SCRYMGOUR CANNOT REMAIN SILENT

The Minister for the Environment, Marion Scrymgour, must publicly indicate whether or not she supports the Martin Government’s policy relating to 99 year leases on traditional land and the expansion of the McArthur River Mine.

“The public have the right to know where a Minister of the Crown stands on critical Government policy,” says Jodeen Carney, Leader of the Opposition.

“She must clear the air and it should be done today after Cabinet meets in Darwin, today.

“This is a test of honesty and a test of probity for the Minister and for the Government.

“Westminster conventions are quite clear on the fate of dissenting Ministers – they cannot maintain their position in the Cabinet.

As the Minister for the Environment, Marion Scrymgour, has publicly expressed her concerns about the 99 year leases on traditional land saying – “This has divided our people as no other issue has divided our people”.

“Those words suggest the Minister does not, could not, support the Martin Government’s policy on leases on traditional land.

The problem for Minister Scrymgour is that she has an obligation as Minister to support and promote Government policy.

“Equally, when the Minister absented herself from the voting on the legislation to authorise the expansion of the McArthur River Mine she place herself at odds with the Government.

“If the Minister doesn’t put her support on the public record for both these issues, she has no choice but to tender her resignation to the Chief Minister.

“If she does neither, the Chief Minister has no choice but to sack her.”

To arrange further comment: Greg Charter 04000 14 059