Burke in denial over Territory’s drug problem

Opposition Leader Denis Burke’s refusal to back the Government’s tough new drug laws shows he remains in denial about the extent of the problem in the Territory.

Attorney General Dr Peter Toyne said he was astounded the Opposition was questioning the reasons behind the tough new laws and denying the existence of a significant drug problem in the Territory during debate in Parliament late yesterday.

"Mr Burke’s attempt to deny a serious drug problem exists in the Territory is shameful.

"He even said it was ‘just nonsense’ to suggest there was a need for special legislation to close down drug houses - the CLP are in total denial.

"That is an insult to the people who live in places such as Parap and Moil who have had to live with these drug houses in their suburbs for years.

"Mr Burke clearly does not want tough new drug laws. On that point he stands shoulder to shoulder with the same people who invaded the Parliament earlier this week demanding that all drugs be legalised.

"It is an extraordinary position for the CLP to take. It’s time for Mr Burke to stand down and for the CLP to support the Government.

"Territory families are demanding that the Government take on the drug dealers and manufacturers to reduce crime. They want drug houses closed down.

"Territorians want to stop drugs being sold in hotels and clubs and they want those who make a profit - from manufacturing and selling these drugs - to be put out of business.

"They do not want an Opposition Leader so blind to the truth that he ends up supporting the very people who are preying on our youth and expanding this illicit industry."

Dr Toyne said the Government’s tough drug laws included new police powers to enter declared drug premises without a warrant, arrest people acting as look-outs and confiscate assets gained through drug crime.