Adam Giles
Chief Minister of the Northern Territory

Labor endorses Country Liberals economic strategy with copycat policies

4 February 2016

Territory Labor has demonstrated yet again it has no new ideas of its own with the release of a so-called “jobs and infrastructure plan” that endorses what the Country Liberals Government is already doing.

Chief Minister Adam Giles said after more than three years in Opposition, Labor had failed to come up with an alternative vision for Territorians.

“Labor’s grandly overstated ‘jobs plan’ is essentially an endorsement of Country Liberals initiatives such as our ship lift facility, the Marine Industry Park, the railway from Tennant Creek to Mount Isa and our Infrastructure Development Fund,” Mr Giles said.

“This latest carbon copy plan from Labor follows recent similar announcements that they would copy the Country Liberals’ business policy and procurement reforms and support our plans for a national indigenous cultural centre in Alice Springs.

“Labor’s plan commits to spend the same amount of money the Government is already spending on things the Government is already building.

“Even Labor’s Economic Summit is not new, it’s a direct copy from then Labor Opposition Leader Clare Martin who made the same promise in 2001.

“Labor’s announcement shows that while on the one hand they support what the Government is doing, on the other hand they have no vision for the Territory.

“An election is supposed to be a battle of ideas. Labor has shown they have nothing innovative to create new jobs and no interest in developing new opportunities other than what the Government is already pursuing.

“One thing the Territory Labor Leader has in common with his friend Bill Shorten in Canberra is that nobody really knows what either of them really believes or stands for.”

Mr Giles said despite announcing a so-called ‘jobs plan’, Labor had shown it was anti-jobs by proposing a ban on fracking.

“Labor’s ban threatens the $800 million gas pipeline to the East Coast, and the 900 jobs it will create by robbing the pipeline of gas it needs to be viable,” he said.
“The pipeline developer has given itself the option of expanding the pipeline’s capacity prior to the laying of the first pipe if market conditions support increased capacity, but Labor would put an end to that with their plan to stifle supply.

“The people of Tennant Creek would be shaking in their boots over what Labor has announced.

“Despite what the Opposition Leader says now, Labor supported fracking when last in Government.

“It was Labor who threw the gate open to 95% of the Northern Territory for oil and gas exploration. It is the Country Liberals who are winding that back to more acceptable levels and locations.

“It is the Country Liberals Government that made the decision not to grant exploration permits for Watarrka National Park and the Coomalie Council region.

“The Country Liberals Government is committed to developing the best possible regulatory system that will allow for the future growth of the onshore oil and gas industry in a balanced and environmentally sustainable manner.

“If Labor actually supported jobs in the bush, there is no way they would be seeking to close down the onshore gas industry.”

Mr Giles said the Country Liberals had worked hard to rebuild the Territory’s economy and repair the Government’s finances since coming to office.

“In just three years, Government debt has disintegrated to less than half of Labor’s $5.5 billion legacy while the Northern Territory now has the lowest unemployment rate in the country and the highest employment participation rate,” he said.

“The Country Liberals Government has embarked on a massive infrastructure program that is building new roads specifically intended to boost tourism and agriculture, and we’ve cut more than 200 pieces of red tape to make it easier to do business.

“We’ve developed a comprehensive Economic Development Strategy that builds on our proximity to Asia and is designed to smooth out the peaks and troughs of economic activity.

“Twelve years of Labor Government showed us Labor will only deliver more debt, a higher cost of living and high unemployment.

“Only the Country Liberals has a real plan to secure the Territory’s future and ensure our economy goes from strength to strength.”

Media Contact: Scott Whitby 0438 531 583