working together but it seems the Government is not interested and is operating on the immature and outdated approach of ‘our laws are tougher than your laws’, so there. Sad!
Cessi foro gallinarum sed surgo