



RALLY: Nelson MLA Gerry Wood addresses the Keep NT Speed Limit Free rally. Picture: JUSTIN SANSON

Speed limits incite protest

By BEN LANGFORD

A NOISY protest marked the opening of parliament yesterday as about 60 people called for the Government's new speed limits to be removed.

Wearing white T-shirts that said "Remember open speed limits, forget Labor", the protesters gathered on the steps of Parliament House.

The turnout was less than organisers had hoped for, but the gathering drew plenty of supportive honks from passing motorists.

The protest was addressed by Opposition Leader Jodeen Carney, who was cheered boisterously as she pledged to remove the 130km/h limits if voted into Government.

"We're not hoons, we don't go fast, but we want (the Government) to focus on the real issues," Chris Perkins said, draped in the Eureka Stockade flag.

'We're not hoons, we don't go fast, but we want (the Government) to focus on the real issues'

Chief Minister Clare Martin bore the brunt of the protesters' vitriol, with signs calling for her removal along with the speed limits.

"She's taken our freedom one bit at a time and this is the last straw," father-of-two Mark Davey, 39, said.

But the Government said there would be no backing down.

"The laws are tough but they are necessary," Transport Minister Delia Lawrie said.

"The Government could not ignore the carnage.

"One of the biggest killers on our roads is speed, yet the CLP continues to rubbish this fact.

"We've already seen great suc-

cess by slowing drivers down on the Lasseter Highway in Central Australia, with the number of road deaths cut by 38 per cent since a 110km/h speed limit was introduced."

Protester Clayton Dwyer — who became one of the first people booked under the new laws when he was clocked going 155km/h south of Tennant Creek — said being forced to stick to 130km/h would mean more unsafe driving at night as drivers were forced to drive later into the night.

"I'm not political, I'm not after the end of Clare, either," Mr Dwyer said.

"This is purely a family matter."

He said he decided to speed up after hitting a kangaroo, with his children in the car, the previous evening.

"The cop that got me, he had to go 180 to catch me," he said.