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**Mayor Misguided and Offensive In Her Attempt To Scrap Town Camps**

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Dr Richard Lim has slammed the Mayor of the Alice Springs Town Council and an Alderman for their uninformed and offensive comment that they “want to scrap town camps”.

“The Mayor should be ashamed for making such uninformed and offensive comment about scrapping town camps. Any person who understands the history of the development of town camps will have to disagree strongly with the Mayor and the Alderman,” Dr Lim said.

“What the Mayor is saying is that she wants to have residents of all the town camps in Alice Springs be transferred to homes in the suburbs or be sent out of town. Neither option makes any sense.

“The Mayor should now apologise for making such a divisive statement.

“The Commonwealth government created town camps as transitional living areas in an urban setting in Alice Springs to provide options for people who wished to move from a bush environment to town.

“At self-government, the Tangentyere Council and several town camps were handed over to the fledgling Northern Territory Government and were treated and funded as remote aboriginal communities to manage itself (the Tangentyere Council) and the town camps.

“Over the successive terms of the Country Liberal Government since 1978, more than half of the town camps in Alice Springs were developed to accommodate the increasing number of people of different language groups moving from the bush to the town.

“I know that secure land titles to these town camps were handed over to Tangentyere Council, whose role have evolved over the years as the manager of services for all the town camps.

“The Country Liberal Party stands proudly by the decision to create living areas where people are provided with an environment that is mid-way between their bush homes and mainstream urban living.

“We still believe that the model, if run properly, will provide living areas where people can move from bush living to urban living in what could be a safe environment.
“The town camps were seen as sanctuaries for bush people and in better times, did save lives.

“There may be a need to refocus the efforts of the Tangentyere Council so that services are better delivered and the living standards of the town camps improved for the residents of the town camps.

“While there may be a case to argue whether there is a need to refocus its efforts, in government, the Country Liberal Party will, in the first instance discuss this matter with the Tangentyere Council.

Ends

Contact: Dr Richard Lim 0418 897 688