



DEBATES

OF THE

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FOR THE

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

HANSARD

5 December 1989

Tuesday, 5 December 1989

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MR SPEAKER (Mr Prowse) took the chair at 2.30 pm and read the prayer.

RESOLUTION OF WANT OF CONFIDENCE IN CHIEF MINISTER

MR COLLAERY (2.30): Mr Speaker, I move:

That this Assembly no longer has confidence in the Chief Minister of the ACT and the minority Labor Government and has confidence in the ability of Mr Kaine to form a government.

Mr Speaker, this motion has its origins, its direct origins, in the evening of 22 November 1989 when we became aware for the first time, on viewing a television program, that the Government had sought to secure by persuasion the vote of the Speaker for the Business Franchise ("X" Videos) Bill.

Mr Speaker, on the morning of 23 November 1989 Mr Kaine and I resolved to visit your office to ascertain the substance of the report and you, Mr Speaker, informed Mr Kaine and me that it had been put to you by the Government that non-passage of the Bill could result in "funding difficulties with respect to current proposals before the Chief Minister, including proposals to establish the Bills committee, a committee which is sorely needed if this Assembly is to operate correctly".

Our conversation with you, Mr Speaker, was, as you will recall, quite formal and correct and, as you are aware, Mr Speaker, we did not draw our conclusions in your presence but took leave and went to our rooms. I summoned our Rally party president, Chris Donohue, and then called an emergency session of the Residents Rally executive, who include, among others, a member of the Australian National University Council and a former member of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal.

In our view, the ALP approach to you, Mr Speaker, was a barely disguised threat. Any argument that all the ALP meant was that the loss of the video revenue could have funding implications for the Assembly is hollow. With the Treasurer's advance of \$10m at her disposal, how could this Chief Minister contemplate allowing the Assembly's processes to wither? The answer is of course, Mr Speaker, a bullying threat, and the "holier than thou" statement by the Chief Minister on ABC radio this morning that she is "not in the business of buying votes" must be treated with the cynicism it deserves.

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The Residents Rally executive discussed whether a censure motion was the appropriate response. This had to be looked at in the context of the fact that the budget was in the middle of its passage through this Assembly and that we had undertaken, for our part, not to block supply to the minority Government. A suspension of standing orders to move a censure motion which, if carried, might require the resignation of those who had participated in the approaches to the Speaker did not appear to provide a tidy solution to a profound problem and could itself be interpreted as diffidence over the budget, a delaying tactic or an exercise in political cynicism to compel a government to resign.

As a more appropriate measure, we resolved to move a motion of no confidence, come what may. My staff prepared the necessary documentation to move the motion, without any reference to you, Mr Speaker, and certainly without reference, initially, to the Liberal Party, as some have suggested. We then had a rare joint party discussion with the Liberal Party and it was resolved to move the motion.

The Liberal Party, in fact, was not aware of the final text of the motion until it was announced by the Clerk on the floor of the Assembly. I wish to say emphatically, Mr Speaker, that no conversation was had with and no hint of this measure was given to the No Self Government Party leader or to Mr Dennis Stevenson, and it goes without saying that the remaining Labor members of the Assembly were not informed.

Ironically there was no expressed intention in the Rally party room to take the video tax affair and the donation aspect any further. After that vote it was resolved to await the outcome of the Electoral Commission inquiry. So I wish to put an end to speculation, Mr Speaker, that this motion was connived at or moved for motives other than in relation to the quite reprehensible act of the Government in approaching you, Mr Speaker, in the manner that I have described to you.

You do not approach a judge about the funding for his court being subject to a decision that you want to go your way. The parallel is there. Mr Speaker, the office of Speaker is the very symbol of propriety and the careful conduct of parliamentary business. This Assembly cannot work effectively if the Government can threaten supply to extract support from the Speaker. The motion therefore was, in our way, win or lose, a method of expressing our total contempt for the acts which had given rise to it.

I took the view that we and the Liberal Party were rock solid in our views on that matter. We were confident of support in that regard. Mr Speaker, clearly, the motion was also the culmination of a number of issues which showed that this Government is too smitten with the wheeler-dealer mentality to promote the image of this Assembly as a democratic institution.

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The minority Labor Government cannot understand that the institution of parliament, the legislature, must come before the preservation of ephemeral political aims. The Government has failed lamentably to adopt a statesmanlike role. Despite restrained prompting from the chief justice of the Supreme Court of the Australian Capital Territory and direct requests by the Rally, this Government has done nothing either in its public utterances or in its legislative program to reassure the judiciary of their tenure after 30 June next year and of the necessity for judicial office not to be seen to be at the whim of this politically charged chamber.

Open, consultative government, Mr Speaker, became a joke, a hollow promise held out at the election and withdrawn immediately the ballot was closed and we had our first question time. This is not a question of style, Mr Speaker, but of propriety. Paul Whalan chose to govern in a minority framework dependent on gamesmanship - the playing off of individuals and party groups. Perhaps if the Chief Minister had entered the ruck the outcome would have been different. But it is quite clear that this Government, with its influential Deputy Chief Minister, cannot continue.

This motion is not therefore, Mr Speaker, merely a judgment of Rosemary Follett. Of great concern to the Rally has been the increasing extent to which the Chief Minister has deferred to the Deputy Chief Minister on planning issues and planning questions. There has been no proper initiative taken to meet community concerns, including developmental planning log jams. This has had a disabling effect on the building industry and/or development in general. Responsible developers have approached the Rally in recent times to indicate to us that the planning process is in meltdown. Community groups have again begun to form protest committees, and in Pearce, in Watson, in Page and in other places we are back to the protests of 1986-87 with no independent planning appeal body to resolve those issues.

The clear message, Mr Speaker, coming from the election of four members of the Residents Rally in March was the need for there to be a decisive initiative in the planning area. Instead, months down the road and after pressure, we received a discussion paper - a white paper - which cobbled together the fruits of our community work in 1987 and 1988. The paper failed to bring forward a discussion paper or draft legislation for the creation of a planning appeals system. There is thus a crisis in development and planning approvals in this Territory. No provision was made in the budget for a planning tribunal and for the preparatory work thereto. The Deputy Chief Minister waded into this mess recently by attacking the National Capital Planning Authority and creating more division for us to unwind.

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Mr Speaker, shallow attempts have been made to sheet home the blame for the planning log jam to community groups and the Residents Rally. This was profoundly cynical, in our view, in its motivations. Of course, members - and particularly members of the press gallery - will recall the Deputy Chief Minister's claims that planning projects were held up by the Rally. This was not borne out by the facts and showed that gamesmanship came before the interests of the construction industry and union members. Just what the game plan of the Deputy Chief Minister is, is still not clear to us. That, of course, will await our access to the documents, which we shall have in a few hours.

Labor's misplaced social priorities were very evident when, in his first reaction to the moving of this motion, the Deputy Chief Minister argued passionately for the casino - not a word about the future of some initiatives taken such as the housing policy review, youth homelessness, the chaos in part of the welfare system and the increasing authoritarianism in the ACT education structure - not a word, Mr Speaker.

What faith can we have in a Deputy Chief Minister who told us on 19 October 1989 that no Minister will have access to, among other things, the identity of casino tenderers, when a few days ago he inadvertently revealed, under media questioning, that he had spoken to a tenderer? What faith can we have in a Deputy Chief Minister who has spoken at length about a casino tendering process at arm's length, of decisions not taken on the required premium for the site or the construction phase, when the Rally comes into possession of a letter dated 2 November 1989 from one of Mr Whalan's senior officials to the proprietor of Seasons Restaurant giving him notice to be out by 30 June 1990?

One of the cumulative reasons for bringing on the no-confidence motion has been the minority Labor Government's disinclination to thump the table with the Federal Government. Despite the requirement at section 71 of the Australian Capital Territory (Self-Government) Act that the ACT Government hold consultations with the Commonwealth about staffing implications of the large hand-over of 17,000 public servants, the Chief Minister indicated on 16 November 1989 that when she saw the Prime Minister earlier that week, we believe, she had not initiated such consultations. Clearly, she is empowered by law to present the Commonwealth with a threat to transfer back public servants and functions if we are not funded properly. This has not been done either informally or formally, to our knowledge.

Chief Minister Rosemary Follett was hailed in her own publicity as having been successful at the Premiers Conference in May. Soon afterwards we learned that she had not secured the release of one dollar. Now we are to be given a third of the broken promise, and that only on condition that it be used for restructuring proposals to bring us into line with Grants Commission formulae. This

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paltry \$7m, which would not even cover a third of the running deficit on the ACTION bus service for the year, shows what a miserable ransom the Federal Government is prepared to pay to rescue its embattled minority in the ACT.

The Follett Government's rush in the last week to appoint advisory committees and present draft reports has created a pace for reform, and we should acknowledge that, but this should have been evident from the start, Mr Speaker. We were promised honest government. Then the Government broke its foremost election promise; it increased rates and charges and failed to explain how it could have alleged during the election campaign, when it fought so hard against us, that there would be a \$30m surplus in the ACT budget.

The Chief Minister herself argued that the Assembly should not fund party political activities. She poured scorn on Dennis Stevenson, questioning whether he was using Assembly resources for his abolish agenda. Yet on 24 November 1989, the day after this no-confidence motion was moved, the Chief Minister used her Assembly letterhead to send a letter signed "Rosemary" to all party members. This letter, which called upon Labor Party members to deluge the media with letters and protests, indicates the type of reasoning behind the local ALP clique. If they have not got the numbers in the Assembly, they are going to use the machinery at their disposal to try to influence the media.

To continue the catalogue, Mr Speaker, the Government has failed to put together a legislative program that gave priority to a number of its election promises. I have already mentioned planning, but other matters - workers compensation, for instance, a matter coming from its own ethos - have not progressed, despite the recommendations, the series of reports and reviews in recent years which could have led to decisive action after July this year.

Consumer protection legislation has not been introduced. A price watch network disappeared from the rhetoric. Also the Government moved to collect revenue by stealth. Mr Speaker, along with the grass, pay parking machines and meters have sprung up in suburban shopping centres without prior surveys of shopkeepers or users. The revenue implications have not been spelt out and we have not seen a clean balance sheet of the direct and indirect costs of maintaining a large parking inspectorate - vehicles, radio based collection activity, purchase and erection and installation of parking machinery and capital works relevant thereto.

Was anyone asked whether they would be willing to pay \$5 a year more on their vehicle registration? Was any survey carried out to see whether street parking could be banned entirely in the city area and pay parking better regulated? Mr Speaker, significantly, and in the area of honest government, how was it that Mr DUBY and I, who sat on the

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Canberra Times redevelopment inquiry, were led to understand that there was no forward plan to extend pay parking to nearby suburbs? Shortly after we brought down our report, in good faith, with a recommendation consistent with that advice - that is, that commuter parking in the suburbs be stopped - officials blithely came to a briefing session on a supposed new transport strategy and told us, and Michael Moore was present at the time, that, when structured car parking and other car parking facilities are full in the city area, a program for residential parking will be necessary.

What lack of cohesion, Mr Speaker, and what discordant forces led to this? We were shown diagrams of where pay parking will go in nearby suburbs. Even the developers' submissions to the Canberra Times redevelopment inquiry assumed that an effective administration could deal with the problem of commuter parking in residential areas, as has been dealt with by North Sydney and other councils.

Mr Speaker, chaos in the welfare system is of deep concern to the Rally. Only yesterday, welfare workers spoke of this on the Matt Abraham show. There has been a failure to rationalise. Recent survey reports indicate some excessive costs within the Government's own welfare area, particularly in the area of subsidised accommodation. There has been a series of reviews but no decisive leader to ensure that they mesh and are resolved by decisive, consultative action. The housing policy review has been a useful step in that direction, but affirmative action, rather than fanfare, is needed.

The lack of flair and the preference for organised publicity have been the flavour of an insecure minority government. Mr Speaker, government is not made up by one relatively popular woman who has been able to avoid a lot of the nastiness of the self-government transition period. One would not be so churlish as to deny her the good reaction she has received and perhaps earned, but it is clear that the real victim in this motion may well be Rosemary Follett. It is doubtful that she will be back in office until she has purged her party of a clique which has not put the interests of the community first but has decided to go for survival. Kind though those words do sound about the Chief Minister, I want to say that I have been personally disappointed with her performance in recent times, particularly over comments, which she withdrew but which were not reported as withdrawn, over the Business Franchise ("X" Videos) Bill.

There have been other matters, Mr Speaker. There has been a denial from the Chief Minister's office that they were aware of funding difficulties at the Legal Aid Office. This is an extraordinary statement when one considers that the Chief Minister sat beside the executive officer of the Legal Aid Office during the Estimates Committee hearings a few weeks ago when he indicated that there were resource difficulties in the domestic violence area, pressure on

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staffing resources and the like. How the Government could deny a call by the Legal Aid Office for help beats me. It is part of the lost conscience of the Labor Party, Mr Speaker.

I return to the letter dated 24 November 1989, sent out on the Chief Minister's letterhead. The Chief Minister refers to Collaery and Kaine making a naked power grab because they simply have the numbers. The Chief Minister wrongly refers to the fact that we rely upon Dennis Stevenson's vote. Mr Speaker, I have not discussed any vote winning issues with Mr Stevenson, and he can vouch for that.

Somewhat prophetically, Mr Speaker, she says that the ACT needs stability and commonsense. She goes on to give a pathetic rendition of the meagre sheaf of legislation that her party brought in, when a great harvest, Mr Speaker, held back by years of arbitrary control in this Territory, was waiting - a great harvest of legislation - an opportunity lost over the last six months.

Finally, she asked all people to talk to friends, workers and neighbours and to phone radio stations and to write to newspapers. But as the butt of that unrepresentative Labor splurge of indignation, this call upon the people by the Chief Minister, before the reasons for this motion were even enunciated, shows clearly what her concept of the parliamentary process is. It is that when the going gets tough you make a call to sheer rhetoric and numbers. It is the same old game, Mr Speaker, numbers and numbers.

Well, Mr Speaker, enough is enough. This Government will fall and the ACT will now embark upon self-government as originally intended. Mr Speaker, I seek leave to table the letter, signed "Rosemary", to party members, dated 24 November 1989, and a letter signed "Roger Smeed", to Seasons Restaurant, dated 2 November 1989.

Leave granted.

MR COLLAERY: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

MS FOLLETT (Chief Minister) (2.48): Mr Speaker, I thank Mr Collaery for his comments. As expected, on this side of the chamber, we have heard nothing new, nothing of substance and nothing that justifies this motion or that indicates in any way that the proposed Liberal coalition sought by Mr Collaery cares about the future of Canberra. I do care and my Government cares. In the seven months since we took office on 11 May the Labor Government has worked for Canberra and we have been delivering for the people of Canberra.

The ACT Assembly and ACT Government are still at a fledgling stage. Time is needed for them to develop. Time is needed for them to put their own stamp on the administration of our Territory. But, most importantly, time is needed to bring about widespread community

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acceptance. It is vital that the people of Canberra work together for our own good government and for the common good of our Territory.

None of this is achievable if there is uncertainty. To develop community confidence we need a stated and certain agenda for the ACT. On 11 May, when I was elected Chief Minister, I set out to this Assembly the objectives of our Government. These objectives came as no surprise, for they were the policies on which Labor had campaigned. Our agenda was not, and is not, extravagant. I believe that a major function of ACT government is to ensure that Canberra stays Canberra, that we retain the great community environment in which we live. I do not support change for the sake of change.

There are two themes which underlie all the actions of this Government. Our policies are based on the objective of developing a socially just community, a community with extensive economic security. Secondly, our Government is committed to open and accountable processes. I believe that we are taking a more consultative approach than any other government in this country.

This approach is highlighted by the innovative consultation processes that we have undertaken, and are undertaking, with respect to the budget, planning, transport, housing and the environment. An indication of our commitment to accountability is the swift implementation of procedures for all members of the Assembly to publicly declare their pecuniary interests.

On 11 May I undertook to implement a broad program of progressive policies for the people of Canberra. I promised the introduction of effective occupational health and safety protection. This was done, although its effectiveness was butchered in this Assembly. As part of my commitment to social justice, I indicated that we would be establishing a social justice unit within my department. In fact I have gone further than this: I have established a social policy division which contains, as one element, a social justice unit. This division is responsible for the overall coordination of government policy and it ensures that our objective of a fairer, more equal society is met.

Of particular concern to me is that programs are targeted to assist those most in need. In particular, I am concerned that young people, particularly young unemployed people, are assisted. In the budget several programs were implemented in this area - policies designed to help young people find work and to assist in the prevention of youth homelessness. I also draw members' attention to the Government's response to the Burdekin report, which I released recently. This response sets out in some detail what our Government has been doing for homeless youth.

Another crucial component of any effective social justice agenda must be the existence of workable antidiscrimination

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arrangements. I made a commitment on 11 May to introduce antidiscrimination legislation following broad community consultation. We are negotiating with the Commonwealth to open an office of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission in Canberra to provide access to antidiscrimination protection for our community. As members will no doubt be aware, I have recently released a discussion paper outlining proposals for ACT antidiscrimination legislation. This legislation will outlaw discrimination on the basis of race, sex, marital status, parenthood, religious conviction, political belief or disability. The Liberal Party showed its commitment to combat discrimination when they attempted to remove budget funding for antidiscrimination activities.

Our Government has been particularly active in its efforts to reduce the impact of sexual discrimination. We have been progressively increasing the representation of women on boards and committees in an endeavour to better reflect the neglected talents and skills available in over half of our community. In this year's budget the Government included a number of proposals designed to improve the economic status of women. Having survived an attempt by the Liberal Party to remove them, they will now be implemented.

On 11 May I told the Assembly that access to adequate and affordable housing is of paramount importance to improving people's quality of life. I committed the Government to a comprehensive review of ACT housing policy. That review is now almost complete but already we are seeing its benefits. The Government has announced proposals for a rental bond trust and an agents fidelity guarantee fund. We have commenced replacement of the Melba Flats. We have exempted low-income first home buyers from stamp duty. We have also implemented a range of policies to assist homeless youth. I believe that the Government's actions with respect to housing are unsurpassed.

Environmental protection has always been high on the Government's agenda, and in six months we have done much. Pesticide control legislation has been introduced and passed. ACT government purchasing of sand and gravel from the Murrumbidgee corridor has been stopped. Environmental assessment legislation is being drafted and will be introduced after community consultation. The recently released ACT environment strategy is of major importance. It is a comprehensive action plan for environmental protection, and I am proud of it.

We have not, however, simply concentrated on our natural environment. The Government has also been active in preserving our urban and cultural environment. I have implemented, and will continue to implement, policies designed to keep Canberra the great place that it is. Early in the life of our administration I established a task force to identify areas of heritage significance. The end result of the task force's work will be a comprehensive

heritage register. This register itself will become part of the Territory plan.

In terms of planning, the Government has released a consultation paper and drafting instructions for integrated planning, environment and heritage legislation. This legislation will ensure that the people of Canberra have a say in the way in which their city grows and is protected. I can assure the people of Canberra that this planning legislation will not be used to facilitate the development of office blocks down to the foreshores of Lake Burley Griffin.

What I have just discussed is no mere list of achievements; it is a list of unbroken commitments. It is a clear indication that this Government has been implementing the objectives that I stated on 11 May. Our program in government should have come as no surprise to anyone here. We have implemented, or are implementing, everything which I told you on that day. We have a clearly stated agenda for Canberra. The people of Canberra know what we stand for.

The most fundamental issue confronting the ACT at the moment, however, is the transition to State-type funding arrangements. The achievement of a smooth transition is essential. The ACT cannot afford sharp financial shocks. A planned, open process is the only way the adjustment can be achieved while maintaining Canberra in the way we want it. The ACT budget - my budget - which was passed by this Assembly just two weeks ago begins that process. It provides for a balanced recurrent budget, a sound basis for the future economic management of the ACT.

The budget provides a \$10m first step towards reducing the overfunding identified by the Grants Commission. This is a significant move but the process will need to continue for a number of years. My budget has begun the process in a balanced way by a mixture of expenditure reductions and revenue increases, by spreading the burden of financial adjustment equitably and acting in tune with the needs of the ACT economy. There have been no sharp reductions in services or severe increases in taxation. We are not interested in massive disruption to Canberra for the sake of a quick budgetary fix. Change needs to be planned and certain. The Government has been looking to the future.

In the budget I announced a number of restructuring proposals designed to provide substantial recurrent savings. Since then, negotiations between the Prime Minister and me have led to the release of \$7m from the Commonwealth-ACT transitional funding trust account. These funds will be used for a number of restructuring proposals which will generate recurrent annual savings of \$2.5m. This is our approach to financial adjustment in the ACT. We do not support shock treatment. It is not the way of our Government to slash public expenditure or to claim that bureaucrats do not deliver the goods and should be sacked.

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It is not our way to impose massive revenue increases on the people of Canberra, nor to irresponsibly suggest the abolition of crucial taxes. It is not our way to impose a huge debt burden on the people of Canberra through a massive borrowing program. These are the stated policies of the Liberal coalition. Our Labor Government is about steady change, change at a rate the community can accept. We are about maintaining critical public services, keeping Canberra the great place that we all know it is. A Labor government will continue that process. Our agenda for budgetary adjustment is set, it is clear, it is achievable.

We are carrying across the same processes to economic restructuring. The Government understands that our industry base needs to be broadened. This adjustment must also be planned and steady. Our community does not want the employment base to be subject to wild fluctuation. The fluctuation faced by the construction industry is an important example. The boom-bust approach which this industry has experienced cannot be allowed to confront other industries. Our Government has implemented, and will continue to implement, policies designed to stabilise the construction industry.

We have increased our own budget construction program. A stable environment is being established for private sector development. In particular, the section 19 redevelopment, initiated by our Government, is a bright prospect for the future. The construction industry is not, however, the whole future for Canberra's economic development. We are looking to new growth industries: tourism, high technology, leisure and recreation services and financial services, to name but a few.

This process was commenced in our budget where significant resources were devoted to industry development. Specific tourist promotion programs have been implemented. An industry development package is being implemented which includes business advice and marketing information, direct land purchase opportunities, infrastructure assistance, human resource development assistance and assistance with relocation expenses. Our Government is committed to creating jobs for the people of Canberra, worthwhile jobs for our young people, jobs to encourage them to stay in Canberra. We care for Canberra. I want it to stay a great place in which to live and to work.

Mr Speaker, I have outlined in some detail the achievements of this Government in the short period that it has been in office. Those achievements are significant, but they reveal only some of the activity undertaken by the Government. The development and implementation of policy, legislation and programs in many areas have yet to produce public results.

Let me outline the areas this Government will pursue if this motion is defeated. We will continue the public

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consultation on our proposals for an integrated package of planning, heritage and environment legislation with a view to introducing the six Bills early next year. This legislation is clearly vital to the future development of Canberra on a stable and rational basis. Our proposals strike a proper balance between economic development and important environmental and heritage considerations. For the first time there will be a sensible and affordable appeals system.

I have announced our detailed proposals for antidiscrimination legislation. Unfortunately, the events of the last few days have prevented the completion of draft Bills this year. This legislation will also be available for introduction early next year. Similarly, work has been proceeding on a dangerous weapons Bill which will provide a new and stronger set of controls on the issuing of gun licences and which will restrict or ban the availability of automatic and some semiautomatic weapons.

We have given instructions for the drafting of amendments to the Domestic Violence Act to extend protection to family or household based relationships and to enable children to apply for protection. We are tackling the problems of homeless youth with new programs targeted at those still at school and at the long-term unemployed. Our response to the report of the Burdekin inquiry into homeless children outlined directions for further initiatives with accommodation and health services.

The housing review established by this Government is working on the housing needs of groups such as the aged, women and disabled people, all of whom have special needs. We are working on means of making home ownership more affordable. These include planning issues like the supply of land, the size of blocks and urban infill and a review of building industry regulations.

Mr Speaker, our Labor Government has taken the initiative in establishing consultative mechanisms at official level, government-to-government, and parliamentary level, with New South Wales and with the local councils in our region. The first consultative forum, planned for the day after Mr Collaery gave notice of today's motion, was to be the venue for announcement of a joint ACT-New South Wales regional economic strategy, yet another initiative by this Government.

The Government's transport strategy announced in October showed yet again that we are prepared to tackle the difficult issues. We are continuing to work to provide better public transport options and to re-route private traffic around Civic.

Mr Speaker, governments should not be changed on a whim. There must be substance. There must be a clear and stated alternative agenda. We have heard no such agenda from Mr Collaery. There is no real rationale for this no-confidence motion. It is a simple power grab.

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Mr Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to thank my Labor colleagues. We have been and will continue to be a strong and cohesive team. Our Government has been supported by an apolitical public service of high quality and high integrity. It has been a pleasure to work with them. I also have the pleasure of working for the people of Canberra, the citizens of this Territory in which I grew up and which I love. I am happy with the support they are giving me.

Suspension of Standing and Temporary Orders

Motion (by **Mr Berry**) agreed to:

That so much of the standing and temporary orders be suspended as would prevent Ms Follett from concluding her speech.

MS FOLLETT: Mr Speaker, I can assure you that I will continue to work for the people of Canberra, no matter what the result in today's ballot. Prior to the election and since, I have spoken to many of the people of Canberra, on the streets, at meetings and in their homes. The message I received from all of these people was simple. They said that they love Canberra, and they love Canberra as it is. They said to me, "Rosemary, don't change Canberra".

They had of course some genuine concerns - concerns about safety at work, overdevelopment, rates and taxes, our health system, the effectiveness of our education system and, of course, our unique Canberra environment, but above all they are concerned about being consulted and being involved in decisions that affect them.

The people of Canberra have said to me, Mr Speaker, that they do not want Canberra changed but they do want to be listened to. They said, both at the election and now, that they trust me to do that. I have accepted that trust and that confidence, and so has my Government. Whether or not I am the Chief Minister is not important. What is important is that the people of Canberra are put first, that their needs and concerns are addressed and rectified.

Mr Speaker, it is because I care about the views of the people that I represent that I object to this motion. This motion is not just one of confidence; it is about the future direction of our fragile community. We cannot afford to indulge in the divisiveness and rapacity that this motion embraces. Mr Speaker, we need to build a better community to make life better for the people that we are elected to serve. We need to find common ground. Above all, Mr Speaker, we need to keep Canberra Canberra. The Labor Government, which it is my privilege to lead, offers the only chance of achieving that. I oppose the motion.

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MR DUBY (3.10): Mr Speaker, in March of this year members of my party were elected on the platform of opposition to imposed self-government for the ACT based on the belief that under self-government the quality of life for its citizens would suffer. Since then, given the reality of ACT self-government, we have consistently acted to ensure that Canberrans do not come out second best and that their interests always come first. Our chief concerns are, and always have been, the best interests and well-being of the Canberra community. Mr Speaker, I guess that brings us to the crux of this issue. Canberra must have a stable and effective government. The ACT economy, already under severe stress, demands it. The ACT economy is not well.

Mr Speaker, we already have in this city building and construction sectors that are extremely depressed; we have got housing forecasts at their lowest levels for years; the tourism industry, both before and after the pilots' dispute, has severely declined; employment growth in the Australian Capital Territory is at one of the lowest levels in this country; and the population growth of the ACT is now lower than the Australian average, when some years ago it was consistently the highest in the country.

Mr Speaker, the ACT economy is in trouble. As I said, what is needed now to face that problem is a stable government. The private and public sectors alike need to have confidence that the stated policies of the ACT Government can and will be implemented. Without that confidence, all Canberrans are the losers. I have outlined some of the problems that the ACT economy is facing at the moment, Mr Speaker. Those problems, and a lot of other problems facing the ACT which I have not mentioned, may not be this Government's fault. But to tackle these problems requires strong government.

Mr Speaker, this motion is not one of personalities. Indeed, I know I speak for all members in this Assembly when I say that Ms Follett is one of the most respected and admired members of this gathering. But that is simply not good enough for the ACT. The citizens of the ACT deserve better - a stable, effective and efficient government. That, Mr Speaker, can only be provided by a majority government. I believe Mr Kaine can provide the ACT with just that - a strong, stable, effective and efficient majority government that utilises the talents and abilities of all the members of this Assembly and of the community as a whole. Mr Speaker, I support the motion.

MR WOOD (3.14): I thought someone there was jumping. Are you? Well, what a lack of confidence in your no-confidence motion! Will you talk?

Mr Humphries: We will take our turn.

MR WOOD: Well, would you like to take it now?

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Mr Humphries: It is your turn.

Mr Kaine: You have the floor.

MR WOOD: Well, what a lack of confidence! It is not surprising that that is the case. Ten days ago I asked the leaders of the Rally and of the Liberals why this motion of no confidence contained no justification for their actions. It was a remarkable motion. It was a bare motion. There was no flesh on it. The arguments were bare, as the background was. They did not have any reasons then, and they do not have any reasons today. They have had 10 days to think about it. It seems to me they need something like two and a half years more to think about it and to get their act together.

Mr Collaery, a short time ago, outlined the way that he developed this motion. He described a train of events. He is simply inaccurate in what he said. Let me give you the example. He said that, after careful thought, after discussion, after conference with his people, he issued instructions to prepare the documentation for the action. What documentation was that? Three lines of handwriting! That was the documentation. All the careful thought went into that.

That tells you how puerile his argument is. What documentation, Mr Collaery? What nonsense! There was nothing there. So much for the train of events that led to this. I will tell you later on what that train of events was, but I will save it for a short while. Let us look at something else. He says, "Open, consultative government was a joke". Well, I am afraid the joke is on you, Mr Collaery.

I will wager that, if this motion goes ahead, you people will close up. You will change the practices that Rosemary Follett has put into place. Will you give us open, consultative government? Will you give us a government, as this one, that shares? Let us wait and see about that. We had a budget which was open and to which you were unable, because of your lack of knowledge of procedures, to contribute; but we had an open budget process. We have had open planning processes. We have had members fully briefed on all sorts of issues. And the best you can come up with is to say that we have not had a consultative government. What happened when we brought down the planning documents? Mr Collaery said, "We don't need consultation; we need action". Make up your mind.

But let me go on to one of the most outrageous things that Mr Collaery said. He alleged that there were threats against the Speaker. No doubt the Speaker might come in and say something - and, Mr Speaker, please interject, if you wish, or come in and speak later and tell me if I am wrong in what I now say. Mr Collaery said that we were going to starve the Speaker. What do the actions of the Speaker, with the support of members obviously, tell us?

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Let me confess I have a car, which I did not reject. I wish I did not have it. I did not ask for it, but I did not say no to it, did I? I have it. We all have cars, worth \$100,000 or something. I have got a coffee percolator in my room up there. I did not ask for it. It turned up. It came. I have other equipment. I have a television in my room, which I do use to watch the news at night.

We, the members of the Assembly, are not starved of things that come from the Speaker. We have been very generously dealt with, might I say. Now, let me show you this. Mr Collaery, will you look at this? Lift your face and look at it. That is a beeper. It was delivered to my office on Friday. I did not ask for it. I did not know it was coming. An attendant walked in and asked me to sign for it.

Mr Collaery: We sent it to you.

MR WOOD: Well, I did not ask for it. I do not know what that particular one costs, and I do not know what 12 of them cost, the number I presume we have. And this is from the Speaker whom we are starving! That went into my drawer. I have only just opened the plastic on it now. So I do not think there is any justification, Mr Collaery, in your claim that we have been standing over the Speaker and threatening the Speaker. On the contrary, the Speaker has been dealt with more than generously by this Government.

He mentioned other matters like parking meters and increasing vehicle registration in lieu of something. That is such a major issue in his mind that we have never heard it before! I was pleased to hear Rosemary Follett detail the record of her Government, and my ministerial colleagues will do likewise.

I want to focus on some of the people over the road who now claim government. As we have heard, it is not a matter of issues. Issues are not involved in this. Certainly Mr Collaery has not shown it. Mr Kaine has not wanted to jump to his feet yet, nor Mr Humphries, nor anybody else.

Mr Kaine: You will hear from me. Just have patience.

MR WOOD: Well, you are very slow about it. Has your speech not come down to you yet?

So it is not a matter of issues, clearly. Is it then a matter of policies? I have been through the Hansard over this weekend, while you have been trying to dream up some ideas, and Hansard records no major policy speech by the Rally or by the Liberals on any matter; lots of minor things, and some lesser policies - second-rate, second stage stuff from you people. In fact, as I went through the Hansard the most significant - if "significant" is the word - alternative speech that was made in this house was one proposing an alternative to the budget, ironically,

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made by the leader of the No Self Government Party. If there has been any alternative proposal that has been presented to this Assembly, that is the most significant. So there is no matter of policy that can give you substance for what you are doing today. Substantially you have followed the Government's agenda and the Government's priorities.

Let us take an example of ways that oppositions traditionally attack the government. I refer to debates on matters of public importance. As in the Federal Parliament, we have an hour allocated every sitting day for such debate. As the House of Representatives Practice, the book that most of us have, indicates, it is an opportunity for the opposition. It is opposition time.

In 37 sitting days here the opposition has raised 12 matters of public importance. Rosemary Follett raised one. In the 18 days since that long September break when matters, it would appear, became more critical, you have raised four matters of public importance. So there is nothing out there - nothing that is happening in here either - that has particularly concerned you. You have not taken the opportunity available to you.

But what is the record on the hill? Go back to 1983 when the Hawke Government first came in. In 49 sitting days 46 matters of public importance were raised. They have used it. You do not know how. You have not found anything of importance. In 1984 in Federal Parliament, over a period of 52 sitting days, 50 matters were submitted; in 1987, 74 sittings, 73 matters raised; and 1988, 65 and 61. If you had a problem, if you thought there was a matter of difficulty, you could have raised it. But you have not taken the simple opportunity that has been given to you. I might add that I cannot find, in the last two years certainly, instances where any government member in the House of Representatives raised a matter. They do have that availability, but I do not believe they have used it. Perhaps you can send someone out to see whether you can find out, and shoot my argument down.

Of course, the ultimate test is that you let the budget through without a murmur, because obviously you wanted to do so. You are condemned by the record of Hansard. You have no complaint that you can justifiably hold against this Government. Your record is weak. You cannot substantiate this motion based on issues and you cannot substantiate it based on any policies. Your motion is based on two factors, one of which is legitimate, and that is ambition, and the other is ego. That is not a legitimate basis for any motion.

The motion arose, Mr Collaery, not in the way you described, but in the particular circumstances of last Thursday. On that Thursday you were mangled in the Canberra Times, after your turnaround on the seat of that chair on X-rated videos; you were savaged on the radio; and then

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further bruised in this Assembly. And that is when you wrote out that motion. That is the background of it. So do not come up here with spurious arguments. It is an entirely inadequate basis.

Still, numbers will count. We face reality. Today it seems that this motion is to go through and we are to have a Liberal coalition, after all the hard work has been done. Rosemary Follett has described that and my colleagues will add to it. After all the hard work, we will knock off - perhaps today, perhaps in a couple of days - and you will not have to front up here for another two months.

Will you be able to show the surety of government that the Follett Government has, the confidence and the knowledge of what you are doing? To date it seems to me that your proposals are rather ill-founded. Can you establish a direction for government, as the Follett Government has? Will you be pulling in three different directions or maybe more than that? Can you provide stability? Mr Mackerras thinks you can, although he does say that it is a discredited government before you start. Will you have the competence? I will not comment individually, I have no worries about that, but collectively, as political parties you have not shown any of the competence that I think a government needs, as I found when I looked at your policies.

Finally, in the matters in which I think a government ought to be able to show it, can you demonstrate integrity? I will not question that of people, other than to single out one instance which to me has been an overriding influence, a detrimental influence, in this Assembly in the six and a half months we have been here. My concerns are based on the requirement that our actions here must be honourable, respectful of parliament and entirely decent. I made some reference to that in the speech I made on the first day of this parliament. I am directing a question specifically to Mr Collaery, because integrity in government is an overriding factor of the greatest importance.

Mr Collaery, if you want to take over as Deputy Chief Minister today with honour and credibility, will you today rectify a grievous mistake that you made some months ago? Mr Collaery now knows with certainty, if he did not know then, that allegations he made about Mr Whalan were entirely without foundation. They were grievous allegations, disgraceful allegations. It was done in similar circumstances to those I described on that recent Thursday when Mr Collaery, because of pressures he had generated and could not handle, came rushing into the Assembly and acted impulsively and improperly.

If Mr Collaery is to take this most responsible position, he should accept the standard of the behaviour it requires. In the interests of his integrity and the integrity of this chamber, he should withdraw those allegations and apologise, knowing as he does that they are untrue. We

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will leave it up to Mr Collaery, perhaps later in the day, to make a personal statement.

Matters such as that have resulted in a very low regard for this Assembly. Members, do you feel as I do when I wander around out in the community, saying, "Hi, I'm Bill Wood, I am from the Legislative Assembly"? I wonder whether you have had some of the responses I have had. Perhaps you do not move around very much. Look at the polls in the papers. (Extension of time granted)

We should look at those. I am now vindicated, Mr Speaker, for my decision to keep a pretty low profile, because I have no doubt that, if the Canberra Times had indicated my name, people might not have disapproved of me; they might have said, "Who is he?". But there is no question that this Assembly is in poor repute - not the Government, not Rosemary Follett, but this Assembly - and some of our actions have brought that about.

This motion of no confidence, this rapid change of government, this opportunistic grab, is not going to help that. Have a look at those figures. I suppose we are all a little sceptical of polls when we do not like them. Perhaps what should happen is that 16 of us should walk out of here and leave it to Rosemary Follett. That is what the polls tell us. That is what the polls tell us, and you have got the gall to sit over there and say, "We have no confidence in Rosemary Follett". Rosemary Follett is the only one that the community has confidence in. Why do you not accept what the community says? No; your egos will not allow that to happen. I do not mind your ambitions, but not those egos.

There is no way that this motion can be sustained. Half a year ago you were unable to form a government. Rosemary Follett and the ALP did so, and did so very successfully. In the short life of this parliament you have not demonstrated a vision. Today you have provided no justification, you have shown no credibility, you do not have the qualities needed for government. Rosemary Follett should remain Chief Minister.

MR HUMPHRIES (3.31): Mr Speaker - - -

Mr Wood: Well, someone got up finally.

MR HUMPHRIES: We have already had two speakers from this side of the chamber, Mr Wood, if you had not noticed.

Mr Wood: Who was the other one?

MR HUMPHRIES: Mr Duby was. We are debating a motion of no confidence in the Chief Minister and a motion of confidence in the ability of my colleague Mr Kaine to form a government from among the membership of this Assembly. In moving the no-confidence motion, Mr Collaery has drawn attention to a number of things, among which was the fact

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that this Government, by virtue of having just five members in a chamber of 17, has been unable to date to provide the Territory with stability and certainty.

Mr Wood: They sure had good policies, though.

MR HUMPHRIES: Well, some of them have gone by the board too, Mr Wood, but I will come to those in a minute.

The ability to set the agenda is fundamental to good government. It is fundamental because, without the numbers, a program of good government easily slides into a mire of mediocrity and confusion. The Chief Minister said on the radio this morning, and I think she has repeated it here today, that her administration has set an agenda for government. That is true, but so in a sense has every other party in this Assembly. At present the ACT does not clearly march to any of these agendas. No one hand sits on the tiller of the ship of state, I would submit.

The fact is that this Government has run into trouble on many occasions and on many important issues. For example, we tried to set the agenda on the question of occupational health and safety, but the direction that that legislation took was radically altered by the members of this Assembly, and I would submit rightly so.

The Government tried further to block the police move-on powers. This house supported those powers. It tried to set the agenda with its bid only a few days ago to raise millions of dollars worth of revenue with a legitimising tax on X-rated videos. This also was defeated. And it tried to get rid of the hospitals interim board of management. But the Assembly, I am proud to say, effectively vetoed this when it passed a motion of confidence in that interim hospitals board. In other words, this Government's lack of control over this chamber is reflected in the high degree of uncertainty with which, notwithstanding Mr Wood's comments, citizens of this Territory look to this Government's program. This Government, I will concede, has been very successful in expanding new frontiers in rhetoric, but that, I am afraid to say, is about all it has.

Last week an opinion poll was published in the Canberra Times - Mr Wood has already referred to that - which showed a large degree of dissatisfaction with the performance of this Assembly. That concerns me. But I ask: why was this so? I believe that there being so many hands pulling the ship of state in so many different directions has been a major contributor to that dissatisfaction on the part of the people of this Territory.

That, of course, is not in itself an argument for leaving any one group or any one person with his or her hand on that tiller. It is certainly not an argument for leaving a minority of five people out of a chamber of 17 to run this Territory. The ALP in this Assembly represents less than a

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quarter of the votes cast in the last election, and those who have bleated over recent days in support of Labor's divine right to rule will do well to remember that. No matter what this Government may say or do, it cannot fight against arithmetic.

I want to go through some of the reasons why I believe specifically this Government should go. In opposition I have been the Liberal spokesman, among other things, in the areas of health and education. In that capacity I have closely followed the performance - some would say the antics - of the Ministers responsible for these two fundamentally important areas of government. After seven months of self-government I can only say that very little has been achieved in these areas, and in some cases considerable harm has been done.

I turn, first of all, to education. Mr Wood has said that this debate is not about policies. With respect, it is all about policies. Policies are fundamental to this, and I want to go on to show Mr Wood and others just what this Government has meant to important policy areas in this Territory. It is unfortunate that more time seems to have been spent by Ministers of this Government thumbing through filth files than paying attention to the educational needs of the children of this Territory. In this portfolio we have seen promises broken, power centralised and participation pushed aside. It was the preschools that were first to suffer from a steady series of Labor Party backflips.

The Chief Minister has talked about what she promised to the people of Canberra at the last election. A series of unbroken commitments I think was what she referred to earlier today. She said, "I am implementing everything I told you I would do". Labor promised the people of Canberra that they would abolish the \$6 a week preschool fee and would not seek to make up the \$700,000 in lost revenue from within the education budget. They said in their policy and I quote, as I have quoted many times before in this house:

Labor is committed to maximising preschool attendance and will abolish the current preschool fee guaranteeing there is no loss to the education budget as a result.

But no sooner was that preschool fee abolished than the Government announced that \$900,000 was to be axed from the preschool budget.

If that was not bad enough, a few months later the Government treated the preschool community with appalling contempt. The preschool community was told that schools would close. Naturally, of course, they were upset, but I think by and large they accepted for the most part the necessity for some rationalisation. I might say, incidentally, that closing preschools is an extraordinary

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way of maximising preschool attendance. The point is that the preschool community was told by the chief education officer that preschools with more than 17 enrolments were considered viable and that no viable preschool would close.

As there was no school in Canberra with enrolments of less than 18, the community thought they were safe on hearing this promise. But the very next day the Minister told them that this was not the case and that the 17 enrolment figure was only one criterion for stability. It is a shabby and shameful way for the community to be misled and it came as no surprise to find this heavy-handed Minister, this Minister for Education, back down and give schools a one year reprieve.

Mr Speaker, this Government has talked constantly, indeed it has bragged, about its attitude towards consultation, and something has already been said today about that. But the fact is that under this Government the consultation process has been in many cases little more than propaganda. The Education Minister has introduced a Bill to wipe the last traces of the Schools Authority Advisory Committee from the statute books. In its place he set up a ministerial consultative committee with no legislative standing and no independence.

In doing so, the Minister has turned his back on meaningful participation in education decision making; he has turned his back on real consultation. I say this because I believe real consultation is still possible within the framework that the Government has set itself. He has, instead, sought to centralise power in his own hands and in the hands of his department at the expense of the community. This is a time for a return to participation and meaningful consultation in education, and the alliance government will deliver where this Government has failed.

Mr Speaker, I have to confess that the problems encountered in education pale into insignificance when compared with the Government's appalling performance in the area of health. The Chief Minister has said that there is no justification for today's no-confidence motion. I believe, Mr Speaker, that her Government's failure to deal with the problems confronting our hospital system alone justifies the sacking of this Government. In particular we have seen a total paralysis in the Government's ability to make decisions regarding the severe cost blow-outs in our hospital system. We have witnessed this Government's threat to abolish the interim hospital board, a board that has done its job responsibly in identifying areas of waste and inefficiency in our health system. Let me remind this Government that these areas of waste and inefficiency are costing the people of the ACT millions of dollars every year. For example, the contracting out of catering services alone would save the people of Canberra up to \$2.5m every year, and elimination of the two and a half hours' overlap in nursing shifts would save an additional \$1m a year.

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The Government's failure to act in these two areas alone is costing the ACT taxpayer some \$10,000 a day in inefficient management - \$10,000 a day - which I sheet home directly to the Government sitting opposite. These are problems incidentally which the interim hospital board has responsibly been dealing with, yet this Government would rather slay the messenger than get on with the job of putting our hospital budget back on track.

I note that the Minister's final solution announced only last week for the board was not to sack it, because I suspect he was unable so to do, but to make it subordinate to some half-baked advisory council which he has just sought to create. He has effectively sought to neuter the board and draw its teeth by filtering its advice through a further layer of bureaucracy before reaching the Minister. This approach, I think, is unacceptable to the majority of members in this chamber and, I believe, unacceptable to the majority of members of the wider community. This Government has had seven months to at least begin to come to grips with the hospital issue but, quite frankly, it has not got past square one.

Before concluding I want to make some comments on some calls that have been made by Labor Party figures in this Territory for a new election. I have heard some people liken this no-confidence motion to the sacking of the Whitlam Government in 1975. As I recall, at the time, Mr Whitlam argued that the party with the majority of seats in the House of Representatives, the governing house, had the right to govern. The alliance parties in this chamber have a clear majority of seats here. They represent collectively a considerably larger proportion of the electors as at the last election than does the ALP in this chamber. Those that claim that that majority has no right to form a government, here and now, are arguing against one of the fundamental principles of Westminster democracy.

I want to respond to a couple of points made earlier in debate. We have heard a great many accusations levelled in the last 10 or 12 days about what this new government for the Territory would mean, and most of them, I am sorry to say, have been totally untrue. The Deputy Chief Minister, unfortunately, has been responsible for most of them. He has talked about an orgy of sackings in the public service. Well, time will tell, Mr Speaker, but I submit to you that that is patently untrue. That will become clear to ALP members and I wonder whether they will have the courage to come back in this place and admit that they were wrong.

In particular, I want to mention a comment by Mr Wood. He invited Mr Collaery to rectify a grievous mistake in saying that the Deputy Chief Minister had done something wrong. I invite Mr Wood to make that same rectification today. He put out a statement some days ago saying that the alliance had bought the vote of Mr Stevenson by promising him his policy.

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Mr Wood: Did I say that?

MR HUMPHRIES: Yes, you did say that, Mr Wood - by promising him the voters' veto which is dear to his heart. Mr Wood, it will be clear to you now and to everybody else in this chamber that no such promise has been made; that Mr Stevenson's voters' veto has been no further advanced by the events of the last 12 days.

Mr Wood has also on several occasions in this chamber said that the fact that the Assembly passed the Government's budget constituted a vote of confidence in the Government. I say again, as I have said before: what is an opposition to do if it disapproves of a budget but does not wish at that time to bring the government down?

Mr Wood: No, but do so two hours later. You don't see the irony in that?

MR HUMPHRIES: Mr Wood, you claim that by voting against the Government on its budget the Opposition would be bringing the Government down - by that action moving a motion of no confidence in the Government. Yet you also say that passing the budget was a vote of no confidence in that Government.

The fact is that it is time that the ACT had a majority government, one with the political strength to tackle the many problems confronting the Territory and to set a sensible and rational agenda for the good government of this Territory for the remainder of the life of this first Assembly. I believe that my colleague Mr Kaine has the capacity to provide that government.

MR MOORE (3.46): Congratulations, Mr Kaine, on achieving a couple of major objectives. Congratulations, first of all, albeit in advance, on your pending Chief Ministership. Secondly, congratulations on removing the middle party. The threat, therefore, to the two-party system no longer exists. As Malcolm Mackerras predicted on the Pru Goward show this morning, at the next election all the votes will go to the two major parties. The idea of a community voice, a watchdog for open, consultative government, is now just a dream. There was a vision of a third political voice in this town - a vision for a voice that was principled, open and honest. That vision is now lost.

I must further congratulate Trevor on the plan that was announced at last night's Rally meeting by Mr Collaery, a plan that puts Norm Jensen and Hector Kinloch as junior Ministers under Trevor Kaine and Gary Humphries, the old divide and conquer technique. I further understand that these junior ministries will be planning, development, health and education, and a further ministry to the conservative independents. Well done! Keep them under control.

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And what of consultation? We have seen a lot of blustering in question time about lack of consultation on the part of the Labor Government. You will have your chance to prove that you can do better, and I shall look forward to assessing your performance and informing the people of Canberra.

I am still waiting to hear the reason for the no-confidence motion. Mr DUBY said last week that he would put his vote your way if you gave a good reason on the inadequacy of the Labor Government. You have obviously shared that with him. However, no-one has shared it with me. Who knows? Had you even approached me, had you given your reasons, I might have joined your Liberal coalition.

Bernard Collaery's speech presented a litany of government inadequacy as the reason: X-rated videos, pressure on the Speaker, planning problems. Such reasons are simply rationalisations. This motion is simply a grab for power. That it is about X-rated video funding is simply lies. This motion - to quote Mr Collaery at the start of his speech - "had its direct origins in the evening of 22 November when we became aware for the first time", blah, blah, blah, blah. That is a lie. Manipulations and machinations toward this day started just a few hours after this Chief Minister first took office.

I wonder, with such a disparate group of people, what chance you really have of providing stable government for the ACT. We could have had stability had the Rally been prepared to sit on the crossbenches. The potential for instability is now far greater. I hope you will not wave your signed document at me as proof. Remember Chamberlain's piece of paper, "Peace in our time"? Even now, no-one would question his good intentions, and I do not question the good intentions of the Chief Minister-to-be. However, I do not support this change of government. There is simply no reason for it other than a simple grab for power, with complete disregard for what is in the best interests of the people of Canberra as a whole.

Allow me to provide just one small warning by quoting from Shakespeare's Julius Caesar, as I did in the Albert Hall last Wednesday night:

Let me have men about me that are fat ... and such as sleep o' nights: Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look ... such men are dangerous.

Congratulations on this incredible coup, on all those different levels, Mr Kaine. It will require all your ability and all your own integrity to keep it together. For these reasons I shall oppose the no-confidence motion and I shall watch with interest and participate on behalf of the people of Canberra from the crossbenches.

MR PROWSE (3.53): Mr Deputy Speaker, the matter referred to by Mr Collaery and others is one which I regard as my

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duty to call to the attention of the Assembly. It is a matter which, if not addressed, I believe could be an encroachment on the future independence of this Assembly and the resources available to it and its committees.

Prior to the debate and the vote on the Business Franchise ("X" Videos) Bill 1989, certain approaches were made to me regarding how I should vote on the Bill. This is not unusual. In this Assembly the Speaker has a deliberative vote only and must exercise that vote if he is present in the chamber when the vote is taken.

I have often been lobbied regarding my voting intentions, and no doubt will continue to be lobbied. However, let me warn members that on these occasions the responsibility is theirs - I repeat, on these occasions the responsibility is theirs - to ensure that no doubt is possible as to who is being lobbied: the Speaker or the MLA. On such occasions it must be made clear when approaching the Chair that members are lobbying me as the MLA and not as the Speaker.

There is one aspect of the lobbying that occurred on this occasion which I viewed with grave concern. Prior to the debate on the X-rated videos Bill, I was clearly told by several Ministers that, should the Bill fail to pass the Assembly, certain additional funding being sought by me as Speaker would be jeopardised. That funding is being sought for the recently approved Bills review committee staffing and equipment for members, which has recently arisen and which could not be covered by my budget submission. My interpretation of these discussions was threat by inference. I regard this with the gravest concern. I want to make it perfectly clear that the allocation of resources to the Assembly and its committees is not a matter to be used or intruded upon in this way.

While acknowledging that the Executive has the ultimate responsibility to the electorate for the expenditure of public moneys and reminding members that the budget process allows for a full input by the Speaker and the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedures, I must stress that it is not acceptable that funding for the Assembly be used to influence the vote of the occupant of the chair in this manner.

Mr Wood spoke of the independence and integrity of the Assembly, and he is correct. The independence and the integrity of the Speaker must be protected and upheld at all times. It is the very foundation upon which our Westminster parliamentary system is built. I therefore place on notice all Assembly members and the community at large that I, as Speaker of this Assembly, will never countenance any threat, veiled or otherwise, to the independence of the Assembly as has occurred on this occasion. I therefore support the motion of want of confidence.

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MR KAINE (Leader of the Opposition) (3.57): Mr Speaker, I assume that, by their remaining seated, the other members of the Government do not wish to speak, or, if they do wish to speak, then they are refusing - - -

Members interjected.

MR KAINE: I have sat quietly, Mr Speaker, while other members have said their piece, and I would appreciate it if they would do the same for me. I can assume only that, if they do have something to say, Mr Speaker, they are ignoring the advice that I gave to the Deputy Chief Minister this morning, that we on this side of the house would follow the normal convention of speaking alternately. If they are playing some funny game, their integrity will go further down the hill in my estimation than it is now.

Mr Moore: You can give advice; they don't have to take it.

MR KAINE: You have got a big mouth. You need to close it occasionally.

Mr Speaker, the business of deposing a government at any time is serious indeed and is not to be undertaken lightly.

Mr Moore: You can do better than that. It has only started for the next two and a half years.

MR KAINE: Mr Speaker?

MR SPEAKER: Order, Mr Moore!

MR KAINE: Since he does not choose to do me the courtesy of listening, I will start again. The business of deposing a government, Mr Speaker, at any time is serious indeed and is not to be undertaken lightly, and I do not take today's proceedings lightly. There has been some comment in some sectors suggesting that the majority opposition should not be moving against this inept minority Government. It is obvious that this has been part of the Government's campaign to unsettle the participants in the majority opposition and to try to build up community opposition to the inevitable. The Government's policy has failed, and the increasingly united opposition that you see here today has been the result.

The Government would be most unconvincing, Mr Speaker, if it expressed surprise at the move against it. As Liberal leader and Opposition leader, I have consistently stated that I saw it as my obligation to take government when the circumstances dictated. No opposition leader, Liberal or Labor, would sit passively when convinced that a government of the opposite party was both a minority government and an ineffective government. Circumstances now exist in which a majority of members of the Assembly have come together to form a new government. This has occurred because the members have become disillusioned by the Government's lack of performance.

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Mr Moore referred earlier to a grab for power. Mr Speaker, the Labor minority Government, of course, did not grab for power back in May. Their motives were and are, of course, pure and beyond reproach! They did not negotiate with the Residents Rally or anyone else, did they? How can they now pretend to claim the moral high ground when it comes to talk about grabbing for power and playing the numbers game? It does not impress me, and it does not impress anybody else.

Mr Speaker, today's no-confidence motion in the Government has been put before the Assembly because of one simple matter, and that is the Government's inability to address the crucial issues that face the ACT decisively. As a result, we have seen a progressive deterioration in the Territory in all respects over the last six months. The Government's budget strategy has failed to address our major problems. It has not come to grips with the deficit spending situation inherited from the Federal Labor Government. It has not addressed the urgent need to reduce the cost of government. It has failed abysmally to recognise the importance of the private sector and its expansion for future jobs for our children and our future revenue base. The Treasurer has proved totally incapable of providing a balanced and effective budget for the ACT.

This minority Government has relied heavily on empty Federal promises of funding. We have seen \$22m put in a hollow log because Mr Hawke and Mr Keating have thought the ACT Government too immature - and perhaps they were right - to handle these public moneys, despite the current financial difficulties in which the Territory finds itself. As a parting gesture, and presumably as an attempt to head off today's events, the Federal Government has decided to hand over \$7m of this money to Ms Follett. Well, it is too little and it is too late.

What we have seen is a continuous budget saga that has been going on for months, and you could hardly say that it has ended yet. Despite the fine words, we have had a government that has presented the image of uncertainty and indecisiveness both in developing a budget and in managing it. I cite the hospital fiasco as a classic case of somebody who has not managed the budget.

The entire so-called consultative process, of which the Government has been so proud, has been an absolute failure. You do not have to ask me; go and talk to people out there whom the Government claims to have consulted. It appears to have been the action of a government that wanted somebody else to make all the hard decisions for it - "We can't make the decisions. We'll go and consult somebody, and they can tell us how to do it".

It is this Government, the ACT minority Labor Government, that should have taken responsibility for the efficient and effective running of this Territory. The Government simply

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cannot abdicate its responsibilities and expect others to manage its problems and make the decisions for it. The Chief Minister, as the head of the Government and as the Treasurer, should have tackled the Territory's economic future with conviction, courage and vision. Mr Speaker, she has failed. The Government has denied all responsibility for its failure and has abdicated its role of policy maker.

We do not have the luxury of time in the ACT, Mr Speaker, and we do not have the luxury of assured funding in perpetuity. What we have is quite the opposite. The ACT has suffered as a result of the Government's short-sightedness and indecision. The Chief Minister spoke of adjustments over a period of years. Chief Minister, we do not have years. The Commonwealth's response to our situation gives little encouragement to the view that it will continue to fund Canberrans at a higher level than other Australians beyond the 1990-91 fiscal year.

Instead of projecting an image of purposeful progress, by which to reassure both the private sector and the public sector that this Government is in control, it has shown hesitancy, doubt and a lack of conviction that even it knew what was going on. It is no secret, Mr Speaker, that the guarantees of Commonwealth funding for the ACT expire in 18 months and that we have been overfunded in the past perhaps, in today's dollar terms, by as much as \$135m a year. The Government seems to have been incapable of understanding that we will need to adjust our finances considerably, to adjust our expenditures and to bring them into line with what we can afford after that expiry date.

The \$50m budget surplus for the 1989-90 fiscal year, which was predicted by the current Chief Minister during the election campaign, has failed to materialise. What we have seen is this Government going timidly to the Federal Government to ask for \$295m to cover its embarrassment. Despite the validity of the request, which I concede, Messrs Hawke and Keating have shown no willingness whatsoever even to address it. This issue should have been pursued vigorously, Mr Speaker; it was not.

The Chief Minister continued to show a total inability or unwillingness to tackle the real issues, an approach which will only compound the problem for 1990-91 and for future budgets. Where change was contemplated, the Chief Minister misrepresented some elements of the financial situation - for example, public borrowing. The Government claimed in its budget papers that it had taken "a significant decision" to cut its future recurrent expenditure by deciding to reduce its borrowings by \$10.8m.

Mr Speaker, this simply was not the case. The \$10.8m reduced borrowings was illusory and involved no hard decisions whatsoever by the Government. Of the \$10.8m, \$5.8m referred to in the initial budget statement of 25 July was simply unallocated borrowings - that is, unused

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borrowing potential - and a further \$4.1m of extra borrowings was not required, simply due to this amount having been carried forward from the previous year.

It is clearly set out in the budget papers that ACT semi-government borrowings for 1988-89 were \$25m, whilst \$28m was proposed for 1989-90. Even though this is some \$10.8m below the level which the Commonwealth will allow the ACT to borrow, it is an increase of 14.8 per cent on last year's borrowings, despite the Chief Minister's claim. For the Chief Minister to claim that her Government had decided to reduce its borrowings by \$10.8m was clearly and bluntly misleading.

The Government has neglected to make rational decisions on reducing government expenditure, decisions which would have achieved efficient and effective government and which would have eliminated duplication and waste without affecting those who actually deliver services to the community - the teachers and the nurses. Yet, in the budget, that is where the impact has fallen - on the teachers and the nurses.

On the revenue side of the budget, greater attention needed to be given to expanding the revenue base by encouraging development and diversifying the sources of revenue in the ACT. The Government has failed in this, too. What this minority Labor Government has failed to grasp is that the Commonwealth Government is no longer a big spender in the ACT. One needs only to look at the capital works budget for this year to verify that. A diverse and effective private sector in the ACT is absolutely necessary if we are to maintain our standard of living and provide jobs for all ACT citizens and to effectively expand our revenue base.

Yet this Government has made only token contributions to encouraging growth in the private sector. On the other hand, it did not lose any time in seeking to collect an additional \$40m or so in taxes and charges from those same businesses - a major disincentive to the business confidence and growth that we should be encouraging.

An example of this lack of financial sensitivity was land tax, an impost which the business community has to carry. The amount collected from this tax last year was \$6.9m; it is expected this year to be \$12.9m, almost double last year's figure. Payroll tax is another area in which the Government has seen private enterprise, particularly small business, as a bottomless well from which seemingly unlimited taxes can be extracted. Even the ordinary taxpayer, despite assurances that individual land rates and charges would not be increased, has faced substantial real increases. In short, Mr Speaker, the Government has failed abjectly either to face resolutely the preparation of an effective budget or to manage it.

In the area of planning and development the Government has simply abrogated its responsibility. It is a major economic issue for the ACT, and all the Government has been

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able to do in the last six months is produce a discussion paper which, at best, raises more questions than it answers. Both the business sector and the individual citizen have become increasingly concerned during the life of this Government over the lack of clearly defined processes leading to planning and land use decisions. Both have become increasingly concerned that open, responsible appeals processes have not been set in place.

The future economic and social well-being of Canberra and its citizens is now heavily dependent on proper arrangements being set in place by the ACT Government; and here, too, it has failed. No positive action has been initiated for the establishment of a permanent territorial planning authority, nor have we seen the establishment of guidelines and principles within which such a body could operate, and no appeals mechanism has even been defined. This Government has been unable to ensure predictability and consistency in decision making in matters of land management, and the ACT has suffered materially from this uncertainty. There has, quite bluntly, been no plausible excuse for this Government's total lack of performance in this important matter, which was high on the political agenda for months before self-government was granted.

In connection with that, Mr Speaker, I would like to quote from a document received from the Master Builders Association because two comments are relevant, and this represents the industry view. It states:

Despite many reviews, submissions, studies, reports and consultations over the past decade, the Territory does not have a planning system which will provide a basis on which industry can determine its forward plans for investment, job creation and business expansion.

That is a factual commentary on what the Government has presented us with. Finally, it states:

The ACT now has the most complicated approval system in Australia, whereas prior to self-government we led the field.

That is a comment on the Government's performance. Mr Speaker, there are many other areas in which the Government has simply not performed, such as health, education and municipal services, to name but a few. My colleagues have expanded or will expand on them. This minority Government has been inept; worse, it has become arrogant in its ineptitude, and it has simply neglected the interests of the people of Canberra.

The Territory has always inspired pride in its citizens. Over the last six months that pride has become tarnished because of this Government's lack of management skills, reflected in major functions like managing our hospitals, on the one hand, and even in the simplest of functions like

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cutting the grass, on the other. We may be a young national capital with a fledgling government, but we can do better.

Mr Speaker, to assert, as has been asserted, that a minority Labor government of five alone can ensure that Canberra remains Canberra is absolutely absurd. Members of the new majority government live here, too, and we aspire to maintain and enhance all that is good about Canberra, and we will do it.

Mr Wood spoke about a government that shares. I simply ask him: with whom? This Government did not share much with Mr DUBY, who supported them for six months and to whom they made specific undertakings. They shared nothing with the members of the opposition. They did not even share their knowledge in question time. They did not share much with the community out there either, through their spurious, so-called consultative process.

Mr Wood also referred to our taking government after all the hard work has been done. I am not looking to two and a half years of an easy time. I am quite sure that there is still two and a half years of hard work to go before the life of this Assembly expires. If Mr Wood wants to join us for the easy ride, he is quite welcome to do so.

This Government, Mr Speaker, despite its rhetoric, has not performed. We have had too much spurious consultation, too many promises broken, too many discussion papers and not enough action. Despite Mr Wood's applause of the Chief Minister's popularity, it is because of the Chief Minister's failure to manage, along with that of Mrs Grassby and Mr Berry, that this motion is being considered today. Mr Whalan, on the other hand, whose popularity was not so worthy of Mr Wood's applause, has been the Government's best performer, in my view.

Mr Speaker, it is a time for change, and a majority of members have spontaneously agreed to be the catalyst for change for the good of Canberra.

MRS GRASSBY (Minister for Housing and Urban Services) (4.12): Mr Speaker, I rise to speak against this self-seeking motion. The Labor Government promised the people of the ACT responsible government. We delivered. We promised consultation. We delivered. We promised social justice. We delivered. We promised a firm financial basis and a responsible budget. We delivered. Now that the Follett Government is popular with the people of Canberra, the power hungry groups opposite have decided to grab power before the people of the ACT forget about them completely. At the next election most of them will not even be here.

Mr Speaker, this Government has got the basics right and has put in place good, stable administration. The achievements in my portfolio are clear evidence of this. The Government has paid particular attention to the

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services provided by my department because we care for the community as a whole and for the many individuals who rely on these services for many of their basic requirements.

My priorities have been caring for the needy; providing access to government services; consulting and listening to community views; addressing major policy issues; and reforming outdated legislation. I am proud of the way this Government has achieved these priorities within a very responsible and carefully considered budget which every member in this Assembly saw fit to pass.

Mr Speaker, social justice - in particular, caring for the needy - has been a high priority of this Government. Social justice is at the heart of every activity carried out in my portfolio. Nowhere is this more evident than in the housing area. The Chief Minister showed her Government's commitment to housing by establishing a comprehensive review of housing policy in the first days of her Government. This is the most significant reform of housing policy ever undertaken in the ACT. It has already produced outstanding results. The review has looked at all housing needs, not just those of the public sector.

We are redeveloping the Melba Flats. This is an exciting project. Tenants are being relocated over two to three years. This is the first time that this has been done in public housing in Australia - pulling down an old complex to build something better for people.

We have successfully negotiated a new 10-year Commonwealth-State housing agreement, with the ACT for the first time being a full partner. We have agreed to 280 additional dwellings being provided each year over the next four years. God help us if the Liberal coalition takes over. Mr Kaine has already said that he will sell off all the public housing - God help those people - and that we should be charging them a lot more rent.

We have set about reforming the ACT Housing Trust, with more community and tenant consultation. We have agreed to a rental bond trust, to increase protection of the consumer, and a private sector rental housing trust which will make available 500 more rental dwellings over the next five years.

We provided stamp duty exemptions for first home buyers and a mortgage relief system. We agreed to introduce a fidelity guarantee fund within the real estate industry to protect home buyers' deposits.

Mr Speaker, no government in Australia has responded as quickly and as effectively to assist homeless youth than the Follett Labor Government. We agreed to two new accommodation centres in Belconnen. I wish to thank FM104.7, the Belconnen Rotary Club and the Anglican Church which came to our aid very quickly in helping to make sure this was done if the money was not available to do it. It

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shows that this Government was working very strongly hand in hand with the community. We agreed to construct three purpose-built women's refuges and one youth refuge, which will expand the Territory's crisis accommodation facilities.

Improving home ownership schemes was the next major priority of this Government in the housing review. There is much to be done and much to look forward to here. We are developing shared equity schemes; we are planning to improve housing options for the aged, people with disabilities and women. No other ACT government will have the vision or the determination to follow these through - certainly not the opposition over there.

Mr Speaker, during the election campaign the Labor Government gave high priority to the protection of the ACT's environment. In the Chief Minister's ministerial statement on the objectives of the Government she said that her Government would ensure that environmental issues were given high priority, and this we did. Mr Speaker, I am proud to say that in only seven months this Government has honoured this commitment. Last week the Chief Minister released a comprehensive draft environment strategy for the ACT. Many of the initiatives taken in my portfolio are consistent with this strategy. Again, I thank FM104.7 and my department for the fact that they encouraged people to plant trees on Mount Taylor. We involved the community again; we did not do it on our own.

Recently I announced substantial amendments to the Air Pollution Act, to implement the national strategy for ozone protection. I declared the Bimberi Wilderness Area in Namadgi National Park. The Nature Conservation Act has been substantially updated, and provision has been made for the special protection of endangered species. There have been major changes to the Water Pollution Act and the Air Pollution Act.

A new Pesticides Act has been brought into operation. The ACT will no longer become a dumping ground for the rest of Australia. The Government has approved the drafting of substantial amendments to the Careless Use of Fire Act, the Stock Act and the Stock Diseases Act, and is about to consider similar proposals for the legislation controlling hazardous chemicals and wastes.

The bushland around Canberra, known as the Canberra Nature Park, is one of the great features of this city, but it is largely unprotected and could be taken away in the future. The Government moved swiftly to ensure that these areas are protected for future generations. We established an extensive community consultation process to develop a management plan to protect the Canberra Nature Park. Over 3,700 residents and community groups are now involved in this process. This is what we did, but they are telling us we did not do it. This is positive proof of our commitment both to the environment and to consulting and listening to the people of Canberra.

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Mr Speaker, although the reforms in the area of housing and the environment are substantial, they are only part of the progress that we have achieved over the past seven months. Nowhere is this Government's commitments to social justice and community consultation better shown than in the recent release of Transport ACT, a draft comprehensive transport policy. It aims to develop a policy by which many future government decisions will be guided. The policy proposes a strategy for handling commuter travel against broad policy objectives. This is the first time such a comprehensive approach to handling transport has been developed in the ACT. Transport ACT focuses on travel to Civic in the first instance because Civic requires attention now, and the proposals on how the Government's broad objectives can be achieved were given high priority.

Mr Speaker, unfortunately time does not permit me to continue in detail with the achievements of this Government over the last six months. It is unfortunate that, should this no-confidence motion succeed, the so-called alliance will stifle many of the initiatives planned for the next couple of years.

However, in the short time left to me, I would like to outline some of the other successes of the Government. The introduction of the civil enforcement of parking fines will free up court and police resources and will remove an unfair burden from the taxpayer of the ACT. Legislation is being drafted to set limits on the weights of loads which can be carried on ACT roads, which apply throughout the rest of Australia. Emergency telephones are being placed on the Tuggeranong Parkway for the safety of the motorist. The school bus safety campaign was launched and has since received outstanding support from schools, parents and children. Canberra's growing cycle path network has been preserved for all users, and \$1m is being spent on its expansion. The Government has agreed to provide for the management, control and disposal of clinical wastes, which are dangers to the voters and people of Canberra. A syringe disposal system is being installed in public toilets, and a sharps hotline has been set up to protect the youth of Canberra.

A major focus has been to improve services to Canberra residents, and this has included reducing approval times in the building section; improving performance at the Motor Vehicle Registry, including the opening of extensions to the Phillip Motor Vehicle Registry; opening of the Tuggeranong shopfront; expansion of bus services to Tuggeranong; completion of the Tuggeranong library; and the opening of the Tuggeranong office of the building section.

I wonder how the people over there, who are supposed to represent Tuggeranong, will feel when all the parking is cut off for people here. As I look across at them over there, I do not think any of them will be back. Needless to say, with the deep policy divisions splitting the so-

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called alliance, I doubt whether they could achieve as much in two years.

Mr Speaker, you said that you were threatened. I visited you as the Speaker, not as a member, speaking to you about that vote on the tax that night. I told you that the Government needed money and that I would not cut my department any more or sack public servants of my department and that, if money for the Speaker had to come out of the budget and I was asked to cut my budget any more, I would vote against it in Cabinet. They were my words to you, and you cannot deny that I said them. I said I was sick of taking money from the people of this city, who had the right to have it, to give to opposition members to give them everything they wanted. That was why I said I would vote against it; I would not support it.

Let me take the example of asbestos. This Government has agreed to commence the asbestos removal program, despite the fact that costs were far in excess of the estimates which had been prepared before we came to government. Mr DUBY, the leader of the No Self Government Party, has a policy of entirely opposing the removal of asbestos unless the Commonwealth picks up the full cost. Can the alliance give an undertaking to those residents of Canberra who have asbestos insulation that Mr DUBY's policy will not be put into effect? If they give that undertaking, where does Mr DUBY stand? What a ragtag coalition!

Mr Speaker, in only seven months this Government has established a proud record of achievement. There is no basis for this no-confidence motion. If it succeeds, I warn the alliance that I will be closely scrutinising their performance. I have no doubt they will fail to come close to this Government's record. I shall let the people of Canberra know of their failure.

I thank officers of my department who, at all times I am sure, gave me the very best advice that I could have got from them and for the fact that they had to put up with Mr COLLAERY making statements in this house about corruption in the ACT public service. I thank them for the work they did and for all the information they gave me when I needed it. I also want to thank my personal staff, who at all times worked many hours overtime to make sure that this Government was able to keep the promises it made to the people, Mr Speaker.

MR BERRY (Minister for Community Services and Health) (4.26): I think the first thing that needs to be addressed is that there are two very different reasons that have been assigned to this vote of no confidence in Rosemary Follett. The first one was put to the Assembly by Mr COLLAERY and dealt with alleged threats against you, Mr Speaker, in relation to the vote on the X-rated video tax. The second one was Mr KAINE's allegation that there were some problems with the Government's management of the Territory. So one of the difficulties I have in addressing this motion is

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determining what are the positions of these two parties opposite.

I will just make a little bit of a nonsense out of some of the remarks that you made, Mr Kaine. I think one of the statements you made was that some dreadful imposts were being placed on the small businesses of Canberra. You know, in relation to payroll tax, that most employers in the Territory miss out on it. So do not mislead this house.

In relation to the alleged threat against the Speaker, may I say, Mr Speaker, with the deepest respect, that I have a great deal of difficulty coping with what you put to this house today. I know that I explained very clearly to you my reasons in relation to the X-rated video tax, and I know that at the time that I explained them to you there was no complaint from you about my challenging your independence in this place. For you to come out in this place, Mr Speaker, with the greatest respect, and claim that there has been some challenge to your independence, I think, is grossly misleading.

I think that the issue has been made very clear by my colleague that this is a budgetary matter and, of course, where funds are withdrawn from the budget there is a threat that further pressures will be placed on individual budgets. It is well known, and pointed out often by those opposite, that the health system in the ACT needs every dollar it can get. I can say, in line with Mrs Grassby, that, if the issue was whether the funds were to be supplied to the Speaker in relation to this Assembly or to some needy area of health policy, I would support in Cabinet the allocation of those funds to the area of health under threat and I would not withdraw from that position.

Mr Speaker, under the leadership of Rosemary Follett the first six months of self-government in the portfolio of Community Services and Health have been a great success for the ACT Labor Government and for the people of Canberra. This has been exemplified by the number of situations which have been successfully negotiated. We have answered those situations with solutions that maintain the Government's commitment to supplying the people of the ACT with a high-quality health service at a reasonable cost. With these solutions we have honoured our commitment to responsible government in the Australian Capital Territory.

Mr Speaker, the Follett Labor Government is an open and accountable government which is responsive to community priorities and accessible to the people. It is essential for the Government to listen to the needs of the community, for they have demonstrated strong interest in this portfolio. We have sought their input and have listened. For example, the consultative budget process revealed community concern, particularly in relation to welfare, corrective services, hospital and community services.

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I must say, in referring to welfare, Mr Speaker, that I heard Mr Collaery raise the issue of subsidised accommodation. I am sure he was referring to substitute care, and I just hope that he gets it right in the future.

But, most importantly, the budget process highlighted the complete inadequacy of the Liberal coalition to cope with anything positive, despite the mumblings from Mr Kaine and Mr Collaery about some form of collegiate government for the ACT. Both, indeed, Mr Speaker, walked away from the process. Given the opportunity to participate in the budget consultative process, you could not have locked either of them in there. They would have kicked the door down to get out.

Mr Kaine: Because it was such a sham; that is why.

MR BERRY: You could not cope with it, and you proved that later, Mr Kaine.

Mr Kaine: It was just a sham, and you know it.

MR BERRY: You proved it later - and I will come to that. I must say that I was interested in the statements by Mr Duby. I view his statements as being somewhat doubtful and demonstrative of an element of duplicity, because there is no doubt that Mr Duby had full access to the budget process and stayed with it, unlike Mr Kaine and Mr Collaery, but in terms of a positive input he was unable to achieve anything. He later made some criticism in this house, but they were largely empty words - drum beating, I suggest.

Tough decisions were made to remain within the constraints of the ACT's first ever budget. In the final analysis the budget we handed down reflects the Government's strong commitment to social justice and our fiscal responsibility. Yet, despite the restrictions of this year's budget, the Government has made a number of important new services possible.

One of the things that I find interesting in dealing with the budget here is that, although Mr Kaine claims to know so much about the budget process, we had to hold up the proceedings of this Assembly to demonstrate how we were going to work our way through it for him. We had a 15-minute adjournment so that he could cope with the problem of dealing with the budget papers. Yet he gets up in this place and suggests that he is in a position to criticise this Government.

The services that have been made possible under the budget process by this Government include a 24-hour direct access service for mentally disturbed persons; the establishment of a health promotion fund to strengthen the community's awareness of health activities, and I am sure that the tobacco lobby will be on your doorstep tomorrow to try to weaken our position in relation to that because they got no joy from this Government; employment of counsellors for the

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critical incident stress debriefing project which assists in alleviating job related stress; the creation of the youth service officer program which will provide school liaison officers to identify and support young people at risk of experiencing homelessness, and do not challenge us on our record on youth homelessness, Mr Collaery; the child abuse assessment clinic at Royal Canberra Hospital, which will be further supported with the employment of extra staff; improved adult detention arrangements for psychiatrically ill offenders; the establishment of an adult attendance centre program to provide a non-custodial sentencing option for the ACT, and which is intended to prevent re-offending through the provision of vocational and personal development programs. I notice, Mr Speaker, that the best the Liberals could come up with of late is support for a gaol in the Territory in order that they can fill it instead of approaching the - - -

Mr Whalan: For people convicted under move-on powers.

MR BERRY: My colleague suggested that they might try to fill it with people convicted under move-on powers, but I suggest that they will try to fill it anyway, regardless of the cost to the people of the Territory. The new services also include funding for a group home for people with intellectual disabilities and for the establishment of new occasional child-care facilities at Dickson; money set aside for the implementation of the Food Act; and expansion of the women's health service and migrant health service.

I think it is necessary to record again, Mr Speaker, the opposition by the Liberal Party to any improvement of services for women. Let us make it clear and let the community be aware of where the Liberal Party and their coalition are coming from. It was an attack on women.

Mr Kaine: We don't mind you telling the truth, but that's a lie.

MR SPEAKER: Order! Order!

MR BERRY: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I heard Mr Stefaniak get up and oppose the budget provisions for women.

Mr Kaine: You said "all". What you said was untrue.

MR SPEAKER: Order! Mr Kaine, order!

MR BERRY: Then he dropped off it when he worked out that he could not handle it. The same, of course, happened in relation to health and education. Mr Humphries could not work out where he wanted to deduct it from and then dropped off the issue when he got the wind up.

Mr Humphries: That is a slur on the staff of this Assembly, Mr Berry, and you should withdraw it.

MR SPEAKER: Order!

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MR BERRY: Finally, substantially expanded funding has been allocated for the much-needed replacement and upgrading of major plant and equipment items at hospitals. This increase addresses the inadequacy of expenditure in this area in the past and will raise the standard of equipment available for patient care. As most will agree, the Government inherited a public hospital system in a poor state of repair. The Government has taken direct action to address this problem and to ensure significant improvements in Canberra's health services.

Mr Humphries: What is left of them.

MR BERRY: Talking the health system down again, Mr Humphries? We are getting used to it.

In the short term some of the expenditures under the capital works program will assist in upgrading the state of the public hospital system. They include - listen to this - asbestos removal at Royal Canberra Hospital; minor new works necessary to maintain the many important community facilities in different parts of Canberra; \$4.4m on a new nurse education building at the Canberra College of Advanced Education; upgrading fire penetration at the Royal Canberra Hospital; and sanitising equipment at the Woden Valley Hospital. Other expenditures under the capital works program include the refurbishment of the detoxification centre at Campbell and modifications to the Belconnen Remand Centre.

I think I have also referred, Mr Speaker, to the loss of the X-rated video tax, which will impact on very important issues of the Government's budget, and that is why we raised it with you.

Over the past years, problems have been identified in the ACT's hospital system. These problems relate to the run-down condition of the buildings, to staffing and to internal morale problems. This led to a lack of confidence in the system. May I say at this stage that Mr Humphries and the Liberal Party did their best to talk down the hospital system, not only in the last six months but also in the lead-up to the budget, for selfish political gain, and I will explain a little more - - -

Mr Humphries: Clyde Holding talked it down, too.

MR BERRY: Keep your ears open, and I will explain a little more about what we have done for our health system while you have been out sniping at it and trying to sabotage it for your own cheap advantage.

Over the past few years problems have been identified in the ACT's hospital system. These problems relate, as I have said, to the run-down condition of the buildings. But, since gaining government, Mr Speaker, Labor has worked to address all of these problems. We have instituted

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reviews of staffing and service areas. We have, after consultation with the community, despite all the whinges from the other side, released the blueprint for the future hospitals development and, in consultation with the dedicated workers, we have commenced work to make the system more efficient. Savings need to be made, but not at the expense of services.

The redevelopment plans will take five to seven years to implement and will yield a modern, integrated hospital system to serve the ACT community well into the twenty-first century. This Government is not simply offering bandaids to patch up perceived problems, nor will this Government undermine the system by taking cheap options to shut down hospitals and endanger the health of people in our care.

I must say that in our hospitals redevelopment program the option for consultation was made freely available to political parties opposite. I heard Mr Collaery whingeing about the process of consultation at significant cost to the people of Canberra. Comprehensive briefing was provided in this building, but Mr Collaery could not even be bothered to attend.

I know, Mr Speaker, no matter how emotional one gets about this, it does not alter the numbers, but clearly I would have to question the health plan put forward by the Liberal coalition, which proposes to proceed with redeveloping the hospitals while simultaneously reviewing the same redevelopment. What a jumble! If that method of development were undertaken, the ACT's hospitals would flounder while precious time and money was wasted. It is certain that the future of Royal Canberra Hospital is again in doubt because of the Liberal coalition policies, and I guess, as time goes on, the great division between their respective positions will appear.

Furthermore, the coalition has indicated that it intends to sell the health department's building in Moore Street, which would deprive the people of Canberra of many valuable services that are accessed constantly in the centre of Civic. Of course, the people who most access those services are not the supporters of the Liberal Party; they are the poor of this city.

The Labor Government has selected a redevelopment process for our public hospital system which focuses on an integrated and comprehensive system. (Extension of time granted) The three existing public hospitals will be retained, although in a revised, more effective and efficient form. This system will be a decisive step forward for Canberra's hospitals.

This Government is concerned with the future needs of the community. That is why the new public hospital system is aimed at providing the number of hospital beds that will be required in the year 2000. As well, the redevelopment

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addresses a variety of community needs. Indeed, an example of that is that the Government will proceed with planning construction of nursing home beds on the Royal Canberra Hospital site. In addition, the Government plans to investigate the provision of convalescent and hospice facilities and a birthing centre.

Another major success for the Labor Government and the people of Canberra is the announcement of a Medicare hospital agreement which was struck between the Prime Minister and our Chief Minister. Under this agreement the ACT will receive almost \$43m in 1989-90 to fund a range of incentives designed to further improve the efficiency of our public hospital system. This incentive money will enable the Territory to develop and expand innovative approaches to reduce the need for overnight admission to hospital or to allow early discharge by providing enhanced services in the fields of post-acute, palliative care and day surgery.

This agreement is further proof of the Labor Government's continuing commitment to the principles of Medicare. Specifically - and I should say in committing ourselves to Medicare I do not see the same sort of enthusiasm from the Liberal Party opposite - the agreement reinforces the right of public patients to free access to hospital services according to medical need.

I think what needs to be made clear at this point, Mr Speaker, is the lie in the words of Mr Humphries when he said that this Government threatened to sack the board. Mr Humphries knows that this Government never threatened to sack the board. The board's term expires on 31 December, and the Government, not the Opposition, had the responsibility to do something about it, and has done it.

The redevelopment and integration of the public hospital system is a massive task which will take a number of years to complete. Given the nature of the task, I have announced a board to manage the Woden Valley and Royal Canberra Hospitals. No sackings! It will continue the work of the existing interim board and will focus on the integration of public hospital services and the development of hospital based clinical training for health professionals and the management of hospitals.

Mr Humphries: What is left of them.

MR BERRY: We have managed to save some from the ravages that you intended to impose upon them by all of the attacks that you made in the media for your own cheap political gain, Mr Humphries.

The board's strength will be based on openness and consultation, and it will be in stark contrast to the process proposed by the Liberal coalition in which a straitjacket of legislation will undermine the independence of board members' representation of the community. The

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senior legal person opposite knows to which piece of law I am referring, and we have discussed it. That was, of course, the Bennett decision in New South Wales, if you do not recall, Mr Collaery.

I am confident that the system proposed by the Labor Government will be the strongest and most effective system for managing our hospitals. To address the wide range of competing needs in the community, I have proposed a community services and health council to bring people from the various peak agencies under one umbrella. They, in turn, will provide me with coordinated, top-level policy advice.

To complement the community services and health council I have created a new community services advisory committee which retains much of the role of the existing community services council. This committee will focus on achieving the coordination of government and non-government community services and will also oversight the operation of the grants program to the non-government sector - not, as Mr Humphries said, forming a committee which would oversight the hospitals board. That was another fib, Mr Humphries.

Mr Humphries: We will never know now, will we?

MR BERRY: And that is going to be demolished, too, by the sound of it. Community consultation is on the way out.

Together, I believe that these three bodies will be the key in shaping some of the future directions for health and community services in the ACT, though Mr Humphries said, and I guess he said it in the knowledge that he has the numbers, that he is going to wipe all these things out. That is not unexpected from the Liberal coalition.

In addition to the new policy initiatives announced under the budget, a number of significant achievements have been made in my department in the past six months. Some of these include the establishment of a youth health clinic in Narrabundah to provide confidential counselling and general health education; an agreement signed with the Trades and Labour Council to regulate occupational health and safety in the department; funding, under the Medicare incentives program, for post-acute and palliative care; one-off funding under the national better health program for health needs of the aged, a cancer program targeting the male role in the spread of cervical cancer, and for the neighbours project, to assist in establishing a drop-in centre for a group of single mothers.

They also include the opening of a health risk management clinic; launching of Midcall, the obstetrics early discharge program; finalisation of the new supported accommodation assistance program; joint establishment with the Commonwealth of the disability services committee; identification of job opportunities for placement of people with intellectual disabilities; opening of the Burrangiri

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Centre in Rivett, which will provide short-term accommodation for frail aged people; the release of a directory of women's health services in the ACT; establishment of a trainee system in the health surveillance service in an effort to retain health surveyors in the ACT; funding for 23 projects to assist ACT community self-help groups; presentation of a \$20,000 cheque to the ACT division of the National Heart Foundation to partly fund a risk factor prevalence study in the ACT; and the launch of the ACT component of the national AIDS education program for people of non-English speaking backgrounds.

The activities within my portfolio, Mr Speaker, in the past six months reflect the Government's commitment to quality service, to social justice and to fiscal responsibility. The Labor Government is proud of its achievements and the ground we have gained to date. The people of Canberra can share that pride, for they are the ones who will benefit from first-rate community and health services that will carry the ACT into the future - services which focus on the individuals in the community who use them and which are sensitive to the needs of the people of Canberra. Compare that record, Mr Speaker, with the record of those opposite. The stark contrast will astound you all.

MR SPEAKER: I would just like to set the record straight on a comment made by Mr Berry. I will read in part a letter that was forwarded to the Canberra Times on 29 November 1989 about an amendment that was circulated in the Legislative Assembly chamber in Mr Humphries' name on 22 November 1989 during consideration of the detail stage of the Appropriation Bill. It said:

The amendment, as circulated, proposed a reduction in the proposed expenditure for Division 70 of \$5m. Division 70 relates to education funding.

Could I point out that in fact, this amendment should have nominated Division 170 rather than Division 70 and this confusion was referred to in the Assembly by Mr Humphries on 23 November. Division 170 relates to Community Services and Health funding. The amendment was incorrectly drafted for Mr Humphries by Assembly Secretariat staff and was not according to Mr Humphries' instructions.

Mrs Grassby: It was in his handwriting. He signed it.

Mr Berry: On a point of order, Mr Speaker; I object to your taking up the cudgels on behalf of Mr Humphries. In fact, the evidence that was - - -

Mr Humphries: You were attacking Assembly staff. That is why he took up the cudgels on behalf of Mr Humphries.

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Mr Berry: Well, Mr Speaker, the note was a handwritten one.

Mr Humphries: It was not a handwritten one.

MR SPEAKER: Order! I really believe that that was not taking the side of anyone. I was correcting the record.

Mr Moore: On a point of order, Mr Speaker; it certainly was. Mr Humphries at that time had a note prepared for him. If my memory serves me, too, it was not handwritten, but he signed it. As a Minister, he is going to have a lot of things written for him which he is going to sign, and he has to learn to check them. It is his responsibility. We seek that you be more impartial, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER: Be careful, Mr Moore.

MR STEVENSON (4.51): Mr Speaker, the important matter is how the people of Canberra will benefit. Ms Follett said that what is important is that the people of Canberra be put first. I agree entirely. It was an interesting situation that, with eight people on my left and eight on my right, it allowed me to have the balance of power up to recent times. With power comes responsibility. What I am interested in is, as the Chief Minister said, how it will benefit the people of Canberra. They should be put first.

We have been surveying fairly extensively what the people of Canberra want. Of politicians they want, firstly, honesty. They also want representation. They want politicians that do their will. In the balance of power, for as long as it lasted, I did not want anything. It was asked of me by the media at different times, "What do you want?". I said, "I don't want anything". But I am quite sure that the people of Canberra want some things. We have surveyed that as well. What they want is the opportunity to have their will heard. That could be called the voters' veto. That was referred to before.

Mr Humphries referred to "Dennis Stevenson's voters' veto". I wish it were the case. I truly do. But it was not mine. The Labor Party had it as a major plank for 70 years, before I was even born!. The Liberal Party introduced a Bill in Western Australia, and in Tasmania. The Democrats have been hard at it, long before I even heard about it, for over 10 years. So it is not my voters' veto. It is the people's voters' veto. It will certainly be introduced. The people will make sure of that.

There was something else which people wanted and which I feel we should give them. It is not just the people of Canberra. It is the people of Australia. Every Attorney-General in Australia has called for the banning of pornographic videos. They did not do that simply because they thought it was a good idea. They did it because of public involvement - people demonstrating that the electorate has the true power, even though they often forget that, but that is where power lies.

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What has happened is that, because we have not followed the recommendations of every Attorney-General in Australia, Canberra has become the porn capital of Australia. I have given notice today that I will move on the next day of sitting a Bill for an Act to ban X-rated videos. The Liberal Party platform says that the sale, hire and distribution of X-rated videos will be banned. I call on them to support the Bill.

These two things, I feel, are very important to Canberrans. I mentioned that in the media and made no hidden agenda about it. I said, "This is what I want, these two things". Someone said, "If the Liberals gave the people the voters' veto, what would you think?". I said, "I would be encouraged". And they said, "And what if somebody said they would not give the people the voters' veto?". I said, "I would be discouraged". Unfortunately, I am discouraged - for the moment.

There was another option I had with the two blocks of eight. If those blocks remained and I abstained, that would have abolished the Assembly. The Canberra Times, last Saturday I believe, said, "Will Dennis Stevenson get his long-cherished dream to abolish the Assembly?". Once again, I was interested in what Canberra people wanted and we have been surveying them. Some 78 per cent of people do not want this self-government. Do not worry about who runs it - 78 per cent of people do not want it. On 4 March those same people, with a few more, made the figure 84 per cent. It has only dropped 6 per cent.

If I was not going to see any benefit for the people out of all this, I was prepared to do the will of the 78 per cent and see it abolished. Some people have suggested that a lot of people would lose their seats. We have all got no doubt about that. Some have suggested that I might lose mine. Well, of course, I could not care less. I did not stand for a seat in government. I stood to abolish it, and everyone here knows full well that, given the opportunity, I would have.

So I made known to the party leaders - the Liberal, the Rally and the Labor Party - that I would be interested to chat along the lines that I mentioned. Earlier, Mr Collaery turned to me and said that he had had no discussions with Dennis Stevenson on vote-winning issues, and that is true. There have been none. But I think the people of Canberra could well question why there have not been.

Mr Kaine could also make the same claim, and again I question why, particularly as Mr Kaine has the title at present of Leader of the Opposition. Presumably I was one of the opposition, and I would have suggested his back would have been well covered by talking to Dennis Stevenson. But there was another agenda that was being followed.

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Mr Moore: Don't take it personally, Dennis. They didn't speak to me either.

MR STEVENSON: Mr Moore earlier said, "This is a simple grab for power". Well, that is not true. No grab for power is simple. The Labor Government well understood that on or about 11 May and the alliance well understands it now. I think what is important is that we follow our conscience in matters before the Assembly. Many people have wondered, through the months since self-government was formed and before then during the campaign, why it was that the No Self Government Party and the Abolish Self Government Coalition never amalgamated. I can understand why they had that question, but there were a number of reasons. The major reason was that I considered it not to be the thing to do. We were serious about abolishing it, and I am not sure that some of the other people were. At one time I spoke to Mr DUBY, I think after the election, and said, "If we could bring it down by all resigning, what would you think?". But that was not met with approval. I am not sure that that would have done it, but I was interested in following the possibility.

On 11 May the No Self Government Party elected the Labor Party to power. A bit later on, during a motion to call an inquiry into self-government, I moved an amendment because there was something missing in the motion that Mr DUBY presented. What was missing was a look at self-government itself. So my amendment suggested that there be a new item 1 as a term of reference, and that item was to look at the constitutional legality of the ACT Assembly. I thought that was a fairly interesting way to bring about the abolition of self-government, because indeed anybody who read the Australian constitution would understand there are about five sections there that would make it unconstitutional to give the seat of government - the nation's capital - away to some other government. I called for a division, and unfortunately I lost by 16 to one. I believe it will not be the last time that happens.

Today the No Self Government Party had the opportunity to give Canberrans another chance, a chance to have their say on self-government. I do not believe self-government would have been abolished, although there was an outside chance, very outside, but certainly the Assembly could have, as we had the balance of power. Whether we would have lost our seats or won more seats or whatever, what a way to go!

Today, the No Self Government Party will elect a Liberal-Rally alliance to power with themselves included, and that grouping will have the numbers. Mr HUMPHRIES mentioned earlier that, if you do not have the numbers, you sink into the mire of mediocrity or some such thing. I would ask: why is that? I understand that government is the 17 people in this Assembly, not five, not 10, not eight or whatever. Every person in this Assembly has been elected by the people of Canberra to represent their wishes. Their wishes

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are to be fairly represented and for people to have a say in what happens to their lives and the lives of their families.

If there is control of the Government by the numbers, as it is said, that does not allow people to act according to their conscience. Many years ago I first heard the suggestion in government of a conscience vote, and I wondered about that. I thought, "What on earth is a conscience vote? How could you have one of those things? Do elected representatives - politicians - not vote according to their conscience all the time?". Well, it would appear not. Only occasionally are men and women in parliament allowed to vote according to the way they feel they should, and that is sad.

We have had votes in this Assembly on fluoride. Unfortunately, people were not allowed to vote according to their conscience. We have had a vote in this Assembly on the pornography tax, and unfortunately people were not allowed to vote according to their conscience. I encourage people in this Assembly to work together and vote according to their conscience. Let us give the people of Canberra a say in what happens to them. (Extension of time granted)

Voters' veto is democracy in action. It will come. It will come sooner or it will come a little bit later.

Mr Berry: Not before Christmas.

MR STEVENSON: I was hopeful.

Mrs Grassby: You won't get that as a present.

MR STEVENSON: It was actually a present for the people of Canberra, and it would have been nice if, in this year of what is called self-government, they could have had a present like that. But it will come. Sooner or later one of the parties or groupings is going to realise that it makes good sense, because the first party that does it will be able forever to say, "We were the first party to give you a say. How can you not like us? You have a say on any matter you wish. Do not complain to us; use your right - use your veto - or use your left, if that is the case".

This is all people want. They do not want to vote on how wide the roads are, or what colour the schools are, or any one of a million other things that pass through this Assembly. Most people do not know most of the things we vote on. Sometimes I wish they did. But they do want a say on occasional issues. In the last five years there might have been five or six issues that people would have liked to talk on - certainly self-government, perhaps the casino, perhaps pornography, I am not sure, but that should be up to the people. The people should be able, by way of petition, to request and compel the Government to give them a say which would be binding.

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Much has been made of stable government. I went to a meeting last Wednesday that was called by the Labor Party, and various speakers spoke on stable government. I even had the opportunity to say a few words myself. The suggestion is that, if the Labor Government remains in control, that would be stable government. Other people have suggested, with the new alliance, that that will be stable government. I suggest that neither would be stable government. There will never be a stable government in Canberra, in Australia, or anywhere else in the world until the people have a say in it.

MR WOOD: I wish to make a personal explanation. In responding to some of my statements, Mr Humphries has asked me to correct a statement that I had made which he claimed was wrong. I aim to be accurate in what I say, so I wish to acknowledge that a media statement I made, I think it was all of No. 2 of 1989, assumed far too much. In that statement I did say that I believed that Mr Kaine had Mr Stevenson's vote wrapped up. Following events in this chamber today and a conversation earlier with Mr Stevenson, I know that not to be the case. So I am willingly and humbly admitting that, and in that context I would also invite Mr Collaery to join in that sort of spirit.

MR WHALAN (Deputy Chief Minister) (5.09): Mr Speaker, the no-confidence motion before the house today is based on nothing more than a perceived new-found ability to count heads on the part of a couple of political opportunists. Clearly what it is not about is good government. This Labor Government came to office in what I would describe as the best of times and the worst of times. On the one hand, we were, and still are, a minority in this house. At that time, too, there was considerable scepticism in the community about self-government and about the ability of this house to provide a stable environment for rational decision making. The state of the ACT's finances was, to say the least, not promising and combined with a slowdown in business activity and an overheated national economy, our flexibility in the economic field was very much constrained.

Nevertheless, the opportunity confronting us was enormous. It is my view that the ACT is at a crossroads in its history. There are important choices confronting us, choices which will mean the difference between a role in either the mainstream or the backwater of Australian life, a choice between leadership and innovation, and mediocrity. In a way, it is the same choice facing the members of this Assembly today. Self-government for the ACT is the only way that the people of the ACT can actively participate in shaping the future of their Territory. Government means taking responsibility. It means making decisions for the betterment of all the people we represent, not just the special interest groups and power blocs who whinge the loudest.

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This Government has approached its task with commitment and vigour and takes full responsibility for the way the ACT has been managed over the past eight months. We have provided a level of stability and responsibility in government that has surprised our detractors and clearly disappointed the opposition. We have provided the people of the ACT with a voice in decisions which affect their daily lives and, importantly, the future of this Territory.

We are proud of our achievements in our first eight months. We hold our heads high and apologise to no-one. For my own part, I have dedicated myself and my agencies to a vision of what this Territory can become. We have pursued our primary objective of responsible, sustainable economic development in the context of the Government's commitment to social justice and environmental protection. We have taken real steps toward achieving a more stable and diverse Territory economy - that is, one that can offer jobs and lifestyles which meet the high expectations of the ACT community into the coming decade and indeed into the next century.

My portfolio of Industry, Employment and Education is a large and diverse one. It embraces functions which are vitally important to ACT citizens. Indeed, the portfolio is the engine-room of economic change. It encompasses a wide range of functions which have a direct bearing on the continued development of the Territory as a place in which to live, learn, work and do business.

We have sought the involvement of the ACT community in all aspects of government, not because it is fashionable or politically expedient, but because we genuinely believe that all citizens have something to offer. Our appointments to boards and advisory committees have been based on the principles of social justice and on seeking talent and commitment from all levels in the community. Some of these people have come from the natural constituency of our political opponents. Indeed, some are members and supporters of other political parties.

Our approach to industrial and economic development has been based on seeking to maximise the long-term welfare of the entire ACT community, to provide jobs and income for the community, to provide an economy which will serve the needs of not only today's but also tomorrow's citizens and job seekers. It has not been, as is sometimes suggested, a matter of serving vested interests.

Some of our opponents, indeed many of the would-be members of an alternative government, simply do not understand the role of the private sector. They would have us believe that government simply pronounces what will be and the private sector follows. They do not understand that investments are made and jobs created on the basis of confidence in expected returns. They believe that government can milk the private sector with high land prices, high taxes, arbitrary limits on leases or any other

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device they can think up and that businesses will cooperate by simply handing over the money. What a bestial alliance between unnatural bedfellows it would be for this group to join forces with the traditional conservatives who think that it works the other way, with government handing over the reins to the private sector.

What this Government, along with the many successful Labor governments around the country, has done is to develop an approach to industry development which selectively channels investment and job creation into areas which provide the maximum net benefit to the community. We do not do this with threats or punitive legislation. We sit down with the private sector and with the unions and community groups and find areas of common interest. Quality developments which serve the needs of the community and which enhance and complement the unique role of this city do not materialise out of thin air. We have developed mechanisms - the Civic Square redevelopment is a classic example - which provide both the people of Canberra and the private sector developers with a net return on their investment.

Whatever the results of today's debate, I am proud of what we have achieved. Despite overall restraint in public spending, we have boosted key areas of my portfolio which will produce tangible returns for the community. One of my first acts as Minister was to establish a consultative mechanism with the tourism industry through the establishment of the Tourism Industry Advisory Committee. We also injected an additional \$1m into the Tourist Bureau's promotional program. This additional funding has already paid off handsomely for the ACT in the form of increased visitor numbers and longer stays, despite the national downturn in the industry and the crippling effects of the pilots' walkout. Quick action by this Government in redirecting promotional efforts to markets within driving distance of Canberra has meant that Canberra went against the national trend of tourism industry recessions.

Our approach to tourism has been both innovative and effective. It is creating jobs for young people and providing ACT citizens with new leisure opportunities. The ACT is winning national and international awards and accolades for its excellence in tourism marketing. We have opened a new bureau office in Melbourne and established an Australian first with our multicultural tourism strategy.

Similarly, in other areas of industry development, we have taken quick and effective action to position the ACT as a site for investment and new business. We have established new and innovative assistance arrangements for businesses expanding in and relocating to the ACT. An additional \$350,000 was provided in our first budget to spur the establishment of new industry. We have successfully attracted Revlon - the international market leaders in cosmetics - to establish a new home in Canberra.

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For the first time in Australia, a government will be using its strengths in the education field to attract and assist business investment. Work force development assistance, one of three categories of assistance available under the new arrangements, will promote the use of ACT based institutions and private organisations which provide training, recruitment and staffing services to companies. We have identified key sectors for assistance, including tourism related industries; business and financial services; environmentally sound light manufacturing, including, in the advanced technology sectors of electronics, communications and information technology; and, finally, personal services, including health care, leisure and recreation.

We are supporting industry across a broad spectrum, large and small, local and international, not just through directed assistance but also by reducing red tape and eliminating unnecessary regulation. On 20 October I announced that the ACT was to become a signatory to the Australian civil offsets agreement. This will enable the ACT to take advantage of investment opportunities arising out of the major purchasing activities of other State governments and the Commonwealth. Under the agreement, the manufacturers of high-technology goods are obliged to make a real contribution to the development of Australian industry. The ACT is well placed to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the offsets program, particularly in advanced technology manufacturing, research and development, and the export marketing of existing products and services. Offsets will be an important element in our strategy to boost private sector investment in key sectors.

We have also initiated measures which lay the foundation for the future. The multifunction polis, or MFP, proposal for the development of an integrated industrial and social system based on twenty-first century technology and lifestyles is one which has captured the imagination of governments and industry around the world. This Government has placed the ACT's case for a role in the MFP firmly on the agenda of the participating institutions and companies in Australia, Japan and the other countries involved. We have articulated an ACT vision based on our strengths in education, leisure and research. In government, we will continue to pursue the ideal of a Territory economy which interacts with, and indeed leads, the world in markets for ideas and investment for our future.

Another project for the future in which we have led the way is the proposal for a very fast train linking Canberra directly with Sydney and Melbourne. The VFT is a project in which I have taken a keen and personal interest. Within only a few weeks of taking government, we had endorsed the project in principle and initiated a number of actions to ensure that the issues associated with the project were identified and resolved before final decisions were required.

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In keeping with our commitment to involve the community in decision making processes, we established a high-level advisory committee to provide independent and considered advice about the project. We directed that the committee should immediately consult the ACT community to identify issues of concern. This process has been singularly successful. The committee has undertaken its task with vigour and has combined its consultative role with one of raising public awareness about the VFT project. I understand that, as of last Friday, almost 50 submissions had been received on various aspects of the VFT and its implications for Canberra. Following a highly successful display at the new Canberra Centre, held jointly by the committee and the VFT joint venture, the committee is now planning a series of public meetings to seek broader community reaction to the project. The committee's first report to Government will provide a firm basis on which to assess and plan for this important project.

Our approach to the VFT proposal is to view it as an opportunity, not as a problem. We have consistently acknowledged that the project - if it goes ahead - will have to meet with a high standard of environmental and social impact assessment. The potential impact of a VFT on the ACT is enormous. In its design, construction and operation, a VFT would bring new industry and new jobs to Canberra. Up to \$200m in design work alone and \$500m in construction expenditure in this region would be some of the early benefits available to the Canberra community.

In operation, a VFT would accelerate growth in those sectors we need to broaden and strengthen the ACT economy: finance and business services; clean light manufacturing, and sport, recreation and tourism. Market studies predict an additional 300,000 tourists visiting Canberra each year with consequent flow-on benefits in terms of jobs and new business opportunities. We have much to gain from a rational and considered approach which is not diverted by side issues and point scoring. This Government has demonstrated that it has the credentials to provide that approach.

I have already mentioned that the section 19 redevelopment is a model of the innovative approach this Government has taken with major projects. That development, the subject of no fewer than five inquiries, will provide some 2,700 direct and indirect jobs during the construction phase and 1,800 jobs when in operation. It will also provide immediate revenue with which the Government will fund community facilities, and ongoing revenue from casino taxation.

This important project is, of course, now directly threatened by today's motion of no confidence. One party to the motion has made its intentions quite clear and there is nothing that the other could do, despite its protestations, to prevent the undermining and eventual scuttling of the project. The Liberal Party's shameless

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complicity in this matter is as transparent as are its motives for supporting the motion today.
(Extension of time granted)

Like the section 19 project, our approach to the redevelopment of the Bruce Stadium and the commercialisation of the stadium trust demonstrates this Government's commitment to vital and forward-looking policies which serve the community and enhance our industry base. Sport and recreation, like tourism and the advanced technology sector, are important industries of the future. In establishing an office of sport, recreation and racing, we have made the first steps in acknowledging the economic importance of sport and leisure to the ACT economy.

The importance of sport and fitness to the general well-being and spirit of the community and the flow-on effects in terms of productivity and savings in the health area have not been overlooked in this move. We are supporting sport, both at the championship and Olympic levels as well as at the grassroots community level. Grants to sporting and recreation groups and clubs are an important part of our program to foster community spirit and participation in sport and a diverse range of recreation activities. In keeping with our social justice strategy, support has been specifically directed to assisting the participation of women and disadvantaged groups in community as well as international sport.

We have, of course, also made changes and charted new directions in the education area of my portfolio. The Department of Education was formed, bringing together the functions of the former ACT Schools Authority and other schools related activities. The Government has committed itself to quality and effectiveness in all levels of education. We have encouraged consultation at a regional level. Budget stringency in the education area has been a necessary measure to rein in escalating costs. As in the health area, this Government has inherited a legacy of cost blow-outs unrestrained by ongoing efficiency gains. Productivity measures will be phased in over the next three years to ensure that education quality and conditions in our schools are not compromised. As a member of the Australian Education Council, the ACT is now in a position to be actively involved in the setting of national directions in education.

As Minister for Education as well as Industry and Employment, I am acutely aware of the need to provide both broad-based as well as vocational training for ACT youth. We have supported the establishment and upgrading of TAFE courses which serve the needs of key industry sectors. We have also worked with industry to ensure adequate and equitable funding of trade courses. We have announced a progressive rationalisation of TAFE administration through the amalgamation of campuses and the redistribution of resources to better serve local population centres. Under my direction, our TAFE system has become more commercially

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oriented both in the nature of courses offered - for example, for those of the hospital industry - and in ensuring revenue returns.

Another target for greater productivity actively pursued by the Government over the past eight months is in the area of land development. The establishment of a land development account has ensured accountability and efficiency in land planning, development, marketing and administration. It allows for the first time in the ACT assessment of all the financial aspects of the entire land development process. The Government has also established an ACT integrated land information system - ACTILIS. This is now the single source of all available detailed information on ACT land, including technical data and titles information. ACTILIS will result in recurrent savings to many ACT government agencies by eliminating duplication and reducing search costs.

Capital works expenditure in the ACT has increased under this Government by \$20m over the 1988-90 levels. The continued development and maintenance of Canberra's infrastructure plays an important part in maintaining our quality of life and the excellent standard of services enjoyed by the community.

Our commitment in this area seeks to bolster our construction sector and moderate declines in employment and investment following the dizzy peak of activity associated with the new Parliament House. We have ensured that responsible development has not been delayed while the national and territorial plans are being developed. Notwithstanding the current constraints, major building projects to an estimated value of over \$250m have been approved. This includes \$116m in Belconnen, \$63m in Woden and Tuggeranong, and \$82m in central Canberra. As part of our commitment to the protection of the environment, the Government is also reviewing the use of rainforest timbers in the ACT construction industry.

In the industrial relations area, we have moved to have comprehensive occupational health and safety legislation implemented and we are reviewing workers compensation arrangements in the ACT. We have established an industrial relations advisory council to ensure that the Territory's unique industrial relations environment is managed on the basis of consultation and communication between government, employers and unions. The Ministerial Advisory Council on Employment has also been established to develop policies and programs which will link employment strategies with the Government's economic and social justice policies. We have also launched a women's employment strategy task force and taken a number of other initiatives aimed at improving opportunities for disadvantaged groups in finding and creating jobs.

I have listed just a few of the many achievements of this Government in just one of the four portfolios established

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only eight months ago. This is not the record of a moribund or inactive government. We have taken a positive approach to the many issues before us and, under the leadership of a capable and sensitive Chief Minister, have dedicated ourselves and our agencies to the achievement of goals which are well understood and supported by the ACT community.

We have undertaken the most far-reaching reorganisation of the administration of the Territory in its history and have done so in full consultation with the community. Furthermore, we have done so in a way which has strengthened the capabilities of our agencies, effected substantial productivity improvements, imbued the ACT government service with a productive culture and generated a high level of morale and commitment amongst the staff and management of our agencies.

All this has been achieved in an environment which supports and gives effect to the principles of social justice and equity for which the Australian Labor Party stands. We have respected our role as a minority government in this Assembly and have accepted our defeats. We have worked with all groups represented here and have sought to acknowledge the legitimate concerns of all, no matter how narrow their platforms.

It is ironic that a couple of paranoid political opportunists now seek to bring down a government at a time when their electoral support is rapidly waning. As recent polls so clearly show, there is no more popular politician in this city than Rosemary Follett. She has proven through thick and thin her leadership capacity. The motion of no confidence before us today is an act of contempt for good government and for a sagacious leader.

MR COLLAERY (5.32): I will be brief but I will respond to one or two matters. Mr Speaker, in order not to involve you in political debate, I will leave the subject of the approach to you to stand on the record as stated here in the Assembly this afternoon. I will make no further comment on that other than that the Rally does not resile from the facts as stated and, of course, completely rejects the notion which I think Moore put forward - in fact, he called it lies. The Rally completely rejects that notion. If ever there was an unplanned event it was this one. There is your answer. You did it and we responded.

We responded on principle and propriety, and you see the result here today. The Deputy Chief Minister has given a most eloquent speech. I was just thinking, if that had been the flavour of this Assembly from day one, then perhaps matters would have proceeded on a different plane. There is much in the Government's program that will no doubt be continued, and no doubt Mr Kaine will speak to that in due course, but the deficiencies as outlined on this side of the house have not really been responded to.

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One of the principal matters raised in the debate and in the response, firstly, of the Chief Minister was her early reference to caring about Canberra. Well, I think we all would not be here unless we did that. She then referred to the fact that her Government was still at its fledgling stage. Truly, this is a long-term Australian Labor Party, a party whose roots go back well before Federation; it is a party in the ACT that is close to the Federal party's advising capacity; it is close to all that good advice; and I am surprised that the Chief Minister could still refer to her Government as fledgling, or words to that effect, when she is so close to what would presumably be the very experienced and professional advice available from her Federal colleagues nearby.

The matter of the legislative program was not referred to but the Chief Minister did say that she had a stated and certain agenda for the ACT. Well, it is here; it is in the election booklet, Policies for a Fairer Canberra. We have not the time this evening to catalogue the pluses and minuses there, but we acknowledge that the Chief Minister has implemented some of her enunciated aims. This is a fact. But, surely, what we are dealing with here is the capacity to bring on a stable situation in this Assembly, a capacity to reflect the standards that we should be imposing on ourselves. I will come to that in a moment, Mr Wood. The fact is that we all look to a socially just community that is open and accountable.

It is on those scores that the Government lost our confidence. But it lost our confidence on a last straw, not a rush to the head, Mr Wood, after I read the Canberra Times. As I outlined in my speech - and my colleagues Dr Kinloch and Mr Jensen can attest to these facts, if you like - the fact is that the television news broadcast in the evening was the last straw, not what happened in the morning.

Mr Speaker, the Minister rather ambiguously said that politicians should keep Canberra the place it is, and planning was directed towards that effect. Well, is that to keep us in the mire that the Federal Government left us in, or not? There was an ambiguity there in the Chief Minister's speech. No doubt we can elucidate that here in the house in future days.

There are a number of issues that I think all members in the house feel somewhat cynical about; the comprehensive heritage register, for instance. Well, we know that the momentum for that antedates government as did, of course, Mr Berry's response to the opening of Burrangiri house. That was built under a previous government and opened under his. Mrs Grassby referred to the comprehensive strategies, particularly on the environment, the advantage of which she had from our policies - our 17-page policies developed at the Environment Centre. I suggest that Minister Grassby did continue the momentum and initiatives brought forward by a number of the very competent and responsive staff that she is blessed with at the moment.

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Mr Speaker, the claim to fame by this Government really falls a little flat, but without wishing to be churlish in respect of their achievements one should recognise that they tried a budget process; they tried a consultative process; it did not really work. I think there were two women at the table or three. I want to put an end to the suggestion that Mr Kaine and I opted out; we opted out for the last morning session.

Mr Berry: No, you opted out because Mr Kaine opted out.

MR SPEAKER: Order!

MR COLLAERY: We opted out for the last morning session, Mr Speaker. That is the fact and that cannot be denied. We do agree, Mr Speaker, that this party was shocked by the motion coming on. I have outlined why it came on, and surely there has been sufficient time to devote to working out where we go in the future.

Mr Speaker, the level of the debate today augurs well. I stress, Mr Speaker, that the basic fact was the instability of the minority Government in going further than it might have in good judgment; but whatever that be, that is coming to an end.

I have an additional comment to make, at the request of Mr Wood, and perhaps I should have done it spontaneously. Mr Wood asked me to apologise to Mr Whalan for events in this house on 6 July 1989, when, having been put to my feet to speak on corruption for three or four hours, I made a number of statements and tabled a document. In tabling that document I said, among other words - and I refer to page 801 of the Hansard - that the Government was forcing me to read this document; to put up or shut up. I went on to say that this could mean a number of things. It could mean that Mr Whalan was involved, it could mean an investment in town, it could mean also a donation to the Labor Party.

Mr Speaker, in retrospect, I regret tabling that statutory declaration, and I wish to say that now. If not goaded and pushed into that three- or four-hour marathon, I think my judgment, particularly as a lawyer, might have been clearer. I would have preferred to have presented the statutory declaration to the Chief Minister in private to determine what action, if any, should be taken. But it was put to me, and it is in the Hansard - the quotes and interjections are there, too - that I should produce something. Produce anything, I think some of the interjections were.

Mr Speaker, in retrospect, I apologise for doing that to Mr Whalan. I believe that he was entitled to have the document presented to him in another forum, if necessary, with the Chief Minister and myself. I unreservedly apologise for tabling that document. Likewise, Mr Speaker, I expect the Deputy Chief Minister might realise that, if

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he was wounded, he did the same to me, and in good biblical terms he returned measure for measure recently. Mr Speaker, the effect on my law practice of the Deputy Chief Minister's recent claims, particularly the one relating to an allegation of wrongdoing and perverting the course of justice will have, and continue to have, profound implications on my standing in the law and my standing as a private law practitioner.

Mr Speaker, I seek to table a letter from the deputy director of public prosecutions which says, amongst other things, that the office has no current matters involving allegations of wrongdoing, such as attempting to pervert the course of justice, on my part. Mr Speaker, I seek leave to table that letter.

Leave granted.

MR SPEAKER: The question is that the motion be agreed to. Is it the Assembly's wish to take a vote on this or just on the voices?

Mr Whalan: Well, why don't you put it to the voices and see? It will probably be lost overwhelmingly. Why would you deviate from normal practice?

MR SPEAKER: Thank you, Deputy Chief Minister, for your direction.

Question put:

That the motion be agreed to.

A call of the Assembly having commenced -

Mr Stevenson: I abstain.

MR SPEAKER: I will take advice on that.

Mr Stevenson, I draw your attention to standing order 161. For your edification, it says:

On the call of the Assembly being commenced, every Member within the seats allotted to Members shall vote and Members may not move from their places until the result is announced.

Unfortunately, you have left your run too late. Please call again, Clerk.

The Clerk: Mr Stevenson.

Mr Stevenson: I think my intention is clear.

MR SPEAKER: Again I draw your intention to standing order 161, Mr Stevenson. In accordance with standing order 161 I will again ask the Clerk to call your name, Mr Stevenson.

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The Clerk: Mr Stevenson.

Mr Stevenson: I take a point of order, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER: There is no point of order, Mr Stevenson. I would draw your attention to standing order 202(e). In accordance with standing order 202(e) I now place you on warning, Mr Stevenson.

The Clerk: Mr Stevenson.

Mr Stevenson: If that is the case, no.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr Stevenson.

The Assembly voted -

AYES, 10

NOES, 7

Mr Collaery
Mr Duby
Mr Humphries
Mr Jensen
Mr Kaine
Dr Kinloch
Ms Maher
Mrs Nolan
Mr Prowse
Mr Stefaniak

Mr Berry
Ms Follett
Mrs Grassby
Mr Moore
Mr Stevenson
Mr Whalan
Mr Wood

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

ELECTION OF CHIEF MINISTER

MR SPEAKER: The next business is the election of a Chief Minister.

MR COLLAERY: Mr Speaker, I nominate Mr Trevor Kaine. I move:

That Mr Kaine be elected Chief Minister for the Territory.

MR WHALAN: I nominate Rosemary Follett. I move:

That Ms Follett be elected Chief Minister for the Territory.

A ballot having been taken -

MR SPEAKER: The result of the ballot is: Mr Kaine 10 votes; Ms Follett six. Mr Kaine, the candidate with the majority of votes, is declared elected as Chief Minister.

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ELECTION OF LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

MR SPEAKER: We will proceed to the election of a Leader of the Opposition.

MR WHALAN (Deputy Chief Minister): I nominate Rosemary Follett. I move:

That Ms Follett be elected Leader of the Opposition.

MR SPEAKER: Ms Follett, do you accept the proposal?

Ms Follett: Yes.

Mr Whalan: On a point of order, Mr Speaker; am I still the Deputy Chief Minister?

MR SPEAKER: Yes, I believe you are.

Are there any further proposals? The time for proposals has now expired. There being no further proposals, I declare Ms Follett, the member proposed, to have been elected as Leader of the Opposition.

DAY AND HOUR OF NEXT MEETING

MR KAINE (Chief Minister) (5.53): Mr Speaker, I move:

That the Assembly, at its rising, adjourn until Thursday, 7 December 1989, at 10.30 am, unless the Speaker fixes an alternative day or hour of meeting on receipt of a request in writing from an absolute majority of members.

MR WHALAN (Deputy Chief Minister) (5.54): I move as an amendment, Mr Speaker, that the date be Wednesday, 6 December. I move that way, Mr Speaker, because there is very important business to be considered. I have submitted 13 notices of motion of matters of private members' business, and we believe that it is absolutely fundamental that private members be not deprived of their rights to raise issues under the general order of the Assembly's business procedure. The fact that there has been a military coup is no reason why there should be any departure from the sitting pattern of the Assembly.

MR SPEAKER: Could I have that amendment in writing please, Mr Whalan.

MR MOORE (5.55): Mr Speaker, the amendment that is proposed by the Deputy Chief Minister is something that was agreed to, along with our whole sitting pattern. I also would like to ensure that any opportunity that private members have for business is not lost. So I support the amendment to the motion.

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Mr Duby: On a point of order, Mr Speaker; my question is a technical one. How can the Deputy Chief Minister submit private members' business?

MR HUMPHRIES (5.56): Mr Speaker, the Liberal Party opposes Mr Whalan's amendment on the basis that I think it is appropriate to allow the new Chief Minister the time that he needs to make important decisions about the conduct of government in the Territory. I recall that, after 11 May, the Assembly adjourned on a similar motion and rose for a period of four or five weeks.

Mrs Nolan: No, a week.

MR HUMPHRIES: Was it only a week? Well, it was certainly longer than one day. I stand corrected, but it was certainly longer than one day. I think that two days is more than enough time to deal with important issues. I think that is a period of grace that the Assembly ought to allow the new Government.

MR SPEAKER: I would like to advise that the amendment is out of order in that, if the motion moved by the Chief Minister had not been proposed, we would have been meeting on that day. So, in effect, the amendment is not required. You just have to vote for or against the motion.

Question put:

That the motion be agreed to.

The Assembly voted -

AYES, 11

NOES, 6

Mr Collaery
Mr Duby
Mr Humphries
Mr Jensen
Mr Kaine
Dr Kinloch
Ms Maher
Mrs Nolan
Mr Prowse
Mr Stefaniak
Mr Stevenson

Mr Berry
Ms Follett
Mrs Grassby
Mr Moore
Mr Whalan
Mr Wood

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

NEW GOVERNMENT Ministerial Statement and Paper

MR KAINE (Chief Minister) (5.59), by leave: Mr Speaker, today begins a new Government for the Territory and, in connection with that, 10 people have joined together to

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form a cooperative government which will take effect from today. Ten people have signed an accord in which they undertake to stand together as a new government. I would like to place on public record that document by tabling an accord for government between 10 members of this Assembly.

Further, Mr Speaker, to damp down any speculation as to what will occur in the next couple of days, I wish to announce that, although it will be a cooperative form of government in which 10 members of this Assembly will participate, in accordance with the Act, I will appoint three other Ministers. They will be Mr Collaery, Mr Duby, and Mr Humphries. I will announce the allocation of portfolio responsibilities and the details of how this cooperative government will work on Thursday.

I present the following paper:

Accord for government between the ACT Liberal Party, the Residents Rally for Canberra and the Independents Group, dated December 1989.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion (by **Mr Kaine**) proposed:

That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Alliance Government

MR WHALAN (6.00): This has been the most extraordinary event today, capped off by what we can now see, I think, is going to be the style of this Liberal coalition from now on. One of the points which Michael Moore made so effectively was that, because there was a Labor minority government, the process of government was conducted in the open in this Assembly. We had to compromise, we had to negotiate, we had to argue our position out here in the open. A fundamental part of that process was the sitting pattern of the Assembly. We realised what the position was, and we accepted that. I believe that, notwithstanding the constraints of minority government, we were able to make very substantial achievements.

But already we have seen inroads into that tradition today. I believe that this will be a secret, closet government. It has so many disparate points of view that it will hide itself away to try to resolve those points of view in the secrecy of locked rooms. Government members will not be prepared to come out into the openness of this Assembly to discuss their issues.

I submit to you and the citizens of Canberra that this Assembly will be presented with a sitting program which

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will restrict the opportunity of the citizens of Canberra to observe what is going on. I submit to you that we will see the rights of private members, in the way we have just seen today, being abused by the removal of the opportunity in the traditional period of Wednesday morning for private members to present their matters before this Assembly. That abuse is the beginning of the end of the democratic processes which have been established here in the ACT. I am very concerned about the way in which decisions will be made in the future.

Alliance Government

MR MOORE (6.03): Congratulations, Mr Kaine, on taking your new role as Chief Minister. Following some of the comments made by Mr Whalan, I now seek an assurance from you, Mr Kaine, to this Assembly - at its next sitting would perhaps be the appropriate time - that in fact that will not happen; that the discussion and the openness that has been a part and parcel of this minority government will continue with the new Government; and that the debates will be in the open, in this Assembly, where members of the crossbenches, Mr Stevenson and I, can continue debating each issue on its merits. You will find, I am sure, and I speak for myself here, that on many occasions I will support the initiatives that you attempt to carry, but at the same time I will have no hesitation in opposing any of those issues.

What is the saddest part of the day for me today is that I mourn the loss of a vision that I and many people of Canberra who voted that way had when they voted for the Residents Rally as a new force, as a third force, in the ACT. I believe that what you have achieved is to have a situation where you have reinforced the two-party system into this parliament, along with other parliaments in Australia.

From your perspective, Mr Kaine, I congratulate you as one congratulates a person after one loses a game of cricket. In good spirit and in genuine spirit, I congratulate you in that way on your promotion to Chief Minister and your support, and also on the other matter of achieving the two-party system.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Assembly adjourned at 6.06 pm until Thursday, 7 December 1989, at 10.30 am

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

The following answers to questions were provided:

Public Servants (Question No. 30)

Mr Wood asked the Chief Minister, upon notice, on 17 October 1989:

Will the Chief Minister provide a list of the numbers of the estimated 17,000 ACT public servants broken down by sector.

Ms Follett: The answer to Mr Wood's question is as follows:

As at 8 September 1989 there were 16,834 full-time equivalent staff working in the ACT Government Service. Of these, 8,316 were employed under the Public Service Act with the other staff being employed under various other Acts. Details of these staffing numbers are in the following table which has been compiled from information provided by the agencies in the ACT Government Service.

TAFE

| | | |
|--|-----|-----|
| Service Delivery | 610 | |
| School based | | |
| Administrative Support | | 270 |
| Personnel, Planning, Resource management | | |
| Agency Total | | 880 |

ACT ELECTRICITY AND WATER

| | | |
|--|--|------|
| Service Delivery | | 1091 |
| Field Staff | | |
| Administrative Support | | 240 |
| Personnel, Planning, Resource management | | |
| Agency Total | | 1331 |

CHIEF MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT

| | | |
|---|--|-----|
| Service Delivery | | 340 |
| Revenue, Legal Aid, Interim Planning Authority | | |
| Administrative Support | | 528 |
| Chief Minister's Department, Law Office, Treasury | | |
| Agency total | | 868 |

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES AND HEALTH

| | |
|---|------|
| Service Delivery | 4053 |
| Nursing, Medical, Professional | |
| Administrative Support | 764 |
| Kitchen staff, Ward clerks, Library, Laboratories, Groundspeople, Administrators | |
| Agency Total | 4817 |

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

| | |
|--|------|
| Service Delivery | 3895 |
| School based | |
| Administrative Support | 300 |
| Personnel, Planning, Resource management | |
| Agency Total | 4195 |

OFFICE OF CITY MANAGEMENT

| | |
|--|------|
| Service Delivery | 3594 |
| Urban maintenance, Bus drivers, Rangers, Fire Fighters, Public Housing | |
| Administrative Support | 634 |
| Technical Services, Traffic and Transport Policy, Engineering Services, Horticultural services, Workshops, Transport Supervisors | |
| Agency Total | 4228 |

OFFICE OF INDUSTRY AND DEVELOPMENT

| | |
|--|-----|
| Service Delivery | 326 |
| Tourist Bureau, Co-ops and Agents, Life be in it, Leasing, Land Sales | |
| Administrative Support | 39 |
| Commercial Research, Employment, Education and Training | |
| Agency Total | 365 |

GOVERNMENT SERVICES OFFICE

| | |
|---|-----|
| Service Delivery | 112 |
| Construction Management | |
| Administrative Support | 38 |
| Government Purchasing, Building Asset Management | |
| Agency Total | 150 |

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| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|
| Total Service Delivery Staff | 14021 |
| Total Administrative Staff | 2813 |
| Total Staff (full time equivalents) | 16834 |

If the Member would like more details I suggest he liaise direct with the relevant Minister.

**Calthorpes' House
(Question No. 31)**

Mr Wood asked the Chief Minister, upon notice, on 17 October 1989:

- (1) How many days a week is Calthorpes' House open for visits.
- (2) How many visitors have seen the place in the last six months.
- (3) What were the operating costs for the last six months.
- (4) What is the cost of maintaining the building and grounds.
- (5) Is there any charge for entry.

Ms Follett: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) Calthorpes' House is open three full days and two half days each week plus public holidays. The days are Tuesdays, 10 am to 3 pm, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays from 9 am to 5 pm and Saturdays from 1 pm to 5 pm.
- (2) 1,625 persons.
- (3) \$48,400.
- (4) The cost of building maintenance, cleaning and ground maintenance is \$12,000 for the six month period. This is included in the operating costs in (3) above.
- (5) Admission charges are \$3.00 for adults, \$1.80 for school children, students and pensioners. A special charge of 60 cents applies to school children on school visits.

**Tuggeranong Community Centre
(Question No. 34)**

Mr Jensen asked the Treasurer, upon notice, on 24 October 1989:

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In respect to the Capital Works Program 1989-90 why has work not commenced on the construction of the Tuggeranong Community Centre when \$4.183m was committed in 1987-88 for the project as shown on page 35 of Budget Paper No. 6.

Ms Follett: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

The lack of progress on this project is a consequence of attempting to provide the most suitable facility, within the available budget, for the many diverse user groups involved.

The original statement of requirements for this project was formulated by the former NCDC in May 1987 in consultation with Community Services and Health. However, design did not commence in 1987 because possible major changes were foreshadowed in the proposed requirements for the centre.

In February 1988 a Steering Committee, representing various community groups, was formed to develop a new statement of requirements.

As stated in my answer in Hansard of 17 October 1989 to Mr Jensen's Question Without Notice on 28 September 1989 on this project, the " ... Steering Committee made an informed decision in March 1989 to postpone commencement so that it could re-brief the Architects concerned in an attempt to gain the best possible facility for the funds available".

Since that time the Department of Community Services and Health, in consultation with the Steering Committee, has been examining options on the scope of the project, including the suitability of the site, in an effort to meet that objective.

Also my colleague, the Minister for Community Services and Health, Mr Berry, met with representatives of the Steering Committee on 25 October 1989 and has undertaken to review all the options as a priority.

Housing Trust Tenants (Question No. 37)

Mr Stefaniak asked the Minister for Housing and Urban Services, upon notice, on 31 October 1989:

- (1) How are tenants screened for ACT Housing Trust housing assistance.
- (2) How does the Trust ensure that conditions of tenancy are being met.

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Mrs Grassby: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) Applicants must complete an application for housing. They must meet eligibility criteria both at the time of registration and immediately prior to an allocation being made. These criteria are outlined in the FOI manual and are summarised in the notes which are attached to the registration forms available to applicants.
- (2) The Trust ensures that conditions of tenancy are met mainly through its teams of area managers located in the City, Belconnen and Woden District Offices. Area Managers are responsible for specific geographic areas and are able to check Trust properties while travelling to and from visits to tenants. Visits are made to tenants for a variety of reasons, for example rental arrears, follow up action from previous contacts, property inspections where such is considered necessary, complaints about neighbours or by neighbours, etc. Monitoring of tenancies is also possible through the Trust's planned maintenance activities.

Housing Trust Maintenance (Question No. 38)

Mr Stefaniak asked the Minister for Housing and Urban Services, upon notice, on 31 October 1989:

- (1) What procedures are followed for the maintenance of ACT Housing Trust properties?
- (2) Who carries out such maintenance?
- (3) What is the average time Trust houses are vacant before re-letting to a new tenant?

Mrs Grassby: The answer to the Member's questions are as follows:

- (1) Maintenance procedures vary with the type of service required.
 - . For urgent repairs, tenants are provided with telephone numbers for direct service during normal hours and after hours.
 - . For non urgent repairs and maintenance tenants may request the Trust in writing or work may be initiated directly by Trust staff.
 - . When dwellings become vacant, Trust staff arrange cleaning and minor repairs as required to enable the property to be re-let.

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- . When dwellings become vacant and the extent of necessary work is greater, repairs and painting are arranged through Urban Services Branch as the Trust's agent, within guidelines and maintenance standards set by the Trust. Urban Services then arrange for the necessary work to be undertaken by contractors or their own employees.
 - . For major refurbishment or cyclic maintenance, specific packages of work are arranged through one of the Trust's agents, Urban Services or ACT Public Works.
 - . Maintenance of common garden areas at flats is carried out by standing arrangements with the Parks and Conservation Division.
- (2) Urgent and minor repairs are carried out by Urban Services Branch of Transport and Works, or by ACT Electricity and Water.

Maintenance of vacated properties is carried out by Urban Services where there is significant work involved. For other vacated properties, Trust staff arrange cleaning by contractors.

Major refurbishment or cyclic maintenance is carried out by Urban Services or ACT Public Works.

Where work is undertaken for the Trust by ACTEW it is normally using their own direct employees. Urban Services and City Parks use a mixture of direct employees and private contractors. ACT Public Works use entirely private contractors. Overall, more than 75% of maintenance work involves private contractors.

- (3) With the exception of houses that are vacant for disposal or redevelopment, the average time from vacancy to re-letting is currently 43 days. This is too long and the Trust is working to streamline arrangements to significantly reduce this time.

I might also refer Mr Stefaniak to my Housing Policy Review Statement of 27 September 1989 in which I stated that the Trust is looking at further improvements in repairs and maintenance to reduce vacancy times. A target of less than 21 days for average turnover of vacant dwellings has been set by the Trust in consultation with Urban Services Branch. The planned date for achieving this target is 30 June 1990.

**Grass Mowing
(Question No. 39)**

Mr Stefaniak asked the Minister for Housing and Urban Services, upon notice, on 31 October 1989:

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- (1) How many horticultural contractors and day-hire grass maintenance contractors are used by the Parks and Conservation Service.
- (2) Can a list of all current contractors be provided.

Mrs Grassby: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) Parks and Conservation uses 13 horticultural contractors and 35 hourly mowing contractors.
- (2) The names of the contractors are below:

Hourly Mowing Contractors

D F & D M Apps J W Mundy
Scullin Waramanga

P & M Apps R & G Mundy
Evatt Page

T & P Apps R W & C M Napper
Florey Curtin

Con Arioli P J Reynolds
Garran Kaleen
P L Carey I W Robinson
Giralang O'Connor
C Coble R C Settlement
Murrumbateman Narrabundah

K & P Coble R Southwell
Murrumbateman Dickson

J Emory J Talent
Hall Ainslie

Galifos Pty Ltd R W Thompson
O'Connor Braddon

J J Gillespie Turf Contractors Pty Ltd
Sutton Ryde
B Heffernan Turf Machinery Tractors
Waramanga Fyshwick
R J Hooper E V Walsh
Queanbeyan Rivett
M J Hurley D Waters
Kaleen Gunning
D C Hutcheson R J Waters
Gilmore Gunning

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P L Martin
Gunning

Whitby & Sons
Queanbeyan

D & C McMahon
Rivett
G C & S J Mundy
Hall
I E & L G Mundy
Florey

G & M Wilson
McGregor
B Woodbury
Narrabundah

Horticultural Contractors

G Ayre
Weetangera

Koomari Industries
O'Connor

D Biermann
Lyons

N K & S A Locke
Kambah

Burgess & Partners
Queanbeyan

P Maleganeas
Queanbeyan

D Cowie
Queanbeyan
G Darby
Flynn
I Darmody
Queanbeyan

J Mudge
Kaleen
I E Mundy
Florey
T Spellman
Spence

I Figueroa
Wanniassa

Machinery **(Question No. 40)**

Mr Stefaniak asked the Minister for Housing and Urban Services, upon notice, on 1 November 1989:

- (1) What is the overall cost to the ACT Government for purchasing a prime mover, low loader and dolly.
- (2) Is the Minister able to provide a list of machinery used by the ACT Government which requires a prime mover, low loader and dolly to transport it.

Mrs Grassby: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) The estimated cost for the prime mover, low loader and dolly is \$220,000.

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- (2) The machines used by the ACT Government which require a prime mover, low loader and dolly combination to transport them include:

Two bulldozers Model Caterpillar D8L.
One bulldozer Model Caterpillar D8K.
One elevating Scraper Model Caterpillar 623E.
One open Bowl Scraper Model Komatsu WS165-2.

The prime mover and low loader combination is also used to transport smaller bulldozers, scrapers, compactors, hot mix spreaders, rollers and linemarkers used by the ACT Government. Pumps, sheds, buildings and Bush Fire Council and Fire Brigade equipment are moved by the prime mover and low loader as and when required.

The new plant replaces the equipment which has a utilisation rate of about 70 per cent and which has been in service for 15 years. It will also enable transport of the items mentioned above within the design limits of the road pavement.

Hospital Services (Question No. 41)

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 14 November 1989:

- (1) In regard to catering arrangements at Woden Valley Hospital, is it the hospital's practice to purchase food for its anticipated number of patients plus a ten per cent margin.
- (2) If the margin is not ten per cent, what is this margin.
- (3) What are the margins at Royal Canberra Hospital and Calvary Hospital.
- (4) How do these margins compare with those of similar public hospitals in other States.
- (5) Does the Minister believe a two per cent margin is normal and desirable.
- (6) How much food is wasted each week at (a) Woden Valley Hospital, (b) Royal Canberra Hospital and (c) Calvary Hospital.
- (7) Has the management of Woden Valley Hospital been concerned about catering arrangements at the hospital and has there been any communication between the Minister and the hospital on this subject.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

- (1) Hospital catering areas require some flexibility to be able to produce unanticipated extra patient meals associated with emergency admissions and transfers. For this reason, forward planning of catering requirements normally includes a margin. This margin however is not in the order of ten per cent. It is in fact estimated to be five per cent or less.
- (2) As stated above, the margin is not ten per cent, but is estimated to be five per cent or less.
- (3) Royal Canberra Hospital provides a margin to accommodate admissions and transfers taking place at any time during a 24 hour period. Like Woden Valley Hospital, this margin is estimated to be five per cent or less.

Calvary Hospital purchases food from a contractor who would also operate within a contingency margin. I am unaware of the level of the margin operating at Calvary Hospital. It is common practice to allow a margin to ensure all requirements are accommodated, including allowances for late admissions.

- (4) I believe that our hospitals operate on a similar basis to public hospitals in other States.
- (5) A two per cent margin could not be considered normal or desirable as hospital catering areas require more flexibility than this margin would give to be able to respond to all requirements, including late admissions and transfers.
- (6) It is inevitable that there will be some wastage in any hospital system, due to unforeseeable demands on the catering area. At Woden Valley and Royal Canberra Hospitals, approximately two per cent of food is determined to be wastage. This figure includes trimmings and meals returned.

I am unaware of the level of food wastage at Calvary Hospital.

- (7) Catering arrangements at Woden Valley and Royal Canberra Hospitals are the subject of ongoing assessment.

As a Budget initiative, a Food Services Working Group was set up to implement the Government's proposal to evaluate food services in both Royal Canberra and Woden Valley Hospitals. The Group is currently identifying areas of productivity improvements in both hospitals. I have received and will continue to receive briefs from that Working Group.

**Hospital Services
(Question No. 42)**

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989, in relation to the management of hospital administration in the ACT:

- (1) Has the future of the board of management style of hospital administration been placed under question when this system was one of the two key recommendations of the Kearney Report and received widespread community support; if so, why.
- (2) Has a Treasury team been sent to examine the financial management of the hospitals only a few months after an interim board was created; if so, why.
- (3) What is the Minister's response to the cost saving recommendation of the interim board.
- (4) Has the Minister given a direct response to the interim board's cost saving proposals, particularly in light of the fact that we are now four months into the 1989-90 financial year and already facing a substantial cost blowout; if not, why not.
- (5) Does the Minister attribute any of the cost blowout to the performance of the hospital board.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

- (1) The Government when it came to power had the redevelopment of the hospital system as a high agenda item. I announced on 28 November the Government's decision to retain a Board of Directors for the Woden Valley and Royal Canberra Hospitals.
- (2) The Treasury Team was sent in to examine the financial management of the hospitals after an approach from the Interim Board which had identified a possible budget blowout.
- (3) & (4)
The Government in development of its budget proposals identified savings in the health area. In developing these savings proposals, the Government accepted advice on a range of options from the Interim Board. Proposals raised since are being considered in the context of the Treasury Review.
- (5) The examination of the cost blowout is under review by the Treasury Team sent in by this Government in response to requests from the Board to examine the problem. It would be premature to speculate on the outcomes of that review before it has had a chance to report fully. The Grants Commission identified

reported overfunding in the health area and the Government examined many options in the lead up to the budget in an attempt to address both this issue and the increasing cost of health care in the community.

**Hospital Services
(Question No. 43)**

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989:

- (1) Have the hospital administration cost saving measures outlined in the Initial Budget Statement been implemented; if not, why not.
- (2) What has happened to the rationalising of nursing shifts arrangements at Royal Canberra Hospital to eliminate excessive overlap and the co-ordination of staff days off to align elective services with staff availability.
- (3) Do the cost saving measures recommended by the interim hospital board also respond to the overfunding identified by the Grants commission as referred to by the Chief Minister in her Initial Budget Statement when she said that the proposals in health "primarily respond to the overfunding identified by the Grants Commission" and are therefore totally in line with Government policy.
- (4) Were the costs per bed day \$428 at Royal Canberra, \$340 at Woden Valley and \$264 at Calvary in 1987-88; if so, (a) what component of these costs are labour costs and (b) what is the reason for the discrepancies.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

- (1) The implementation of savings identified requires extensive negotiations and the budget reflects this in less than full year savings targets. The measures are being progressively introduced in consultation with staff and unions.
- (2) Negotiations on measures to achieve savings identified are taking place with the unions involved. Further details are provided in my response to question on notice no. 52.
- (3) The Government sought in the budget process to identify cost saving measures. These measures are not simply a response to the Grants Commission but part of the many responsible actions taken by this Government to serve the people of Canberra, while always maintaining our commitment to a first class hospital system which is available to all members of the

Canberra community and those parts of New South Wales which depend on us.

- (4) I assume that the costs quoted refer to net operating costs per adjusted occupied bed day and were calculated in accordance with methodology used in the 1985-86 utilisation cost study conducted by the Australian Institute of Health.

Crude costs per adjusted bed day are of course potentially misleading indicators of cost performance.

Hospital Services
(Question No. 44)

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989, in relation to cleaning costs at ACT Hospitals:

- (1) What program has been made towards bringing cleaning practices at Royal Canberra Hospital into line with commercial standards as proposed in the Initial Budget Statement.
- (2) Does it currently cost \$18 per square metre to clean Woden Valley Hospital (where contractors are used) and \$32 per square metre at Royal Canberra Hospital (whose inhouse staff do the cleaning); if not, what are the costs.
- (3) Can the Minister state what it currently costs in dollars per square metre to clean Calvary Hospital.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

- (1) I assume that the costs quoted refer to net operating costs per adjusted occupied bed day and were calculated in accordance with methodology used in the 1985-86 utilisation cost study conducted by the Australian Institute of Health.

- (2) Current average cleaning costs per square metre for the following hospitals are:

| | |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Woden Valley Hospital | \$18.62 |
| Royal Canberra Hospital | Approx \$28.00 |

- (3) Calvary Hospital costs are about the same as Woden Valley Hospital. As I said in the previous question, detailed comparisons between the three hospitals are difficult and must be interpreted with considerable caution. Analysis of the gross costs between Royal Canberra and Woden Valley Hospitals show that labour costs account for 77 per cent of costs at Royal Canberra and 75 per cent at Woden Valley. A range of factors explain that apparent differences between the

two hospitals and include patient complexity, design and age of buildings, number of beds, and range of medical services.

Hospital Services
(Question No. 45)

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989, in relation to the area of food services in Canberra hospitals:

- (1) Are only 45 meals produced at Woden Valley and Royal Canberra Hospitals per staff member when commercial kitchens produce an average of 100 meals per staff member; if so, why.
- (2) Could the use of private contractors, by the Minister's Department's estimate, save up to \$2.5m per year.
- (3) Would (a) using cook/chill methods of operation and (b) removing the need to have food preparation staff on duty at weekends, and on other penalty shifts, have the potential to save between \$0.65m and \$1.7m per year.
- (4) Is the cost of (a) meals produced \$9.43 and (b) meals sold to non-hospital staff, visitors, meals on wheels etc. between \$1.50 and \$5.
- (5) Has the Minister acted on waste and inefficiency in food services; if not, why not.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

- (1) My Department recognises that there are differences. Food services practices across both hospitals are currently being reviewed. It should be noted, however, that a direct comparison with non-hospital services is not appropriate as the hospitals provide a variety of meals (including special diets) for a range of clients and to multiple sites (eg Jindalee Nursing Home).
- (2) It is a commonly held view that private contractors could provide food services at a lower cost than the hospitals now provide. Various estimates yield different amounts to be saved. As part of the food services review identified by the Government in its Budgets all options will be canvassed, but this Government will ensure that any savings will be made without endangering quality or reliability of a service which is important to the patients in the hospitals.

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Contracting out is not considered appropriate for the public hospital system since it leaves the system vulnerable.

- (3) Estimates indicate that with cook/chill methods of operation longer term savings could be in the order of \$1.7m per annum, but in the transition phase would be around \$650,000. However, other impacts need to be assessed in the review now under way.
- (4) The \$9.43 is the estimated overall average cost of all meals prepared, including special diets. However the distribution costs vary depending on where the meal is provided. Distribution costs are far higher for inpatient meals than for example, say cafeteria meals.
- (5) The Minister has not failed to act on any issue, particularly the area of food services. Savings were identified in the budget process and a review of food services is already under way.

Hospital Services (Question No. 46)

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989:

In relation to labour costs in Canberra Hospital are (a) labour costs of medical salaries some 6.5 per cent above the Australian average, (b) nursing costs more than 31 per cent above average, (c) administration costs 89.5 per cent above average; and (d) domestic services 21 per cent above average.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

I presume that the ratios quoted derive from the publication "Hospital Costs and Utilisation Study" by the Australian Institute of Health. The values referred to are then "averages", not "standard" levels.

The ratios referred to in that publication are for 1985-86 and compare the ACT's type 2 public hospitals, that is, Royal Canberra and Woden Valley Hospitals, against type 2 Australian metropolitan hospitals. As I am sure members will realise hospital staffing ratios and costs are directly related to their size and functions.

My Department believes this comparison is inappropriate given the range of specialists and the more complex cases treated in our two major ACT public hospitals. Our hospitals also have an important additional regional referral role.

It is considered that ACT's two major public hospitals would be more appropriately compared against type 1

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hospitals that handle a similar complexity of cases and have a greater range of specialties than type 2 hospitals. When this comparison is made, ACT public hospital staffing ratios more closely match those of similar hospitals.

**Hospital Services
(Question No. 47)**

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989:

Are ACT costs in Canberra hospitals per adjusted occupied bed day (a) four per cent above the Australian standard for salaried medical officers, (b) 31 per cent above standard for nurses, (c) 33 per cent above standard for diagnostic staff, (d) 67 per cent above standard for administrative staff and (e) 19 per cent above standard for domestic and other staff.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

See answer 46.

**Hospital Services
(Question No. 48)**

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989:

Does the ratio of ACT hospital staff per occupied bed day relative to the standard for Australian metropolitan hospitals reveal that (a) salaried medical officers are four per cent above the standard; (b) nurses are 20 per cent above standard; and (c) administrative staff are 111 per cent above standard.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

See answer 46.

**Hospital Services
(Question No. 49)**

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989, in relation to the nursing levels in Canberra hospitals:

- (1) Has the new nurses career structure increased the number of senior nurses to such an extent that 15 per cent (some 180 positions) are not involved in direct patient care activities.

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- (2) Do Royal Canberra and Woden Valley hospitals, with a combined total of 772 beds, have 27 level four nurses.
- (3) Does this compare unfavourably with Royal Adelaide, a hospital with 795 beds, which has nine level four nurses; if so, why.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

- (1) The Government considers that all nursing positions contribute to patient care activities. The question invites the Government to make an arbitrary distinction between direct patient care providers and others, a distinction which the Government does not accept. The new nursing career structure contains three major streams: a Clinical Stream, a Management Stream and an Education Stream. It is true that the management stream does not get involved in direct "hands on" patient care but it is not true that they do not contribute to direct patient care activities. The new nursing career structure was put in place in 1987 following extensive arbitration hearings before the Industrial Relations Commission. The structure is now part of the nursing award.

The Government and the Australian Nurses Federation have agreed to a review of the career structure and are presently discussing the timing and format of such a review. The government would welcome a submission from Mr Humphries when the review is commenced.

- (2) Yes.
- (3) The ACT operates under an Industrial Award that provides for a nursing service structure that is different from that which operates in South Australia. One of the features of this Award is that it provides for a larger number of nursing positions at higher levels.

Hospital Services (Question No. 50)

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989:

Did the Minister meet with (a) the Australian Nurses Federation (ANF) and (b) the Hospital Employees Federation (HEF) during October and November; if so, (i) what was the purpose of these meetings, (ii) when and where did they take place and with which officials of the ANF and (iii) did the Minister make any undertakings to either the ANF or the HEF and if so, what were these undertakings.

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Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

A meeting with the Australian Nurses Federation was scheduled for 12 October 1989 but was cancelled.

I met the Branch President and Branch Secretary of the Hospital Employees Federation on Friday 17 November 1989 where a broad range of issues of concern to Hospitals Employees Federation members were discussed.

The meeting was held in my office and the undertakings given were in line with Government policy to continue consultations.

**Hospital Services
(Question No. 51)**

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989:

Did the Minister meet with doctors' organisations during October and November and give any undertakings to those organisations; if so, what were those undertakings.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

I met with the Australian Medical Association on 8 November 1989 to discuss the Hospitals Board.

The meeting was held in my office and the undertakings given were in line with Government policy to continue consultation.

**Hospital Services
(Question No. 52)**

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989, in relation to staffing at Canberra hospitals:

- (1) What serious measures has the Minister taken to reduce over-staffing in the areas of (a) central health administration and (b) hospital staffing.
- (2) Does the two and a half hour shift overlap that currently occurs in the nursing roster cost the community some \$1m a year.
- (3) Is the Minister able to state whether this shift overlap occurs in hospitals outside the ACT; if so, where.

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- (4) Have attempts to reduce this overlap been unsuccessful; if so (a) why and (b) which groups/organisations are opposing the move to abolish the overlap.
- (5) What is the Minister's assessment of the arguments against eliminating the overlap.
- (6) Will the Minister take direct action to eliminate the overlap; if not, why not.
- (7) Has the interim board recommended that this overlap be eliminated.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

(1) & (2)

As I have already stated in the Assembly the bottom line of the Government's budget saving will be achieved and that is being worked towards in negotiations with the unions at the moment.

- (3) I understand that similar shift overlaps exist in some hospitals around Australia. I have asked my Department to examine the prevalence of the practice and provide me with a report.
- (4) I am not aware of any attempt in the past to remove this overlap.
- (5) The Government in its Interim Budget statement identified the removal of this short overlap as a savings measure. It was put to one side after the Budget Consultative Process and is now being considered along with other alternatives.
- (6) The removal of this overlap is presently the subject of consultation with relevant unions. The Government will make a decision on the issue when this consultation is complete.
- (7) As I have indicated the overlap was identified in the preparation of the Budget, and the Board has subsequently indicated to me that they agree with this approach.

Hospital Services (Question No. 53)

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989:

- (1) Does the ACT need an independent board with sufficient power to be able to implement cost saving measures for effective management of Canberra hospitals.

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- (2) Is the Minister actively considering a three member advisory committee to take over from the interim hospital board; if so, does this option include union representation.
- (3) Should cuts be made in areas which do not directly impact on patient services; if not, why not.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

- (1) As I have already advised the Assembly the Government has decided to retain a Board of Directors for the Royal Canberra and Woden Valley Hospitals.
- (2) I have never considered a three member advisory committee.
- (3) There is no area of a hospital that does not have an impact on patient services. The whole direction of a hospital is to provide patient services and all staffing and other costs impact on patient care in one way or another.

Hospital Services (Question No. 54)

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989:

Has the Minister's attention been drawn to the Trades and Labour Council's position that a hospital board is an unnecessary administrative overlay; if so, what is his response.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

The Government has noted the position of the Trades and Labour Council and all other relevant agencies and groups in reaching its decision to retain a Hospital Board.

Hospital Services (Question No. 55)

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989:

Is the Minister able to state how many Australian hospitals, with more than 200 beds, operate without a board of management.

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Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

I am advised that apart from repatriation hospitals, some state psychiatric hospitals and Northern Territory public hospitals, all major public hospitals across Australia operate with Boards of Management. There is a variation in the functions and powers of these Boards. The ACT Government has decided to continue with a Board to manage our hospital system.

**Hospital Services
(Question No. 56)**

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989:

Has the Minister received any complaints from nurses about the direction taken by the Australian Nursing Federation (ANF); if so, does he propose to take any action on their complaints.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

Complaints by members of Australian Nursing Federation about the general direction of the Union are most appropriately dealt with by the Union.

However, if Mr Humphries has a specific complaint in mind, I would be pleased to give the matter further consideration if he would bring the matter to my attention.

**Hospital Services
(Question No. 57)**

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989:

Has the Minister taken any measures to implement the Kearney Report recommendations that a hospital board of directors be established with powers, privileges, duties and responsibilities similar to those accorded to hospital boards throughout Australia and that these powers be based in legislation; if so, (a) what steps have been taken to draft this legislation and at what stage has the drafting reached, (b) what consultation has occurred in drafting this legislation and (c) who directed the legislation to be drawn up; if no steps have been taken, why not.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

The Government has announced its decision to retain a Hospitals Board to continue the work of the Interim Board.

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No decision has been taken by the Government to enact legislation.

**Hospital Services
(Question No. 58)**

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989:

Does the Minister support the Kearney recommendation that the proposed hospital board of directors comprise six members selected by the Minister with expertise in areas covering business and financial management, corporate planning, law, the trade union movement and education, and three staff nominees (one medical, one nurse and one other) elected by the relevant staff.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

The Government has yet to decide the composition of the Hospitals Board. The Kearney Review recommendations will be taken into account in this process.

**Hospital Services
(Question No. 59)**

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989:

In view of the Minister's criticism of the cost of supporting the interim hospital board (\$150,000 a year) will a similar cost be involved in supporting an advisory committee; if not, why not.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

There is no criticism of the Interim Hospital Board, nor of the cost to run it. It is expected that the initiatives announced by the Labor Government will operate at a similar cost.

**Hospital Services
(Question No. 60)**

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989:

What steps has the Minister taken to implement the Kearney Reports recommendation that (a) staff savings in the central administration be identified by management and (b) hospital ancillary services including cleaning, catering and supplies monitor their performance against commercial standards.

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Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

The Government has applied, in the context of the current ACT budget, a saving of five per cent against central administration costs.

Commercial Standards for cleaning at Royal Canberra Hospital are being negotiated in the context of the Budget process.

A review of food services is also being conducted in the context of the Budget.

**Hospital Services
(Question No. 61)**

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989:

What measures has the Minister taken to improve management/staff relations at Woden Valley and Royal Canberra hospitals which were referred to in the Kearney report as being at a "particularly low ebb" and has the Minister's recent statements casting doubt on the future of the hospital board helped or hindered management/staff relations.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

The Labor Government with its commitment to consultation process is implementing this policy throughout my Department. We have also announced in the last week our Government's industrial democracy program. It is through these mechanisms that management staff relations have improved and will continue to improve. An impediment to improve management staff relations has come from undisciplined statements issued by Gary Humphries, Liberal Spokesperson on Health.

**Hospital Services
(Question No. 62)**

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989:

Is the fact that staff groups felt unable to contribute in a meaningful way to the decision making process in the hospitals a major reason for poor/staff management relations as stated in the Kearney Report.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

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Once again our commitment to industrial democracy will empower staff groups and ensure they can contribute in a meaningful way to the decision making process. This process will continue no matter what structure is in place. The Government is keen to ensure that the membership and scope of such structures are expanded to provide all workers in the system with an opportunity to contribute.

**Hospital Services
(Question No. 63)**

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989:

Has the interim hospital board of management brought staff groups closer to the decision making process; if so, is the hospital board of management therefore far more preferable to an advisory committee.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

Once again our commitment to industrial democracy will empower staff groups and ensure they can contribute in a meaningful way to the decision making process. This process will continue no matter what structure is in place. The Government is keen to ensure that the membership and scope of such structures are expanded to provide all workers in the system with an opportunity to contribute.

**Hospital Services
(Question No. 64)**

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989:

Did the Kearney Report state that (a) the hospital management structure (prior to the creation of the interim hospital board) lacked proper consultative and participative mechanisms, (b) particular organisational changes have had the effect of centralising decision-making and contributing, in time, to a sense of alienation and lack of commitment to outcomes; and (c) the goodwill of management, groups and individuals has not been able to overcome the difficulties imposed on them; if so, is this still the case or has the interim board of management been able to overcome the sense of alienation and lack of commitment to outcomes.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

- (a) Yes.
- (b) Yes.

- (c) Yes. The Interim Hospitals Board has commenced the development of improved consultative structures and other mechanisms to improve management/staff relations and the recently announced industrial democracy initiatives of the Follett Labor Government will enhance this process.

**Hospital Services
(Question No. 65)**

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989, in relation to industrial disputes in Canberra hospitals:

- (1) Has the level of industrial disputes fallen since the interim board was created.
- (2) Did some 91 industrial disputes occur between January 1986 and November 1988.
- (3) How many industrial disputes occurred between January 1, 1989 and November, 1989.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

The level of industrial disputation during 1989 is lower than that for the same period in 1988.

Information on industrial disputation given to Dr Kearney by the Department in 1988 indicated that there had been 91 disputes in the period January 1986 to November 1988. Kearney believed that self-government would contribute significantly to an improved environment for the resolution of industrial disputes, leading to direct lines of communication and responsibility, as well as direct accountability to the community.

In the six months of the Follett Labor Government there have been six instances reported compared to 13 in the corresponding period last year, a significant achievement for the Government for which I take much credit.

The details of the disputes, which include threat of industrial action as well as industrial action, between January 1989 and November 1989 are as follows:

| | PSU | FEDFA | ETU | ANF | POA | TWU | ADSTEHEF | TOTAL | |
|------------------|----------|------------|----------|------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| JAN-MAR 1989 | NIL | NIL | 1 | NIL | 1 | NIL | NIL | 3 | 5 |
| APR-JUN 1989 | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | 1 | 1 |
| JUL-SEP 1989 | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | 1 | NIL | NIL | 2 | 3 |
| OCT-NOV 1989 | 1 | NIL | NIL | NIL | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| SUB-TOTAL | 1 | NIL | 1 | NIL | 3 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 14 |

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For comparative purposes I have included information for the same period in 1988:

| | PSU | FEDFA | ETU | ANF | POA | TWU | ADSTEHEF | TOTAL | |
|--------------|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----------|-------|----|
| JAN-MAR 1988 | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | 5 | 5 |
| APR-JUN 1988 | NIL | 1 | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | 2 | 3 |
| JUL-SEP 1988 | NIL | NIL | 1 | 1 | NIL | NIL | NIL | 8 | 10 |
| OCT-NOV 1988 | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | 2 | 2 |
| <hr/> | | | | | | | | | |
| SUB-TOTAL | NIL | 1 | 1 | 1 | NIL | NIL | NIL | 17 | 20 |
| <hr/> | | | | | | | | | |

Hospital Services
(Question No. 66)

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989:

Has the Minister received advice which suggests that (a) a hospital board that is an accountable body at a level closest to the health care providers is not likely to alleviate low morale in the hospital system and (b) the hospital board model is not in fact the best option for the efficient and responsible day to day administration of hospitals; if so, will the Minister make this advice available to Members of the Assembly.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

The Government has received wide ranging advice from many quarters in canvassing the options for management structure for public hospitals.

Hospital Services
(Question No. 67)

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989:

Did the Minister state that the cost blowout in the hospitals is under control; if so, what exact measures does the Minister intend to take.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

A Treasury Team is currently undertaking a review of the financial situation in Royal Canberra and Woden Valley Hospitals in conjunction with my Department. It is not appropriate to pre-empt the outcome of the review at this time.

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**Hospital Services
(Question No. 68)**

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989:

Has the ACT hospital system had difficulty filling all medical staff positions; if so (a) what is the reason; and (b) what measures has the Minister taken to overcome this problem and reduce the extra demands this situation places on existing medical officers.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

The Hospital Services Division experienced difficulties filling junior medical staff positions in 1989. The reason for this was a reduction in medical graduate availability. Also, the majority of junior medical staff prefer appointments to major teaching hospitals in the larger state capitals.

A variety of measures have been taken to overcome the problems of extra demands being placed on existing medical officers, including discussions with all relevant staff members and unions to ascertain what duties could be combined and what areas could accommodate a reduction in medical staffing.

The situation has remained stable since July 1989 with no further resignations. There has also been an active recruitment campaign for 1990 and present indications are that appropriate staffing levels will be achieved.

**Hospital Services
(Question No. 69)**

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989:

Has the Minister's office had contact with the interim board of management; if so (a) what form has this contact taken, (b) how much contact has occurred, (c) what questions have been asked of the interim board by the Minister's office, (d) has the Minister's office been in daily contact with the board, and (e) have any directives been issued by the Minister's office to the board.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

Since May I have met with the full Board once and with individual members of the Board on two separate occasions, I have also maintained contact through the Chief Executive Officer, Len Withers on a regular basis.

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**Hospital Services
(Question No. 70)**

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989:

What has the Minister done to encourage the development of a system of sub committees to cover matters such as finance and administration, planning and development and medical services etc. as recommended by the Kearney Report.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

Part of the Boards charter was to develop a system of committees to cover all aspects of running a hospital and a range of committees is now in operation. I am currently considering the need to further expand the Committee's structure.

**Hospital Services
(Question No. 71)**

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989:

What importance does the Minister attach to the Kearney Report's recommendations that - (a) one principal hospital be established and (b) a board of management be established to administer the hospitals.

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

The Government has demonstrated its recognition of the importance of the Kearney Report recommendations by decisive actions in the first six months - by putting into place hospital redevelopment plans and a Hospitals Board.

**Hospital Services
(Question No. 72)**

Mr Humphries asked the Minister for Community Services and Health, upon notice, on 15 November 1989:

Has the Minister's attention been drawn to the proposal to elect three staff representatives, rather than having union appointees placed on the interim Health board as this would be a far more democratic and responsible method of ensuring staff representation; if so, does he support the proposal.

5 December 1989

Mr Berry: The answer to **Mr Humphries'** question is as follows:

The Interim Board included three staff members elected from within medical, nursing and other groupings. The composition of the recently announced Board of Directors and the process for making appointments to this body is under consideration and I expect to make an announcement shortly.