Royal Commission links former NT Labor Government to MUA slush fund

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The Leader of the Opposition, Michael Gunner, needs to come clean on the deal between the Maritime Union of Australia and the NT Labor Government over Blacktip Gas supply to Darwin.

Treasurer David Tollner said the Blacktip Project was worth billions of dollars and designed to secure electricity for decades for Territorians.

“During the construction phase of the project, the Royal Commission was told that $1 million was paid by two subcontractors to the MUA for training,” he said.

The Royal Commission into Union Corruption stated in regards to the MUA...

‘The trouble is that the evidence taken as a whole suggests not only that a material purpose of ENI and Saipem for making the payment was to secure and maintain industrial peace, but also that the MUA insisted on the payment on pain of industrial war if the payment were not made.’

“It’s also clear that throughout the entire contractual arrangements and the actual construction and commissioning phase, the current Leader of the Opposition, Michael Gunner, was in a position of authority as the Chief of Staff to the then Minister for Power and Water Corporation and the chief of staff to the then Chief Minister,” Mr Tollner said.

“NT taxpayers had to pay millions in extra for diesel generation for electricity whilst the MUA was delaying the gas deal.

“The MUA have a significant role in the NT Labor Party and Gunner needs to make it clear to NT voters that they are not influencing his policies.”

Recently the NT Government introduced legislation to improve the powers of inquiry following the Stella Maris issue.

“Are the Royal Commission’s findings another example of what Territorians can expect to see more of if Labor get into government?” Mr Tollner said.

“Gunner needs to come clean on this issue and his relationship with the unions. As chief of staff to both Paul Henderson and Kon Vatskalis he was paid to know about that deal.”

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