14th April 2005

Is Health the Real Reason for Jack Ah Kit’s Resignation?

The announcement today that the Minister for Community Development Jack Ah Kit will retire from politics at the next territory election means that the Labor government is attempting to allow the Minister to avoid public scrutiny over his actions.

Country Liberal Party Leader Denis Burke said that questions still surround the Minister’s questionable actions including;

- The Minister’s refusal to apologise to Warren Anderson and how many millions tax-payers will have to for out once the settlement is determined,
- An on-going police investigation into the Minister’s decision to giveaway a $35,000 four wheel drive to a local community,
- Other issues within his departments regarding other decisions to provide funding to local communities,
- The Minister’s claims of maladministration within his department.

Mr Burke said,” The Labor government and particularly the Chief Minister must now allow the full and open scrutiny of the May Budget before we go to the next election. With Jack Ah Kit’s retirement, we must now be able to get to the bottom of how much money the Minister has cost Territory tax-payers along with any other possible corrupt activity.

“The Chief Minister has been desperate to hide her Budget books from public administration. Now we know at least one of the reasons why.

“I am aware that Jack Ah Kit blamed poor health for his retirement but he was looking pretty sprightly at the Alice Springs sittings. He has also said for some time now that his health was fine and under control. But the fact that the Minister is under pressure on several fronts raises the possibility that he might have asked to go by the Chief Minister to avoid any further embarrassment to the Labor government.

“The Chief Minister must give a guarantee to all Territorians that Jack Ah Kit fulfils all of his responsibilities and stays to face up to the music over his questionable behaviour.”