

Atrocious living conditions in the One Mile Dam Aboriginal community

16 May 2012

Editor

NT News

Dear Sir

Congratulations to Alison Bevege for the excellent analysis of Federal grants and subsidies to the NT (NT News May 12). We are informed the NT receives 5.5 times the national average of GST grants based upon our indigenous population that are treated as a 'liability' for extra 'disability' spending. However, in response to Dave Tollner, the Government Business leader, Chris Burns claimed that the atrocious living conditions in the One Mile Dam Aboriginal community were a Commonwealth government responsibility that would take 'a large amount of money' to rectify. Once more crying poor, while not far from OMD the NT Government has spent many millions on the wharf precinct, including a wave pool and convention centre. Surely the cash for that luxury development came from Commonwealth funds?

Meanwhile at OMD, power has been cut to two substandard buildings, better described as 'chicken coups', arousing suspicions in the community that Dave Tollner's libellous outburst may lead to having them evicted and the land reclaimed. Let's not forget that it was the Everingham government who granted the land to Aboriginal people at One Mile Dam in 1979 to provide a secure future for the residents and guardians of a registered site. Instead of criticism, Dave Tollner should be praising the One Mile Dam President, David Timber, for opening his community as a refuge for the homeless, and thereby fulfilling a need, despite the community's meagre resources.

Yours sincerely

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