GOVERNMENT’S SELF INFLECTED WOUNDS

“The Chief Minister is clearly out of favour and out of touch with her party,” says Jodeen Carney, Leader of the Opposition.

“In a week when Clare Martin wanted her Government’s fifth budget to be the centre of attention, incompetence, internal division and ill-discipline overshadowed the budget.

“It must have been painful for the Chief Minister to watch Mines and Energy Minister, Chris Natt, fumble even the most elementary questions about his portfolio.

“The public are now aware he isn’t up to the job, and his time as a Minister is limited. The Chief Minister won’t be able to arrogantly brush aside his next, inevitable, stumble.

“Last night’s vote on the McArthur River Mine Bill highlighted the growing strength of the indigenous wing of the ALP and conversely the unravelling authority of the Chief Minister.

“The fact three indigenous MLA’s crossed the floor, and the Minister for Environment, Marion Scrymgour, pointedly absented herself from the vote bodes poorly for the Chief Minister’s future.

“The Chief Minister is fortunate that the Government’s overwhelming majority on the floor means all indigenous MLA’s could cross the floor and she would still command an absolute majority.

“In a tighter Parliament labels like broad church would be quickly replace by the old Labor terms of rats and threats of expulsion.

“With the public animosity of the Alice Springs demonstrations still fresh in her mind, the Chief Minister must have been aghast to read of Minister Kon Vatskalis’ behaviour at an Alice Springs nightclub.

“The Chief Minister’s horror week must have bought back memories of late last year when her leadership was under pressure as a result of her mishandling of allegations about sexual abuse in remote indigenous communities.

“So there’s some irony in the fact this week began with the Minister deciding to withhold a report on that very issue.

“That Report needs to be released for public scrutiny now.”
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