



Failed Rees Government dangerous to the community – prison focus

Minister of Corrective Services John Robertson will be asked to respond to a list of the government's anti community behaviour at a conference called by the Community Justice Coalition and the International Commission of Jurists at the State Library on Saturday September 5. He will be asked what moral right they have to command obedience.

In its dying stages the Rees Government has withdrawn into a safe perimeter acknowledging it has lost contact with the NSW community. A weak government that has only legal authority and money can do desperate things. The more unreasonable and unpopular its behaviour the tougher it appears as long as the target is weak and it can compel obedience. The Government has become dangerous, and counterproductive whilst absorbing welfare money.

Police support has been bought by a wages deal breaching government guidelines, and the Shooters' Party support probably by allowing hunting in Parks. Principles were abandoned long ago.

With prisons, human rights and mental health they try to bolster their authority by seeming tough. They feel safest guided by the failed Prisons Commissioner Woodham presiding over the highest recidivist level and the biggest budget in Australia.

- Privatisation. Rejection of public servants responsible to Parliament, in favour of multinational corporations controlling our most damaged citizens in the prisons. Parklea Prison privatisation to go ahead against total community opposition. All community organisations opposing - 453 submissions with only eleven including the multinationals and Woodham supporting it. Rees himself humiliated by a hundred day picket line of prison officers and thousands honking rejection outside his electorate office.
- Mental health patients locked in cells for 18 hours a day despite explicit promises to Parliament. Patients forcibly injected against health protocols rather than having social contact and education facilities. Costing over \$200,000 a year without progressing.
- Children locked in Juvenile Justice cells for twenty hours a day and an indigenous rate of imprisonment twenty times that of others. Costing over \$200,000 a year and most returning to custody within two years.
- Prison visitors criminalised and excluded from giving support to their family member without appeal, by the sniff of a dog.

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