

Democratic Labor Party

Queensland Branch

MEDIA RELEASE

MEDIA RELEASE

11th July 2010

TIMOR LESTE SHOULD NOT BE A REGIONAL REFUGEE PROCESSING CENTRE

The DLP Candidate for the Federal seat of Moreton in Brisbane's south-west, Mr Lee Nightingale; today said it was a big mistake for the ALP Government to make Timor Leste its "preferred option" for a regional refugee processing centre.

Lee Nightingale was a long-term campaigner for the Independence and Freedom of East Timor and was the strategic adviser to the Timorese Democratic Union and also strategic adviser to the East Timor Guards Organisation.

"A East Timorese elder who lives in the Moreton Electorate and with whom I campaigned for over ten years, has told me that the ALP proposal is bad for Timor-Leste", Mr Nightingale said.

"Also I was phoned by a person (who wishes to keep their identity private) who worked in the Diplomatic Corps and the United Nations for about 15 years who also said this was a wrong move by the ALP Government."

"Timor-Leste is not suitable as a regional refugee processing centre because they already have many problems to deal with and this "preferred option" by the ALP just adds to that list. Timor-Leste remains one of the poorest nations on the planet"

"As well Timor Leste already has an illegal refugee problem of its own and I have been told is struggling to keep track of some of these people that are in their country illegally at present".

"Timor Leste could be de-stabilised because such a centre would encourage those unsuccessful refugees to remain in Timor Leste. In a nation of about one million people this is dangerous for two reasons. Firstly it could produce a "Fiji type scenario" and secondly it could invite Indonesia to install a "puppet regime" and move back in the future to "stabilise" Timor Leste."

"We must not forget that the infrastructure of the country was destroyed by the Indonesian Military and their agents (many of whom were on drugs) and thousands murdered in 1999 just before Timor Leste became a free nation. There were water trucks driving around the country full of fuel to aid in the burning of things etc. People were being randomly murdered in many situations. Every piece of copper wiring was taken. Every bicycle was taken."

"Today East Timor is free and in spite of failures the nation and people are far better off than in the dark days of occupation and systematic genocide. Let us forever be vigilant to maintain that freedom that has come at a very high price – lest we forget," Mr Nightingale concluded.

For verification and further information on this matter, contact:

Tony Zegenhagen
Queensland Secretary
Democratic Labor Party (DLP) of Australia

Mob: **0415 459 322**
E-mail: **qldsec@dlp.org.au**

Democratic Labor Party

Queensland Branch

MEDIA RELEASE

MEDIA RELEASE

Further information can be obtained from:

Mr Lee Nightingale
DLP Candidate for the
Federal seat of Moreton
Ph: 0457 655 894

For verification and further information on this matter, contact:

Tony Zegenhagen
Queensland Secretary
Democratic Labor Party (DLP) of Australia

Mob: **0415 459 322**
E-mail: **gldsec@dlp.org.au**