



DEBATES

OF THE

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FOR THE

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

HANSARD

6 August 1991

Tuesday, 6 August 1991

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

LEADERSHIP OF THE OPPOSITION

Statement by Speaker

MR SPEAKER: For the information of members I present the legal opinion on the matter of the appointment of the Leader of the Opposition. The opinion, which was circulated to members on 4 July, was sought following the questioning of the validity of certain actions taken in the Assembly on 21 June.

I also inform the Assembly that on 23 July Mr Kaine advised the Acting Speaker that the Liberal Party had, on the previous day, elected him as its leader. He also advised the Acting Speaker that he consented to being Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly. Following the receipt of legal advice on the matter, the Acting Speaker directed that Mr Kaine be recognised as Leader of the Opposition from 22 July 1991. For the information of members I present the further legal opinion on this matter, which is dated 24 July 1991.

PRIVILEGE

Statement by Speaker

MR SPEAKER: On 29 May 1991 Mr Stevenson gave written notice of a possible contempt of the Assembly concerning letters received by him from a Mr Gerald Gold. Under the provisions of standing order 71, I must determine whether or not the matter merits precedence over other business. If, in my opinion, the matter does merit precedence, I must inform the Assembly of the decision, and the member who raised the matter may move a motion without notice forthwith to refer the matter to the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedures.

I have considered the matter carefully and have concluded, on the basis of the information before me, that the matter does not merit precedence. I have written to Mr Stevenson informing him of my decision. For the information of members, I present Mr Stevenson's letter to me on the matter and a copy of my response.

PETITIONS

The Clerk: The following petitions have been lodged for presentation, and copies will be referred to the appropriate Ministers:

X-Rated Videos

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Australian Capital Territory in Parliament Assembled.

The Petition of the undersigned respectfully sheweth that we protest at the sale, hire and distribution of X-Rated videos in and from the Australian Capital Territory.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your Honourable House ensure that Legislation is passed that bans the sale, hire and distribution of X-Rated videos in and from the Australian Capital Territory.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

By **Mr Stevenson** (from 37 citizens).

Royal Canberra Hospital

To the members of the Australian Capital Territory Legislative Assembly in parliament as assembled. The signatures contained herein from the constituents of the A.C.T. and the surrounding regions respectfully showeth that the decision to close Royal Canberra Hospital should be reversed and that it should be upgraded to its former excellent standard for the people of Canberra and the surrounding regions, and your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

To the members of the AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY Legislative Assembly in parliament as assembled. The signatures contained herein from the constituents of the A.C.T. respectfully showeth that the decision to close Royal Canberra Hospital should be reversed and that it should be upgraded to its former excellent standard for the people of Canberra, and your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

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TO THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

The petition of certain residents of the Australian Capital Territory draws to the attention of the Assembly:

THAT THE DECISION TO CLOSE ROYAL CANBERRA HOSPITAL ON THE
ACTON PENINSULA AS AN ACUTE CARE PUBLIC HOSPITAL WAS TAKEN
WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OR AUTHORITY OF THE PEOPLE OF CANBERRA.

Your petitioners therefore request the Assembly to:

CALL ON THE GOVERNMENT TO REVERSE ITS DECISION.

By **Mrs Grassby** (from 2,054) citizens).

Petitions received.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Budget Strategy

MR KAINE: I would like to address a question to the Chief Minister and Treasurer. Ms Follett, over the last year and a half, you have been on record many times as saying that I was overstating the financial problems of the Territory, that I was scaremongering, that there really was not a problem, and that a little bit of nipping and tucking would do. I notice in your budget strategy statement, which was recently issued, that in the opening statement you said that this budgetary problem is not ephemeral. Is that a roundabout way of saying that in fact we did have a problem and that you now acknowledge that that is the case?

MS FOLLETT: I thank Mr Kaine for the question, Mr Speaker. I should like to state at the outset, Mr Kaine, that I do not believe I have ever said that there was not a problem. What there has been in recent months is, in my view, a very poor outcome from the May Premiers Conference, and that occurred while you were Chief Minister and Treasurer. I think it is largely reflected now in the budget that I have to frame.

The fact is that at that Premiers Conference all of the other States and Territories had their funding maintained but the ACT did not. We suffered a real cut, as I have spelt out to this Assembly before. Despite the fact that the Commonwealth has returned to us the transitional funding that it had set aside, the guaranteed funding which it had promised prior to self-government, we still have less money in this budget than in previous years. There is no doubt about that, and that is reflected in the kinds of statements that I have issued on the coming budget.

Mr Speaker, I think it is also important to note that, over the years, I think some erroneous statements have been made, especially during the period of the Alliance Government when Mr Kaine repeatedly claimed that it was necessary to close schools and hospitals and to sack 3,000 public servants in order to meet the budget requirements faced by the ACT. I have consistently taken the view that that kind of draconian action was not necessary, nor was it effective. As we discovered with the schools closure debate, the closure of schools does not save money, and I think Mr Kaine would acknowledge that that is the case.

In conclusion, Mr Speaker, I think the kind of strategy that I have outlined is a much more even-handed approach towards a very difficult budget this year. We had a gap, to start with, of well over \$50m. You cannot take that lightly, and I have attempted, in all of the budget work that has been done so far, to ensure that no particular sector of the community wears the difficulty that currently faces the Government in framing its budget.

Mr Speaker, I think Mr Kaine is wrong to imply that I have taken lightly the ACT's budget situation; I never have. Nor do I think that that situation in any way justifies the kinds of actions that Mr Kaine's Government took which, in fact, reduced services to the community. It is my intention to frame a budget which is responsible, which protects the services to the community and which reflects this Government's social justice objectives.

MR KAINE: I wish to ask a supplementary question, Mr Speaker. Ms Follett, if you think that closing a couple of schools was draconian, would you like to tell me what draconian measures you will implement to cover the \$17m gap which you cannot even identify at this stage and which you have to ask the community to tell you how to fix?

MS FOLLETT: Thank you, Mr Kaine. Mr Speaker, it is the case that the budget strategy which I have outlined still leaves a gap of \$17m, and I have asked the community - indeed, I have asked the parties in this Assembly - for their indications as to what they think of the strategy as so far developed and ideas that they might wish to put forward on how to meet the remaining gap. I have been quite overwhelmed by responses from the community - some of them extremely informed and extremely helpful. They have come from all sectors of the community, and a great many have come from private individuals. Needless to say, I have yet to hear from any member opposite. It should not be forgotten, Mr Speaker, that Mr Kaine's budget - the one that we are just finishing, the 1990-91 budget - is heading for a deficit of \$6.4m.

Mr Kaine: Not bad in \$1.4 billion, I would have thought, in today's terms.

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MS FOLLETT: Mr Kaine congratulates himself on the deficit of \$6.4m. Given that he was going for a balanced budget, as I am, it is not a great result and not one of which I would be very proud.

Mr Duby: Better than \$40m in five months.

MS FOLLETT: Mr Speaker, if members opposite have useful suggestions to put forward on the remaining budget task, I would be delighted to hear from them. I look forward to hearing their views on the budget framed so far and how they see that significant remaining gap being met.

Land Tax

MR COLLAERY: My question is directed to the Treasurer, Ms Follett. In view of your again enunciated consultative style, could you inform the Assembly, particularly non-government members, why you did not consult them before announcing the one per cent land tax on residential investment properties; why notices have gone out to the various affected parties from the Department of Finance, indicating that the people are liable from 1 August; and why you have been so presumptuous with this Assembly, considering the fact that you are in minority government, without consulting us, industry or the affected parties? I refer particularly to the tenants union and other groups who are affected by this anti-socially just measure.

MS FOLLETT: Mr Collaery has had his opportunity now to put forward his view. That measure is outlined in the budget strategy statement which I will be tabling today but which was made available to Assembly members on the day that it was made.

Mr Collaery: But you did not consult us.

MS FOLLETT: You are being consulted now, Mr Collaery. You have been consulted. From the first day on which the budget strategy statement was made members have been provided with copies of it. Mr Speaker, if that is not asking for their views, I do not know what is. Mr Collaery was overseas at the time and came back a bit late into the process and now feels aggrieved that we did not send it to him in Japan, I presume. I can only repeat what I said last time, Mr Speaker: If members opposite have constructive views to put forward they have the opportunity to do so, and I hope that they will.

MR COLLAERY: My supplementary question to Ms Follett leads on to ask her why her department did not consult the Housing Trust and the skilled people who advise the Minister for Housing, Mr Connolly, on this issue before it was put into the budget process.

MS FOLLETT: Mr Collaery indicates a total misunderstanding of the process of government decision making if he thinks that that issue could have come to the Government without it having been circulated amongst the Government's agencies, as indeed it was. In looking at the issue, the Government was well aware of the views of the Housing Trust and other government agencies, and took them fully into account. So, Mr Collaery's assertion that they were not consulted is absolutely baseless.

Hospital Facilities

MR HUMPHRIES: Mr Speaker, my question is addressed to the Minister for Health. Will he tell the Assembly how long he has had the report of the review of hospital facilities on the Acton Peninsula and why this report has not yet been released? Will he also tell us when he intends to make it public; or does he intend to keep the covers on this report, just as he intends to keep the covers on the report which purported to investigate serious complaints concerning the Ambulance Service?

MR BERRY: I thank Mr Humphries for his question. It gives me the opportunity, Mr Speaker, to tell the Assembly about the necessity for the report and what will be said later in these proceedings in relation to the review.

Members would be aware of the depth of the damage that has been done to the hospital system as a result of the Alliance Government's inability to deliver appropriate health services for the people of the ACT. The incoming government had a commitment - a different commitment, of course, from the conservatives opposite - to ensure that there were better hospital services in the Territory. But we had to accept that there had been 18 months of a conservative government with a very conservative Minister who had wrought havoc in the hospital system. That was quite evident from the length of the waiting lists that people had to endure.

Mr Kaine: That was why you fired another half a dozen ambulance officers, was it?

MR BERRY: Could I do this without interruption from this week's Leader of the Opposition, who is sitting beside last week's and so on.

Mr Humphries: Mr Speaker, on a point of order: I have asked the Minister a very simple question, namely, where is the report? Could I please have an answer to that question.

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MR SPEAKER: I do not believe that that is a valid point of order, Mr Humphries.

MR BERRY: I am coming to that, Mr Speaker. It is important that it is well known that Labor was committed to examine what was salvageable in the hospital system after the former Minister had had a go at it. In short, I will be making a ministerial statement on it shortly.

Ainslie Transfer Station

MR DUBY: Mr Speaker, I refer my simple question to the Chief Minister, Ms Follett. Does the Government intend to reopen the Ainslie Transfer Station?

MS FOLLETT: The simple answer, Mr Speaker, is yes.

MR DUBY: I have a supplementary question, Mr Speaker. Given the Treasurer's acknowledgment of the Government's requirement to find additional savings, in excess of some \$15m, I believe, and given the fact that reopening the Ainslie station will involve capital funds well in excess of many hundreds of thousands of dollars, plus a recurrent expenditure of in the order of \$300,000 to \$400,000 per annum, how can the Chief Minister justify this blatant waste of expenditure, given that this transfer station has been closed now for almost two years, that there is no public outcry for its opening and that in terms of recycling needs it is simply not required?

MS FOLLETT: I thank Mr Duby for the question. I am sorry to say that he misunderstood this issue from the start, from the moment when he was persuaded to close the Ainslie Transfer Station. To answer his implications about the budget, Mr Speaker, we will be looking for the most cost-effective way of achieving the reopening of the Ainslie Transfer Station, and we will be looking at that in the budget context.

Mr Duby has asked me to justify that decision. I think that, because he asked for that, he must be deaf to the community who were denied access to the Ainslie Transfer Station when he closed it overnight, with no consultation and no justification. He closed it just because it seemed a good idea at the time to a government that was closing schools and hospitals, and trying to close health centres and so on. It closed the tip as well. It was about as sensible as that.

There is no doubt whatsoever in my mind, Mr Speaker, that the community in the North Canberra area needs that facility. It needs it for a variety of reasons, not least of which is that it is an ageing community in that area. They have made good use of the Ainslie Transfer Station over the years and, because it is convenient for them and easy to use, wish to make continued use of it. If
Mr Duby

is not aware of the continuing community requests for the reopening of that transfer station, he is deaf to the demands of the community. It has been a major issue in the area in which I live and in most of the correspondence that I have had, ever since he closed it; there is no doubt about that.

Mr Duby has also referred to the recycling arrangements that have been made, in a very belated and half-hearted attempt to correct the wrong that he did in closing the Ainslie Transfer Station. I think it ought to be said that not everybody in the community is happy having recycling bins at every local shopping centre. In some instances, they have become unsightly and a bit of a nuisance. Also, not everybody is aware of, or in a position to make use of, the Mitchell recycling facilities.

Mr Speaker, I think that reopening the Ainslie Transfer Station would be a response to a very real need in the community. It is a response which I have always been prepared to make and, now that we are back in government, which I am delighted to be implementing.

Royal Canberra Hospital

MR STEVENSON: My question also is directed to the Chief Minister, Rosemary Follett, whom I commend for reopening the Ainslie Transfer Station; indeed, it was something that the majority of people wanted reopened. My question is: Will she honour her promise and that of the ALP to reopen the hospital, which is a much more important issue for the people of Canberra?

MS FOLLETT: I thank Mr Stevenson for his question, Mr Speaker. I am afraid that he will have to wait for an answer on that very important issue, until my colleague Mr Berry is in a position to report fully to the Assembly on the findings of the study that he commissioned as soon as we got back into government.

MR STEVENSON: I wish to ask a supplementary question. If a promise was made to reopen the hospital, why do we need to wait for a report?

MS FOLLETT: Mr Speaker, I think Mr Stevenson has overstated the situation in regard to the Labor Party and Royal Canberra Hospital. Of course, I would love to make that promise. I can only repeat what I said before: You are going to have to await Mr Berry's announcement on that.

School Enrolments - Tuggeranong Valley

MRS NOLAN: Mr Speaker, my question is addressed to Mr Wood in his capacity as Minister for Education. I refer to the projected school enrolments in the Tuggeranong Valley. In relation to both primary schools and high schools, are these figures now available? Do these enrolment figures indicate the need for the opening of the Condor Primary School at the beginning of the 1993 school year, instead of the middle of that year? Will the school be ready for such an opening at the start of 1993?

MR WOOD: The matters concerning enrolments of these students are being closely monitored. I suppose a little extra variable is being punched in now, with the development of Gungahlin. Planners cannot be quite sure about the rate of development in southern Tuggeranong, because Gungahlin is coming on stream. We have to weigh up just when those enrolments will take place. I can tell you that that school will be ready to go on stream when it is needed. We are aware that timing is important, and arrangements are in hand, as we refine our statistics, so that planning commences at an appropriate time.

MRS NOLAN: I have a supplementary question. When will the projected enrolments for the entire Tuggeranong Valley be available for both high schools and primary schools?

MR WOOD: I will get those to you as soon as I can. They will be in draft form, in a sense, because of the conditions that I indicated to you; but I will certainly dig those out and forward them to you as soon as I possibly can.

Health Services

MR MOORE: Mr Speaker, my question is directed to Wayne Berry as Minister for Health, and it refers to the matter to which Ms Follett alluded briefly a short while ago, about the decimation by Gary Humphries of the community health centres. On a number of occasions, Mr Berry, you have espoused a very sensible notion that preventive medicine is important, especially to long-term budgetary savings and the long-term health of our community. What then will be your approach to, firstly, facilitating the role of community nurses in getting out into the community; secondly, undoing the damage of the Alliance Government in closing down community health centres in neighbourhoods so that parents without vehicles, particularly mothers with young babies, can no longer access them; and, thirdly, safeguarding the school dental services program?

Mr Kaine: This is one that you can really get your teeth into, Wayne.

MR BERRY: You leave me plenty of targets, Mr Kaine. The first part of the question related to community nurses; the second part related to health centres; and the third was in relation to the dental service.

Community nurses play an important role in the delivery of health services directly to the community. Labor's commitment to the provision of non-hospital health services stands, and community nurses will always have our support in the delivery of those services. I cannot go into that issue in any more detail unless I have the specifics, Mr Moore; but I am quite prepared to talk to you further on the subject if you want to deal with specific matters in relation to community nurses.

On the subject of health centres, the Alliance Government made it clear that it was about to close a good number in the ACT.

Mr Humphries: Absolute rubbish!

MR BERRY: Mr Humphries is on the record as saying that Belconnen had too many health centres. There was some concern in the community at one stage about the closure of the Dickson Health Centre, but that had a reprieve under the Alliance Government. There was some concern about the closure of the Melba Health Centre, but after an outcry from the community in that area it was decided that they would back off on that.

Mr Duby: There was some concern about the Northbourne Flats, too.

MR BERRY: There was, indeed, as Mr Duby said, some concern about the Northbourne Flats; but the former Government backed off on that, too. There was concern about the Weston Creek Health Centre, but unfortunately the former Government had time to deal a severe blow to it and put in place measures which would make it almost impossible for any future government to reverse that closure. There was also the issue of the health centre at Tuggeranong. The former Government reluctantly opened that centre only when it was disclosed that it was idle. The people of Tuggeranong, whom Mrs Nolan tries to represent, did without it for an extensive period during the course of the Alliance Government.

The consolidation of health centres has been put on hold, and this Government will deal with the provision of services from community health centres in consultation with the community. We will not be riding roughshod over the community, as the former Government did, particularly those sectors that are least able to protect themselves, such as the aged. That is what the Alliance Government did with the aged of Weston Creek. They rode roughshod over them, closed their health centre and took services away. That is what the Alliance Government did and what this Government, the Labor Government, is charged to reverse, difficult

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though it might be. So, on that score, Mr Moore, you have our assurance that we have a commitment to the provision of quality community health services from community health centres, and the provision of those services will be developed in consultation with the community.

On the issue of dental services for youngsters, a consultant has been engaged to look at it across the board. We have inherited difficulties with the dental service.

Mr Humphries: So did we.

MR BERRY: Hang on a minute. The former Government - - -

Mr Humphries: Which former government?

MR BERRY: The former Labor Government had difficulties with that issue because of the professional structures that we both inherited. Unfortunately, the Alliance Government was slow to get off the mark on the issue, and it takes as much as 15 months for some services to be available to adults.

The issue of schools is being considered in the context of a general review of dental health services, but at the end of the day we intend to provide the best services possible to people at school. I do not want anybody to read between the lines in my statement "the best services possible" and say that we are going to reduce them by a significant amount; it is about providing better dental services for more people in the ACT.

Hospice

DR KINLOCH: My question is addressed to Mr Berry as Minister for Health. The Chief Minister and the Deputy Chief Minister have both mentioned the aged, and I must say that I join with others who welcome some of those comments. My question arises from a broadcast that Mr Berry had with Ms Harris yesterday on 2CN, in which the question of the hospice arose. I detected a glimmer of hope. Could the Minister assure us that the hospice proposal has not been put on the back-burner, has not been set aside, and that the plan for a hospice will go ahead?

MR BERRY: The plan for a hospice will go ahead? Which plan was that? You could not get a commitment out of the former Health Minister on when the hospice would be built.

Ms Maher: It was one of the major things in our Social Policy Committee report on the needs of the ageing.

Mr Humphries: It was there in black and white, Wayne.

MR BERRY: The best he could do was say, "Well, the hospital redevelopment will take five to seven years, and it is included in that".

Mr Duby: That was in this year's capital works program. It was going to be built this year.

MR SPEAKER: Order, Mr Duby! Mr Duby desist, please. I warn the member. If you carry on with that behaviour, Mr Duby, you will find yourself walking. I call Dr Kinloch.

Dr Kinloch: Mr Speaker, this is not a supplementary question; I would merely repeat my question to which I have not yet had an answer.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you for that observation.

MR BERRY: As members who are so full of knowledge on this issue will recall, if they have any grasp of it, the hospice was programmed at a cost of about \$2.1m, from my recollection, and I think there was some talk of recurrent costs of around \$600,000.

Mr Duby: Two Ainslie tips.

MR BERRY: It was \$600,000. It seems that the recurrent costs were grossly underestimated, and the Government is now considering the provision of the hospice in the overall budget context.

Mr Jensen: It has been removed from the capital works program.

MR BERRY: And it certainly has been removed from the capital works program.

DR KINLOCH: I wish to ask a supplementary question. I had not asked a supplementary question, Mr Speaker. Is the hospice now on the capital works program?

MR BERRY: If you had been listening you would know that I told you that. I told you that it was not on the capital works program; it is going to be considered in the overall budget context.

Asbestos Dump

MR STEFANIAK: Mr Speaker, my question is directed to Mr Connolly, the Minister for Urban Services. Along with the publication of the whereabouts of the newly opened asbestos dump at West Belconnen, it has been reported that the Department of Urban Services - - -

Mr Berry: Promises, like Bernard's \$8m worth of new promises.

MR SPEAKER: Order, Mr Berry, please!

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Mr Collaery: Is he talking about mercy killing, Mr Speaker, or what?

MR SPEAKER: Order, Mr Collaery! I do not know what he is talking about; I am listening to the question. I call Mr Stefaniak.

MR STEFANIAK: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will say that again: Along with the publication of the whereabouts of the newly opened asbestos dump at West Belconnen, it has been reported that the Department of Urban Services has "recommended that no houses be built within 1,500 metres of the dump". If that is correct, are you aware that the majority of blocks that are currently being sold in Gungahlin are within that distance of the Gungahlin asbestos dump, and can you assure the house that buyers of blocks of land in that area have been made aware of the proximity of the old dump to their future homes? Can you also explain why asbestos is still being dumped, wrapped only in plastic and in ply boxes, when experience in Gungahlin has shown that this method has resulted in crates being split open under bulldozers, freeing the dangerous fibre into the air and onto surrounding ground?

MR CONNOLLY: Mr Speaker, like so many opposition questions, this one is premised on some mistakes of fact.

Mr Duby: Hear, hear!

MR CONNOLLY: Mr Duby says, "Hear, hear!". He would say that because he was the Minister administering this program - and I will say that he was administering it quite well - until I took over and continue to administer it - - -

Ms Follett: Extremely well.

MR CONNOLLY: Extremely well. The suggestion in the Canberra Times this morning that there was some mystery shrouding the move of the asbestos tip from Gungahlin to West Belconnen is simply not true. I can recall speaking to a range of electronic media organisations, within weeks of coming into government, about that move. It was proposed, I think, originally for 12 July but had been delayed because of the wet weather. It was clearly a decision which had been taken by the previous administration. The Gungahlin tip had served its useful life. There were also substantial earthworks and so forth in the Gungahlin area.

The West Belconnen tip, which had been identified as a hazardous waste site by the National Capital Development Commission in 1988, is clearly signposted and marked as a hazardous waste site, and has a very large pit dug for this specific purpose. It was the obvious site to take over. That decision had been implemented by the previous Government, and we continued with it because it was sound.

I am surprised at the suggestion that there is something unsafe about the current method of asbestos storage. The best advice that I have available, and, I presume, the advice available to the former Government, is that what is being done is perfectly adequate. Indeed, we go beyond Australian standards. In New South Wales asbestos is simply packaged in two layers of plastic; whereas in the ACT it is packaged in two layers of plastic and boxed, the crates are securely bound with wire, and it is then buried under at least three metres of topsoil. The standard in other parts of Australia is to put only two metres of soil on top. Asbestos is dangerous because of its loose, fibrous nature. That is why it is being taken out of ceilings. It is not like a chemical which can leach from a ruptured underground container into ground water supply. It is not like lead tailings which can enter the atmosphere and cause problems there. If asbestos is securely packaged and buried three metres underground, it is perfectly safe.

It is not correct to say that the asbestos tip at West Belconnen is going to be quarantined by 1,500 metres, whereas that is not happening at Gungahlin. If any development goes ahead in that area - it is a matter that is with my colleague Mr Wood - the proposals indicate a 1,500-metre quarantine zone around the ordinary landfill tip, and that is there principally because of nuisance and convenience. Tips tend to emit noxious odours, and bits of paper and plastic fly around. The 1,500-metre cordon is around the tip, and the hazardous waste site is within the tip. It is not because of the hazard of asbestos.

At Gungahlin the asbestos area is being planted as a park; nothing will ever be built on it. The Australian Survey Office is very accurately marking where the asbestos is buried. That will be marked on all the survey maps of the ACT well into the future. Nothing will ever be built there; no trenches will ever be dug. The asbestos will be entirely safe. This is a piece of alarmism, extraordinarily directed at the actions of the former Government.

If Mr Stefaniak had spoken to his one-time colleague in the Alliance Government Mr DUBY, I am sure that Mr DUBY would have assured him in much the same way as I do. I am not an engineer, and Mr DUBY was not one. We rely on the advice of our engineers and environmental scientists. I am satisfied with that advice that what is going on in West Belconnen is appropriate and safe.

MR STEFANIAK: I have a supplementary question, Mr Speaker. The problem with the Gungahlin tip, as you are no doubt aware, Mr Connolly, goes back through the periods of not only the Alliance Government and the first Labor Government but also the Commonwealth Government. But, in relation to your comments regarding what is happening to that site, I would ask you to comment in relation to the 1,500 metres surrounding the Gungahlin tip. How far away from that tip will houses be built?

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Mr Duby: It is not required.

MR CONNOLLY: As Mr Duby interjected, quite correctly, it is not required. There is no 1,500-metre cordon around the Gungahlin site; the cordon is around just the site. Nothing will be built on the site. It will be a town park. Across the street from the town park will be housing sites which, no doubt, will attract a premium at auction because of their location near the pleasant open space of the town park. The 1,500-metre cordon is used in West Belconnen purely because of the nuisance value of the tip - not because of any safety concern about buried, inert asbestos.

Ms Follett: I ask that further questions be placed on the notice paper, Mr Speaker.

AUDITOR-GENERAL - REPORT NO. 6 OF 1991
Efficiency Audits and GAO Activities 1990-91

MR SPEAKER: I table for the information of members the following paper:

Auditor-General's Report No. 6 of 1991 - Efficiency Audits and GAO Activities, dated 6 August 1991.

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

That the Assembly authorises the publication of Auditor-General's Report No. 6 of 1991.

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

That the Assembly takes note of the paper.

Debate (on motion by **Mr Moore**) adjourned.

SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION
Papers

MR BERRY (Deputy Chief Minister): Pursuant to section 6 of the Subordinate Laws Act 1989, I present the following subordinate legislation in accordance with the schedule of gazettal notices for determinations, declarations and regulations:

A.C.T. Institute of Technical and Further Education Act - Determination of fees - No. 19 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).

Adoption of Children Act -

Determination of fees - No. 54 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).

Determination of fees under section 64A - No. 68 of 1991 (S70, dated 22 July 1991).

Architects Act - Determination of fees - No. 22 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
Associations Incorporation Act - No. 55 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
Bookmakers Act - Determination of fees - No. 23 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
Building Act - Determination of fees - No. 24 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
Business Names Act - Determination of fees - No. 56 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
Cemeteries Act - Determination of fees - No. 25 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
City Area Leases Act - Determination of fees - No. 26 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
Clinical Waste Act - Determination of fees - No. 61 of 1991 (S61, dated 28 June 1991).
Co-Operative Societies Act - Determination of fees - No. 64 of 1991 (S64, dated 10 July 1991).
Credit Act - Determination of fees - No. 27 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
Dangerous Goods Act - Determination of fees - No. 28 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
Director of Public Prosecutions Act - Notice of commencement of sections 4, 5, 19 to 32 inclusive
and 34 (S57, dated 26 June 1991).
Dog Control Act - Determination of fees - No. 29 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
Door-to-Door Trading Act - Notice of commencement (S59, dated 1 July 1991).
Electricity and Water Act -
 Determination of charge -
 No. 1 of 1991 (27, dated 10 July 1991).
 No. 2 of 1991 (27, dated 10 July 1991).
 Determination of charges -
 No. 3 of 1991 (27, dated 10 July 1991).
 No. 4 of 1991 (27, dated 10 July 1991).
 No. 5 of 1991 (27, dated 10 July 1991).
 No. 6 of 1991 (27, dated 10 July 1991).
Determination of fees - No. 62 of 1991 (S27, dated 10 July 1991).
Hawkers Act - Determination of fees - No. 30 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
Health Services Act - Determination of fees and charges -
 No. 21 of 1991 (S54, 1 July 1991).
 No. 66 of 1991 (S66, dated 10 July 1991).
Housing Assistance Act - Determination of fees -
Homebuyer Housing Assistance Program (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
Long Stay Caravan Park Housing Assistance Program (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
Instrument Act - Determination of fees - No. 57 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
Lakes Act - Determination of fees - No. 31 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
Liquor Act - Determination of fees - No. 32 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).

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- Lotteries Act - Determination of fees - No. 33 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
- Machinery Act - Determination of fees - No. 34 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
- Magistrates Court Act - Magistrates Court Rules Regulations (Amendment) - No. 14 of 1991 (S62, dated 28 June 1991).
- Magistrates Court (Civil Jurisdiction) Act -
Magistrates Court (Civil Jurisdiction) (Fees) Regulations (Amendment) - No. 15 of 1991 (S62, dated 28 June 1991).
- Magistrates Court (Civil Jurisdiction) Regulations (Amendment) - No. 17 of 1991 (S67, dated 12 July 1991).
- Motor Omnibus Services Act - Revocation and determination of charges - No. 35 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
- Motor Traffic Act -
Determination of fees -
No. 36 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
No. 37 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
No. 65 of 1991 (S65, dated 11 July 1991).
- Motor Vehicles (Dimension and Mass) Act - Determination of fees - No. 38 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
- Nature Conservation Act -
Declaration of the Namadgi National Park - No. 75 of 1991 (S76, dated 5 August 1991).
Declaration of the Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve - No. 73 of 1991 (S76, dated 5 August 1991).
Determination of fees - No. 39 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
Revocation of declaration of the Namadgi National Park as a reserved area - No. 74 of 1991 (S76, dated 5 August 1991).
- Occupational Health and Safety Act - Occupational Health and Safety Regulations (Amendment) - No. 13 of 1991 (S53, dated 28 June 1991).
- Pesticides Act - Determination of fees - No. 40 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
- Plumbers Drainers and Gasfitters Board Act - Determination of fees - No. 41 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
- Pounds Act - Determination of fees - No. 42 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
- Public Parks Act - Revocation of declaration of Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve as a public park - No. 72 of 1991 (S76, dated 5 August 1991).
- Public Place Names Act - Determinations -
No. 67 of 1991 (S69, dated 18 July 1991).
No. 69 of 1991 (S72, dated 30 July 1991).
- Rabbit Destruction Act - Determination of fees - No. 43 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
- Real Property Act - Determination of fees -
No. 44 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
No. 58 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
- Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages Act - Determination of fees - No. 59 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).

Registration of Deeds Act - Determination of fees - No. 60 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
Roads and Public Places Act - Determination of fees -
 No. 45 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
 No. 46 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
Sale of Motor Vehicles Act -
Determination of fees - No. 47 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
Determination of fees and charges - No. 48 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
Scaffolding and Lifts Act - Determination of fees - No. 49 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
Small Claims Act - Small Claims Regulations (Amendment) - No. 16 of 1991 (S62, dated 28 June 1991).
Stock Act - Determination of fees - No. 50 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
Unit Titles Act - Determination of fees - No. 51 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
Water Pollution Act - Determination of fees - No. 52 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).
Water Rates Act - Determination of fees - No. 63 of 1991 (S27, dated 10 July 1991).
Weights and Measures Act - Determination of fees - No. 53 of 1991 (S56, dated 1 July 1991).

BUDGET STRATEGY STATEMENT Paper

MS FOLLETT (Chief Minister and Treasurer): Mr Speaker, for the information of members I present the budget strategy statement, dated July 1991, which was released when the Assembly was not sitting on 24 July 1991, although, of course, it was circulated to members. I move:

That the Assembly takes note of the paper.

MR KAINE (Leader of the Opposition) (3.11): Mr Speaker, the document that the Chief Minister and Treasurer just tabled is the budget strategy that you table when you do not have a budget strategy. I think it is deserving of considerable comment, in the light of the circumstances in which the Territory finds itself at the moment. It has been quite clear, since self-government, that a major transition financially was required of this Territory.

In Ms Follett's first government and first budget she simply failed to address that issue, although it was well known that there was a problem. In the last budget, the second budget of the self-governing Territory, we changed the direction to the tune of \$80m in one year, because it was necessary that we do so. The task that was to be confronted this year started off with about the same order of change being necessary. I think the Chief Minister and Treasurer would acknowledge that that was the starting point for the order of change in the current year's budget.

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Yet, during all that time, despite the present Chief Minister's assertions on the floor of the house today, she has consistently denied that there was any major problem. She has consistently told me that I was overstating the problem and acting as a scaremonger and, I repeat, that with a little bit of nipping and tucking it would all be good.

I notice in the introduction to this statement - I asked a question earlier - that the Chief Minister and Treasurer now says that the reduction in funds from the Commonwealth is not ephemeral. She could have been much more positive and said that it is real. It is something that she has denied for two years, but she could not even bring herself to say that the problem is real. She has to hide behind a euphemism and say that it is not ephemeral. We almost have a double negative there.

It is now common knowledge that in the year in which we took self-government the Commonwealth had overexpended against any reasonable expectation, to the tune of \$135m in that year, and that was the order of magnitude of change in which we had to engage and which we had to confront, and we had two years of the transition period in which to confront it. Even after all this time, the best that the Treasurer and Chief Minister can say is that the problem is not ephemeral. Having said that it is not ephemeral, she then avoids the issue entirely.

This document says, in effect, Mr Speaker, that the things that the Alliance Government was putting into effect in the budget for 1991-92 were all pretty good and that we will reduce - - -

Mr Berry: Does it say that anywhere?

MR KAINE: She says:

... I have earlier announced a 25% cut in consultancy funds, a 10% reduction in travel expenditure and a 5% cut in vehicle spending.

These were decisions taken by me and my Cabinet when we were in government, to be put into effect this year. There is nothing there that we had not taken into account in our intentions for the budget that we would have brought down.

Mr Speaker, the only new thinking in here is the one per cent land tax. That is the only new initiative taken by the new Chief Minister. Having made that adjustment and having picked up all of the adjustments that we had proposed, she gets to the bottom line and she is still \$17m short. What does this Chief Minister and Treasurer do? Having got to the point where all the easy decisions have been made and we have to confront the hard ones, the

Treasurer says, "Look, go and ask the community what they think". She acknowledges that she had already consulted the peak councils - CARD, ACTCOSS and the Trades and Labour Council - as we had.

Mr Berry: No, you only do CARD.

MR Kaine: I consulted the Trades and Labour Council, and ACTCOSS gave me the same briefings that they gave you, Mr Berry. Let us be clear about that. They are the only people in this community who are really competent to make any contribution to balancing a budget, because they have all the information. When you go out and say to the average man or woman in the street, "What do you want me to do to balance the budget? I am only \$17m short", what information does he or she have which could possibly enable him or her to make any substantial contribution? The answer is none. So, you have already been through all the processes in which one could reasonably engage. You are \$17m short. You throw your hands up in the air and say, "Somebody come and tell me what to do". That is a plea for help, if ever there was one.

So, this statement, Mr Speaker, as I said, is a Clayton's strategy; it is a strategy that you have when you do not have a strategy. It contributes nothing to the debate on balancing this year's budget. It makes no, or very little, contribution over and above what the Alliance Government had already decided to do. As a ratepayer and a resident of this city, I would like to see what this Chief Minister and Treasurer and this Government have to put forward as their solutions to the problem.

I think it is totally unreasonable, when you get to the hard decisions, to go to the community and say, "We do not know. You tell us". The headline on the Canberra paper should have been, "Rosemary says, 'We do not know'", because it is a fact. I think this Government has to do what it failed to do in 1989 and what it is still failing to do in 1991, that is, face up to the responsibilities of government, make the decisions and tell the community what it intends to do. That is what it was elected for; if there is a question of a mandate, that is what its mandate is; and that is what the people sitting on the other side of the house are being paid good public money to do. For heavens sake, stand up, stiffen your spine, make some decisions and tell us what you are going to do, and stop this phoney community consultation process. It is phoney; it is a sham, and you know it. Let us have some character - - -

Mr Connolly: Like the decision on land tax. That was a tough one to make.

MR Kaine: Let us have some stiffened backs; let us have some decision making and fewer smart comments by the Mr Connollys of this world.

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Mr Connolly: We have done it, with land tax. It was a tough decision. Are you going to back us on that one? Or are you going to give away \$6m?

MR KAINE: We will talk about budget outcomes when we get to the end of this year. You have never had to confront one. I had to balance your budget for you because it was blowing out when we took over in December 1989. It was only by keeping control of the budget that we brought it in balanced. Last year, when every State budget and the Commonwealth budget went absolutely haywire, with a \$1.4 billion budget ours overran by \$6m. That is a good result by any standard. If you do not believe it, just go and do some comparisons against the States.

The absolute figure of \$6m sounds a lot of money; but look at it in comparison with what the other State governments were able to achieve, particularly those of your Labor mates. Look at Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania, and see what their budget outcome was.

Mr Connolly: What about New South Wales?

MR KAINE: Nick Greiner's outcome, like mine, was very good, relatively, and you cannot deny that. Look at the facts; do not merely speculate. Do not talk off the top of your head, as you always do. Go and look at the figures and then come back and tell me whether the result last year was not a lot better than you are pretending now.

Mr Speaker, I started with the proposition that it was a Clayton's strategy; it is. I want to see some leadership from this Government as to what they are going to do, and I am sure that there are nearly 300,000 people out there who are paying taxes in this Territory and who are looking for that, too. I think it is about time that we saw some policy making, decision making and action on the part of the Government, instead of this plaintive plea of "Tell me what to do".

MR COLLAERY (3.19): Mr Speaker, my comments will be brief because the strategy itself is a brief document and, like Mr Kaine, I recognise much of it as part of our proposed budget indicators. It was called our proposed budget strategy when I saw the Cabinet draft. In one way I am pleased. As I predicted when the Follett Government was restored, there was little that Ms Follett could do to tinker with the budget. This document establishes the notion that there is little that she is going to do to the budget in the short term. There are a couple of variations, but they point more towards her style rather than substance. The imposition of a one per cent land tax has come suddenly - overnight almost. It needed very careful thought, particularly in terms of effect on investment decisions and its social justice impact. I will come back to that.

Mr Speaker, also the former Cabinet was facing the prospect of perhaps having to examine borrowings. I quote from page 8 of the published bound statement, where Ms Follett says:

In addition we have reviewed the previous Government's capital works program so that borrowings can be minimised, and hopefully avoided altogether, in constructing future Budgets.

What Ms Follett is referring to is a municipal budget, a municipal capital works program. All organised governments usually borrow on their municipal accounts because future generations, not the current ratepayers, should pay for the infrastructure inputs to land servicing and the rest. In this sense, Ms Follett binds herself as a matter of policy - and we will hold her to that at the election campaign - to not borrowing on the municipal account. Given the nature of the circumstances of Canberra as it stands, given the fact that we have a high per capita income and a high level of capital assets in a significant proportion of the community, there is a continuing possibility that we should be orthodox and borrow on the municipal account so that future people, not the current ratepayers, pay towards it. We are moving into another land development boom, in a way, in Gungahlin particularly, and those municipal borrowings will be taken up by the people who go onto those blocks.

Mr Speaker, a clear, definitive statement on revised receipts estimates should have been issued with this strategy. My view, and that which a number of informed people in this town take, is that stamp duty revenues will pick up for the Government in the short term. There is an upswing in conveyancing; there will be an increase in stamp duty revenues; and that may offset the predicted downturn of \$5m. That is not alluded to. I believe that the Chief Minister, in finalising her budget, should seek careful advice from the stamp duties office as to whether revenue has not picked up with the upswing in the housing market, which is evident to those of us who know those things.

Mr Speaker, the other issue that concerns me particularly is the failure to consider adequately the social justice impact of the one per cent land tax. In the ACT the majority of residential tenancy agreements are for a shorter term than those interstate. Often both landlord and tenant hedge their bets in this Territory, and there are a number of short-term tenancies at will - monthly tenancies. This means that this land tax can be passed on to tenants very quickly during anticipated and non-scheduled rent reviews. It means that the average \$100 rental bill will go up to \$106 for the tenant. Moreover, the decision to impose this does not adequately address the question of whether the Grants Commission will not simply take out the expected \$6.3m revenue when it comes around next time. What is the net gain of imposing this land tax?

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There will be an added impost on tenants who usually, in this and most other communities, are those who are in a lesser financial position than those who own property, so it will tax those with the least.

Mr Connolly: This is nonsense - absolute nonsense. It is looking after the interests of the landlords.

MR COLLAERY: Mr Speaker, we hear the protests from the other side. They are stung by this. Taxing landlords has immediate ideological attraction to the Socialist Left. If Mr Connolly wants to hold his position in the Right, he would be well advised to tread the fence on this because I can tell you that there are very heavy moves in the Labor right-wing camp about this left ideological idiosyncrasy in the budget strategy. It is a funny little idiosyncrasy. It is significant, it is important, but it is a very strong pointer to how the Left will operate within government, if it gets into government again after February 1992. Mr Speaker, it therefore is a litmus, a warning, to us that there is not going to be consultation when ideology is involved; it will just roll in and be dropped on the community.

The other matter that is missing from this budget strategy statement from a social justice point of view and from a community interest point of view is that, as was alluded to in speeches in this Assembly when the Alliance Government fell, Ms Follett does not address how she is going to fund new policy proposals that were being developed under community consultation by the former Government. Those proposals were particularly in the youth sector and community support for the aged and the infirm.

Mr Speaker, there is hardly a mention in the Labor Government's budget strategy statement, apart from a few throwaway lines, of social justice. There are a few words on youth employment, but no solution is offered; there is a final word promising consultation. This is a very thin document; it is shorter than the Cabinet submission on which it is founded and which some of us recall. The vital issue that Ms Follett must face in finalising her budget is the need to cover gaps in services, which have existed since self-government was imposed upon us. There are significant gaps.

There were new policy proposals for a grief and bereavement service which our community needs. That is a tack-on service that an established community agency could handle. A number of them - I will not name them - would offer that service that is needed in this community. The youth street link and youth support schemes are not going to be funded under this budget strategy. They are all going to fall by the wayside. The program that we had built up, particularly in my ministry and in the health area, is falling by the wayside. That is a significant part of this strategy. I believe that Ms Follett is slipping that through and trying to sugar the pill.

This is not a socially just budget strategy. It is rejected by the Residents Rally for its brevity, for its omissions, not for what is in it. I think Ms Follett needs to look at that and at a whole range of issues about which the community has been active. I particularly suggest that she read again Jack Waterford's article in the ACTCOSS April news, entitled "Trading Away Welfare".

Mr Speaker, if the Labor Government says that it differs ideologically from the Alliance Government, why is its budget strategy the same as ours, bar a couple of idiosyncrasies? The short answer is that, from its time on the opposition benches, the Labor Party has learnt little innovation; it is the same dull crew. Mr Connolly, Mr Wood and Mrs Grassby are properly squirming because they are not party to the ideological Left, and they well know that the one per cent land tax is simply an indicator of knee-jerk budget strategic measures.

Mr Speaker, substance can never take the place of debate. We can debate what we like about this strategy, but the fact is that the new policy proposals - pages of them - which were handed to the Labor Government before they took power are not attended to in this document. No amount of media antics by the Labor Government can overcome the fact that this slim little document offers very little to the poor, the disadvantaged, the aged in the community who have paid taxes and rates all their lives and who need a hospice, and the first home owner community.

We need to protect the first home owners, but there is nothing here about accessibility and affordability of housing issues to come from the budget; there are no initiatives there. The Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Howe, has said that it is the next issue for the decade. So, why do we not have some reference to a Follett strategy on accessing affordable housing? Will the Follett Government tackle the question of the reserves being set for government land sales, which have resulted in significant and inaccessible home prices in Gungahlin? Will the Follett Government recognise that we need additional strategies for first home owner access, which can be done by having measures relating to stamp duty and the rest?

MR MOORE (3.30): Mr Speaker, I will begin my comments on the budget strategy by referring to cuts to capital works. It has been my considered opinion on the two previous budgets that one of the things that people in Canberra do is look around them and see that the infrastructure for Canberra is already very, very good and, when they hear that there are budget difficulties, they always say, "Why are we getting such good gutters? Why are the roads being redone? Why are those issues being allowed to go ahead full bore when we are cutting back on hospitals and health care?", and so on.

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The question that is tackled by this budget strategy is to cut back on the capital works, the effect of which is to transfer that money from the capital works program to the recurrent program. It is something which I have suggested a number of times and which I am delighted to see finally implemented. I wonder, though, whether the extent of the move is adequate. We must recall that last year the Alliance Government increased capital expenditure significantly, and the move of the Labor Government is to put back what was added to the capital expenditure and add some \$5m in that transfer process. So, I wonder whether, apart from restoring things to how they were before the Alliance stuffed it up and then adding some more, it is enough.

My recommendation, as a reaction to this budget strategy, is first and foremost to consider making that capital works figure even lower than \$192m. I am not talking about some \$20m; I am talking about perhaps easing it back another \$3m or \$4m because I am aware of the ramifications of cutting back capital works in terms of employment, projects and business and the effect that that will have in tight financial times. Nevertheless, it is, in principle, fair to say that people look around them and see that we have good capital infrastructure but to continue spending at the same rate on capital is not the appropriate way to go.

I would now like to move on to the one per cent land tax about which Mr Collaery has jumped on his white horse and which he has taken to task. The beauty of the one per cent land tax is that it is a tax on speculation rather than on productivity. It is another issue that I have raised again and again in this Assembly. I can remember that on a number of occasions when I raised it people said, "You have been reading Bill Mason again", and there is some truth in that, of course. I am sure that all of you have been approached by Mr Mason, who espouses the Henry George theories. As far as he is concerned, that is the whole solution to the problem.

What we have seen here is a very small step towards taxing speculation rather than taxing productivity. The *Canberra Times* recognised - it was something that I had mentioned on radio some days before - that the advantage of the one per cent land tax is that it would be a tax deduction from the Federal Government; therefore, the effect of it is to charge the people of the ACT some \$3m while at the same time raising for the ACT over \$6m. I think that is a very wise move.

The other part that I think needs to be taken into account when you are looking at land tax is the fact that over the last six months or so we have had significant drops in interest rates. People who have invested in this way are not necessarily the wealthy. I have never suggested that they are the wealthy. On many occasions the people who will be taxed are those who are trying very, very hard to put aside a nest egg for when they retire. It is important

to allow them to do so. But it is true to say that they have the advantage, at the moment, of falling interest rates. The net result will be that they will see very little difference in terms of the amounts of money coming in and going out. So, we are taking advantage of that.

The scare tactics that are coming out of the Real Estate Institute and bodies like it, such as the Residents Rally, indicate that there is going to be a terrible increase to tenants. That simply cannot be shown to be the case. Markets have dictated rents in the ACT, and will continue to do so.

To summarise, contrary to what Mr Collaery has said, the notion of the one per cent land tax is very effective and very important because it is a tax on speculation as opposed to a tax on productivity. I would like to see us continuing to move on a tax on all forms of land speculation, so that we can start to remove the taxes that we have on productivity, such as payroll tax and other taxes along those lines. That is the direction in which we should be moving.

Mr Collaery: Yes, we do not disagree with that. But it is your selective introduction - - -

MR MOORE: Mr Collaery interjects, "We do not disagree with you"; so I can hear that Mr Collaery is in agreement with the notion of the one per cent land tax, which seems quite sensible to me.

The next point that I would like to raise is a warning about a comment in the *Canberra Times* editorial of Saturday, 27 July, which was entitled "Pinching from Bob to pay Rosemary" - a catchy little title. It says:

The ACT's public housing stock is higher than in the states. Many tenants do not qualify for or need rent subsidies. The ACT Government should get out of the business of providing public housing to anybody but the needy. Excess assets could be sold.

It is true that that could happen. But allow me to give you this warning: The difficulty with doing that is that, if that goes ahead, if the suggestion is followed, we will wind up with a system in which the public housing is marginalised housing. The advantage of having the public housing system as it is at the moment is that those who can afford to pay the rentals and who are paying the full rentals are subsidising the needy, without any further injection of funds from the ACT. It is a quite appropriate way to go.

If that is working most effectively, it is an area that could be looked at and investigated for possible corporatisation of some form - I use the word loosely but broadly - so that a housing trust can be seen to be a group

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that can be profitable enough to continue expanding its responsibilities to the needy. It would be an absolute disaster to start selling off our public housing stocks at this stage. I think a social justice view of that would recognise that that suggestion, which has come directly from CARD and others, could well be catastrophic.

With those few comments I think I will leave it there. In due time, I will be making further comments. But I have appreciated the fact that the indications that I have given previously have been taken up in this budget strategy, and I will be interested to watch the much more detailed outline of what goes on in Canberra when your budget is brought down. The difficulties that we will have are to resolve the deficit that the Alliance Government has handed over to you, which was very different from the one that you passed on to it.

MR JENSEN (3.40): Mr Speaker, in the budget strategy statement of 24 July, by the Chief Minister, we heard once again how the Federal Labor Government has withdrawn considerable ACT funding. Once again we have seen that we cannot rely on the Federal Government for a fair deal for the Territory. The Territory is not asking for anything abnormal; we are just asking for a fair deal for the community which we represent. After all, ACT funding by the Commonwealth was one of the reasons self-government was foisted upon us. We know that the introduction of self-government was the only way that the Commonwealth Government could reduce its direct budgetary expenditure on the ACT. No-one expected a handout; we just wanted a reasonable share of the cake to assist us to recover from the years of Commonwealth Government neglect, particularly as it relates to our infrastructure and other areas. I will come to that later, in response to some of the points that Mr Moore made.

Ms Follett's broad proposals in the budget strategy statement were admirable but lacking specific detail and direction. It was not until I got to about the last three or four pages that I finally found something to read. The first bit was just waffle. There were a lot of high-sounding statements but no real guts or information for the community to work on. Commitments must be translated into real programs, and these programs must be spelt out in detail. I hope that we are going to see a bit more detail in the budget when it finally hits the table. How is the community expected to comment on broadly based motherhood statements? Quite frankly, that is all we got in the statement that was put down on 24 July.

Mr Berry: It is not the budget, Norm; that will come later.

MR JENSEN: Mr Berry interjects, Mr Speaker. The Labor Government is seeking comment from the community, but they do not give anything for the community to comment on. There are broad-based motherhood statements; waffle is

really what we are talking about. However, I note that there was a stated commitment to preserve the quality and access to public health, education and community services. We will be looking forward to some greater detail as to how the Government proposes to go about that in a tight budgetary situation.

Vision and clear direction for the Territory, Mr Speaker, are the key to any ACT budget or budgetary statement. Unfortunately, Ms Follett's statement failed to address a number of important issues. There was no vision; there were no new ideas, as my colleague Mr Collaery has already said, in that statement. For example, we in the Rally believe that the Government should consider some of the following as initiatives. There should be a plan for restructuring the public service over a five-year period - not just statements such as "We are going to do a little bit of restructuring". Let us have a proper five-year plan for restructuring the public service, not just a few high-sounding statements or words.

The other issue, Mr Speaker, that my colleagues in the Rally have sought a number of times is the formation of an economic planning council to provide independent community advice to the Government, outside the advice already provided by Treasury. We want something new, some input from the community. That is the sort of input that I suggest we should be seeking from the community, rather than airy-fairy statements and requests such as we have seen in some of the media statements by the Chief Minister and Treasurer.

We should also have a defined strategy for the improvement and development of private sector employment and a program for the reduction of payroll tax - this is not the first time that we have raised this issue - and there should be the requirement for the funds forgone by industry to be used for training and development programs for youth. We have seen increasing levels of youth unemployment in our city. As a parent with a teenage child, I am fully aware of the problems associated with lack of work for some of our young people in the ACT at the moment. But it is through initiatives such as these that the ACT can look towards a bright and prosperous future. They are just some simple, basic ideas that should be taken up and considered by this Government.

For example, our public service needs a five-year plan for its restructuring, to include a switch from top level and middle management to service delivery. There is not much point in having a public service of 30,000-odd if the majority of them are at the top levels or in middle management. You have to get them out delivering the service to the community that they are supposed to be serving. There are a large number of small organisational units that should be consolidated into units servicing a specific community of clients, which would allow for major efficiencies and benefits. A streamlining of procedures

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should also be required, to allow movement between the ACT public service and the Commonwealth Public Service, to allow some changes, fresh ideas and new concepts to be brought into our public service. But that will not happen if there is not the opportunity for people to move quickly and easily between the various public services.

It could also be argued, as I know some have, that one of the problems and the costs of the ACT public service is that we have costs associated with a much wider organisation, such as the Commonwealth Public Service, which are inappropriate for a small organisation like the ACT Government Service. Community involvement and community views are very important, and community advice assists governments to make informed decisions. An economic planning council, as I have said, would provide this independent community advice.

Proposals for the growth of Canberra and the region need to be looked at and adhered to. I notice that Ms Follett has continued the commitment that was started by the previous Chief Minister - - -

Ms Follett: By me.

MR JENSEN: Maybe you started it, but Mr Kaine picked it up and improved it, and you have an opportunity to improve it even further, Ms Follett. The economic climate of the ACT is very dependent upon its neighbours and the success or otherwise of their economic strategies. The ACT, Mr Speaker, is not an island; it is part of a region, and it must relate specifically to that region.

Growth also depends increasingly on the private sector, which is where we should look for job creation. Canberra has a number of advantages in this area. We have a highly educated work force and the facilities for further education. We need only to look at our two universities and our TAFE colleges for examples of what opportunities can be provided. The encouragement of further private sector employment is essential, especially in high-tech, light manufacturing industries. As I have already indicated, a progressive reduction in payroll tax would encourage business to the ACT.

However, there is a trade-off that must be made to ensure that, when the recession that we had to have finally turns around, because of the amount of money and effort that is injected into training and its highly educated work force the ACT is in a position to take up the opportunities that the change in the overall economy of our country will offer. Incentives such as these will revitalise the ACT economy. We are not a large territory which has access to major transport systems which in turn open markets interstate and overseas; so we have to provide opportunities for those industries which can draw on a highly skilled and well educated work force.

Let me now turn to the Follett Government's capital works program which, I believe, will cause serious problems for employment. Borrowing for capital works is a legitimate exercise, provided that the ACT can service the debt. I am sure, Mr Speaker, that it was necessary for Mr Connolly to borrow to enable him to purchase his home, a capital asset. If it was not, I would have a bit of a problem - that is, if he was able to put down the necessary money for a home without any borrowings. We all know that there is a requirement these days for people to borrow in that situation because that is a capital asset. We all know that if you borrow on your Bankcard to pay for the daily running expenses of your home you very quickly get yourself into trouble. I am not suggesting that, Mr Speaker.

What I am suggesting is that, as my colleague Mr Collaery has already alluded to, it is appropriate for capital works that are required by a developing city to be provided for by a certain level of borrowing, provided that we can service it. It could be argued that in a recession when we are finding that people are prepared to quote much lower prices to keep themselves in employment and keep the work going so that employees do not have to leave town, as we are finding particularly in the building industry, it is possible to make a slight increase in capital works expenditure, subject to an ability to pay, so that you can upgrade and improve your employment base and the flow-on that takes place. Each job created provides other jobs, but each job loss means that four jobs are gone. *(Extension of time granted)*

There is a need to exercise care in spending the moneys from trust funds on projects that do not have a major effect on the reduction of recurrent expenditure. It would be of little use if the moneys held by the Federal Treasurer for one-off programs were used for the capital works budget at the expense of projects that would provide long-term recurrent savings.

The proposal to introduce an annual land tax on residential investment properties will, despite the suggestion of Mr Connolly, be a major expense for tenants in a tight rental market. We have the tightest rental market in Australia, Mr Speaker, and that, I would suggest, is going to cause Mr Connolly some problems in another part of his budget; but I am sure that he will find that out for himself.

In closing, as has already been said, this budget statement is lacking in vision. In this statement there is no vision or real facts to enable the community to start to see where our public accounts are going. Unfortunately, Mr Speaker, this is an attempt by a government in wonderland, and I trust that we will see some improvement in this process in the final budgetary statement; but I am afraid that I might be waiting for a long time.

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MR DUBY (3.51): Mr Speaker, today, 6 August, marks a milestone for the Government. I believe that it is the second anniversary of their term in government. They took government on 6 June, if I remember correctly; so today we have had two months of the second Follett Government, and already we are seeing a return to the famous Follettnomics that we experienced in 1989. This budget strategy statement which was put out by the Chief Minister, on behalf of her colleagues and herself, in my view is very long on words and very short on figures. Indeed, I would almost regard it as an exercise in the unsaid word. I was going to say "deceit", but I decided that that is not really appropriate. It really is an exercise in the unsaid word because, whilst it is long on rhetoric, it is very short on facts.

It does demonstrate, though, that again we in the ACT are going to have to experience a period in which we have people who do not really know what the heck they are doing on the treasury benches. From the tone and thrust of this document it is clear that the Follett technique of trying to grope with the problems facing the Territory is to do a fiddle with the numbers, and we are seeing that quite precisely because the capital works expenditure is being transferred. In my view, from what I can see - this is only from words, not figures, because we do not get many figures - the thrust of this statement seems to be that they are going to fiddle the capital works program to pay for the recurrent program. I think that is a disgraceful state of affairs.

In only 61 days this Government has already made some rather remarkable announcements. We all are familiar with things like the reopening of the Lyons and Cook schools. We do not agree with that; but that is a political decision, and the Government, in its wisdom and with its previous commitment to those programs, is quite entitled to reintroduce them. That is part of their political program. If they can find some way of funding that arrangement with the moneys available in the education budget or the whole budget generally, so be it.

But today we have heard some remarkable examples of what I regard as gross wastage of public expenditure by this Government. For example, we are going to have the Ainslie tip reopened at a cost of some hundreds of thousands of dollars of capital expenditure, not to mention expenditure in the order of some \$300,000 per annum forever and a day, if this Government has its way. Yet at the same time they announced that they cannot afford to fund a badly needed hospice in this community, which is long overdue and for which we had prudently provided.

At the same time we have also heard announcements - I notice that they are not mentioned here - about the excellent swimming facilities which were to be provided at Tuggeranong being downgraded so that we no longer will have an international standard pool. The Government has

announced that we can chip \$2.5m or \$3m out of there. Who cares about the people out there? As long as they have somewhere to jump in and get wet and as long as it is under cover, that will do. It will save \$3m there. We all know that money can be well spent at the beginning, as in all things in life. That ongoing project would attract trade and custom. There would therefore be an ongoing concern.

In 61 days we have had this document produced, plus the other insidious announcements that have been made. Why does this Government not have the guts to stand up and say quite categorically that they are not going to go ahead with the Civic Square redevelopment? Why do they have to sneak into paragraph 3, on page 12, the fact that they are going to spend a certain amount of money on the refurbishment of the North Building in Civic Square? Why do you not simply say, "We have looked at the figures, but they do not add up. We cannot get someone to take it on"?

Mr Berry: Ask a question tomorrow. Just ask a question.

MR DUBY: This has been out for three weeks, and this question has been asked in the media, and by me publicly in the past. Why do you not simply have the guts? Are you afraid? Coupled with the insidious attack that we have seen on the capital works program that was originally in place under, as I said, the prudent management of the previous Government, they have decided to slash that. They have decided to fiddle the books. They have decided to use a bit of Folletnomics and transfer capital funding into recurrent expenditure. Anybody who can read between the lines can see that that is exactly what this does - it takes money out of capital works and puts it into recurrent expenditure; it is as simple as that. You are taking out of the future of the Territory to pay for your current crazy ideas. Anybody who has the ear of the Chief Minister and who wants a particular project done, or undone for that matter, can have it achieved.

I am quite amazed about the Ainslie tip. Another example is the \$600,000 grant to hockey. I did not know that members of our Cabinet played hockey. Do they? I can only assume that it must be the case, because in the ACT we already had one of the best hockey facilities in the country. It is a grant, not a loan. I think this is remarkable, given the fact that this day it has been announced by Mr Berry that a badly needed hospice will not be proceeded with. That is a disgusting state of affairs. To tell you the truth, Mr Speaker, I am surprised that somewhere in here there is not an announcement that they are going to reconstruct the Casuarina Weir. With their phobia for reversing all possible attempts at sound financial management and sound environmental practices by the former Government, it is surprising that they have not tried to reverse that as well.

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Mr Speaker, I think this statement is an indication of what this Territory is in for with the coming budget. Frankly, as I said, it is very long on words but very short on figures. It is quite remarkable to be taking funds out of the capital works program but at the same time bemoaning the fact that we have a very high youth unemployment rate. For goodness sake, if you cut out the capital works, how are these kids going to get work as labourers, apprentice bricklayers, plumbers, electricians, et cetera?

Mr Connolly: The Opposition should talk to "Jed" Clampett. He is the bloke to fix their problems.

MR DUBY: No, I am not a Clampett; but I do know that the procedures that we had in place would have addressed this issue. So, what do we have? On the second last page the statement says that unemployment amongst youth is now 27.5 per cent. Shock! Horror! The Chief Minister says, "I do not know what to do. Please send your suggestions, and do not forget to put the stamp on the envelope". That is basically what it says. I think it is a very, very half-hearted attempt at facing the realities of life in the Territory. I frankly shudder at what we can expect when this Government brings down its full budget, because I know that it will be one that, when sensible economic management is again restored to the Territory, will take many, many years to overcome.

MR HUMPHRIES (4.00): Mr Speaker, I want to contribute to this debate because, by the sound of what Ms Follett said before, this may be the only chance I get to contribute to the budget strategy. I recall, Mr Speaker, a review of a book I once read which simply had three words. It said, "This slim volume". It seems to me, Mr Speaker, that that is an excellent review of the budget strategy statement that Ms Follett issued last month. It is a slim volume indeed. The substance is even shorter. The document is disappointingly vague. My colleagues in the Liberal Party and elsewhere have already, I think, fairly clearly articulated the shortcomings of the document.

I am as distressed by the lack of information as I am by some of the unclear and vague statements that are made in the document. There is one on page 8 that took my fancy, and I quote that one sentence. It says:

The Government will be considering future creative approaches to Canberra's urban form -

whatever that is -

not only to assist our budgetary position by using existing infrastructure better but also to improve environmental impacts through reduced dependence on private transport ...

et cetera, et cetera. I really do not understand a word of that. I am not going to bother to read any more of it, Mr Speaker, because I think it is as clear to me as it is to everybody else.

I think Ian Davis, in the *Canberra Times*, when reviewing this statement, described its vagueness and lack of detail as its strength because, in fact, only a government can make decisions about the important matters that supposedly the Follett Government was putting out for public consultation. Of course, he has a point there. Whether deceiving the public is a strength or not, I do not comment on; but I certainly think it is regrettable that one should pretend that one is actually getting a budgetary strategy worked out through this kind of bizarre process.

Mr DUBY has already drawn attention to the vague statements about youth unemployment. I cannot add much to what he has said about that. I am amazed, with all the criticism that was coming forward of the Alliance Government over the question of youth unemployment, that we should see such marked lack of detail, lack of answers, on the part of the new Follett Government. It was easy to criticise, of course; but now, when answers are required, when its own alternatives are needed, it is found lacking, and passing around the suggestion box is hardly a solution.

Mr Speaker, I am quite pleased to see that the Government intends to minimise borrowings. It is a very laudable aim, an aim shared with the Alliance Government; but, Mr Speaker, cuts in capital works are a poor way of achieving that. I think that, in particular, Mr Moore, who supported this particular measure, ought to realise that the cost of cutting capital works can be measured very much in human terms. The hospice is a very good example of that. It is also a very good example of taking short-term gain, that is, cutting from the capital works budget, for long-term pain.

The facilities which we do not build at this time or construct at this time in order to save money in this election budget will cost the Territory in terms of services in the long term, and I, for one, will be reminding the Labor Party in years to come, when particular facilities are found to be wanting, that those problems relate directly, in some cases, to the decisions it has made in this particular budget. I quote, for example, the decision not to proceed with the relocation of the Belconnen TAFE or the decision not to construct a new fire station in the Civic area. Those things, I think, will come home to haunt this Government.

The most glaring omission, however, Mr Speaker, in this document is obviously in the area of health services. Under a heading in the document at page 15, "Health", we see three short paragraphs which say, in effect, nothing about the important problems facing us in health. I quote:

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Concerns with the Hospital Redevelopment project have to be resolved ...

That is a remarkable statement! It continues:

The Government will be endeavouring to provide an array of quality services at affordable prices ...

et cetera, et cetera. That is another very vague statement. I have to say that that really is not good enough in the circumstances. Health is perhaps the single most important, most significant part of the ACT budget at the present time and, for reasons which are quite obvious to us all, questions in this area need to be answered very quickly. There are, in that respect, absolutely no answers in this document in the area of health, and anybody seeking to find solutions to those problems will have to look elsewhere.

Of course, we would all be somewhat more enlightened if the Government were to release the document which it now has in its possession and which I understand it has had in its possession for the last week - a document of great importance to the future of this Territory's health service but which continues to be suppressed by the Government. I sincerely hope that we can get some answers by the release of that document in the very near future, perhaps even this afternoon in the next ministerial statement.

Mr Speaker, some features of this document had a certain ring of familiarity about them. I see that Ms Follett promises a balanced budget. She promises to recognise and promote the role of the private sector, to minimise Territory borrowings and so on. I might quote just three short references concerning budgetary matters in terms of government goals. The first is "to promote the development of the private sector" in the ACT. The second goal is "to produce a balanced recurrent budget". The third goal is to minimise the Territory's borrowings.

Those are very laudable aims. But in fact, Mr Speaker, I am quoting not from the 1991 budget statement but from the 1990 budget statement which Mr Kaine released as Treasurer in March of last year. Of course the goals are very similar. For all their bluster, all their criticism, all their carping from the sidelines, it turns out that the basic budget strategy employed by the Follett Government, at least on paper, is exactly the same as that employed by the much criticised Alliance Government. We will have to get quite used to that kind of doubletalk.

In this budget strategy document we see that there is a recognition of the concept of a leaner bureaucracy. On page 10 Ms Follett says:

The Government recognises the community's call for a leaner bureaucracy and believes it can respond without affecting the delivery of direct services to the public ...

In other words, we can reduce the size of the public sector in the ACT, the ACT's own public sector. I want to remind the Assembly, Mr Speaker, that the Follett Opposition, as it then was, consistently and repeatedly associated reductions in the size of the public sector, the ACT's public sector, with reductions in the level of services. Any attempt made by the Alliance Government to reduce the number of public servants was seen as a reduction in the quality of services. Yet now Ms Follett says that the community is calling for a leaner bureaucracy and that some cuts in public service numbers are acceptable. All I can say is that once again we have seen doubletalk on a quite remarkable scale.

Mr Speaker, the cuts that we all know must be achieved in the size of the ACT public sector will have to be achieved, and they will not be achieved by anything outlined in this document. Random cuts, such as those to consultancy funds, to travel expenditure or to vehicle spending, are no way to produce a reasonably reduced public sector. There clearly needs to be a very clear, unambiguous, direct and forthright strategy to deal with this question, and it needs to be stated quite quickly because there is, unfortunately, little time in which the ACT can deal with these complex and long-term problems. There is no evidence of it here. Mr Jensen spoke about a five-year plan, and that is one solution to the problem. We have not seen anything in specific terms from the Government and I hope that that is rectified quite quickly.

I am disappointed, Mr Speaker, that the Stromlo High School accelerated closure decision has not been proceeded with. The Government appears to have set its face hard against the Alliance Government's school plans. They find it quite incomprehensible that there could actually be some people of goodwill out in the community who actually support our proposals for a particular school closure. And that is so in the case of Stromlo High; there are people out there who actually support our plan.

Now, those people are being told, for ideological reasons, "We are not going to support you; we are going to put to one side your call for government assistance to proceed with that closure plan, and therefore we are going to leave you in need of those restructuring funds necessary to get that particular project off the ground". It will save money, of course. Proceeding with the accelerated closure of the Holder campus of Stromlo High will certainly produce recurrent savings. It would produce recurrent savings, Mr Speaker; there is no doubt whatsoever of that. The people of Stromlo know it and I think that those opposite should know it as well.

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MS FOLLETT (Chief Minister and Treasurer) (4.10), in reply: I will briefly round off the debate. I would like to thank members for their contributions to this debate which, when you sweep aside the rhetoric, I think were constructively meant. I hope they were. I can only conclude, Mr Speaker, that the people opposite must forever remember the Labor Party in their prayers for having got them out of an impossible government situation. If you look at some of the contradictions that have been put forward in the debate this afternoon you will see that it is quite impossible for a group such as we have opposite to ever attempt to govern.

Mr Speaker, what have we heard on the question of the budget strategy statement? You heard Mr Kaine saying that he would not have done it at all; that there is no point in consulting; that it is a waste of time to ask people what they think; and that even when they tell you there is no point in listening to them. That is the Trevor Kaine school on consultancy - tell them nothing. On the other hand, Mr Speaker, Mr Collaery claimed the statement as his own; it is the budget strategy statement that he would have made had he remained in government. I find that simply extraordinary but not untypical of members opposite.

There is another fairly fundamental difference of opinion here. Mr Kaine is urging on me his slash and burn techniques of budget management - close things down; take what he calls all the hard decisions. On the other hand, Mr Collaery is urging us to borrow our way out of budget difficulties - Bankcard Bernard, as he has been dubbed over here - in order to make good on his own \$6m promises on new policy proposals. Again I fail to see how the difference between the previous Chief Minister and the previous Deputy Chief Minister could ever have been resolved except by their going out of government. As I say, they ought to be grateful.

Mr Speaker, Mr DUBY raised a few interesting issues, mainly relating to his own Government's draft capital works budget. He called into question some of the things which were in fact included in his own draft capital works budget. So, either he has not read his own draft capital works budget or else he disagreed entirely with what eventually went forward in that draft. He also drew attention, Mr Speaker, to the swimming pool at Tuggeranong and implied that what was intended to be provided by the Labor Government was not of a suitable national standard. That is quite untrue. The swimming facility that we are planning to build there will meet all of the requirements, but we will meet them at a slightly reduced cost from the very inflated figure that the previous Government had put forward.

Mr Speaker, the capital works budget, which a number of members alluded to, has gone to the appropriate Assembly committee for detailed scrutiny, and I expect that the Assembly will be hearing from that committee in due course. So, there are a number of issues in there that there is a further opportunity to debate.

Mr Humphries made some quite extraordinary comments about the relative merits of the public sector. Mr Humphries was the man who, as Minister for Health and Education, did everything in his power to reduce the public sector in both of those spheres and to impose upon the community a requirement to move into private education and private health, and he cannot deny that.

Mr Humphries also made reference to the amalgamation of the Holder and Waramanga high schools to Stromlo High School, and he has berated me for failing to accelerate his plans to amalgamate those two schools onto one campus. Mr Speaker, what he has not mentioned is that the accelerated plan would, firstly, have cost \$2m. I do not know where Mr Humphries was planning to get the \$2m from. Secondly, it would have involved the erection on the Stromlo campus of seven demountable classrooms. What kind of an improved educational outcome is that for the children moving? Mr Speaker, I think that our reversal of the acceleration decision, not of the amalgamation - a reversal of the acceleration - was taken with the best interests of both of those schools in mind, and I will not depart from it.

Mr Speaker, to conclude: I am grateful to members for their comments, but I think they should recognise that this is not the budget. It is a strategy statement. If you like, it is a progress statement on the formation of the budget. When the budget itself is framed there will be, of course, other opportunities for members to comment in greater detail. That process will probably take up a good period of the remainder of the life of this Assembly.

The budget of a Labor Government will be different, and you must expect it to be different, from the budget of a Liberal, Alliance, or any other sort of government. I am quite sure that Mr Kaine will recognise that. I am quite sure that members generally will recognise it. Whilst there may be a good deal of heated debate about exactly what is in that budget, you have to recognise that not all budgets are the same and that the Labor budget will be concentrating on social justice measures, as we have repeatedly said, on no reduction in services to the community, and on achieving a balanced and responsible budget.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

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**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
1989-90 Annual Report**

MR BERRY (Minister for Health and Minister for Sport): Mr Speaker, for the information of members I present the 1989-90 annual report of the Department of Health, which was released when the Assembly was not sitting, on 8 July 1991, and move:

That the Assembly takes note of the paper.

Debate (on motion by **Mr Humphries**) adjourned.

**NATIONAL EXHIBITION CENTRE TRUST ACT
Direction**

MR CONNOLLY (Attorney-General, Minister for Housing and Community Services and Minister for Urban Services): Mr Speaker, for the information of members, I table a direction made by me this day, pursuant to section 6 of the National Exhibition Centre Trust Act 1976, in relation to arms exhibitions at the Natex Centre. This matter will be the subject of an MPI later this afternoon.

**SPECIAL PREMIERS CONFERENCE
Ministerial Statement and Paper**

MS FOLLETT (Chief Minister and Treasurer), by leave: Mr Speaker, on 30 July 1991 I attended the second Special Premiers Conference in Sydney. These conferences bring together the heads of government of the Commonwealth, States and Territories of Australia, as well as representatives of local government. At the first Special Premiers Conference, held in Brisbane last year, leaders and representatives agreed on a wide-ranging agenda for reviewing and reforming intergovernmental relations, with the objective of developing a more efficient and competitive economy. I believe that the July conference was most successful in working towards this objective.

Mr Speaker, I would like to provide members with a brief description of the various outcomes of the conference before discussing the particular significance of certain outcomes for the ACT. The main focus of the July conference was on areas of micro-economic reform, and on moves towards a single national economy. Important agreements were achieved in the following major areas: First, agreement was reached on the establishment of a National Road Transport Commission as the focal point of a national scheme for heavy vehicle registration, regulation and charging. This is designed to overcome the major problems which exist in relation to road transport, particularly the problems caused by varying regulations across the country, and charging systems which fail to

recover the full costs of road usage. I was one of the signatories to an intergovernmental agreement relating to the establishment of the commission.

Agreement was also reached on the establishment of Australia's first National Rail Corporation. This will ensure, for the first time, that Australia has a single company responsible for interstate rail freight across the country. By operating on a commercial basis, the corporation will become an efficient and competitive alternative carrier to road transport.

Another important area of micro-economic reform is the establishment of a National Grid Management Council. This will provide an effective planning base for the efficient and environmentally sound operation of the electricity industry in eastern and southern Australia. Competitive efficiencies will be gained by allowing electricity to be purchased from any source within the grid.

A further important agreement reached by leaders and representatives in relation to the improved efficiency of the economy concerns the rationalisation of regulatory activities undertaken by different governments. In particular, it was agreed that, to ensure effective interstate mobility of goods and labour, mutual recognition should apply where uniform national standards are not essential. This will enable goods or occupations which meet standards set in one jurisdiction to be recognised elsewhere.

In addition to micro-economic reforms, another area of major importance considered by the conference relates to the provision of programs and services to the community. In this area, heads of government reaffirmed the commitment, made at last year's conference in Brisbane, to improving the way in which programs and services are delivered by reducing overlap and duplication between the different levels of government. In particular, a detailed agreement was signed on the rationalisation of roles and responsibilities for disability services.

In future, the Commonwealth will assume responsibility for employment-related services for people with disabilities, with the States and Territories having responsibility for accommodation and support services. The two levels of government will coordinate the strategic planning of their respective services. The objective of this reform is to ensure that services are delivered to people with disabilities in a more coordinated and efficient manner. Reports on reviews of other programs and services will be provided to the next Special Premiers Conference, to be held in November this year in Perth.

Mr Speaker, the communique from the July conference describes in detail the outcomes of discussions at the conference. For the information of the Assembly, I table a copy of the communique.

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Mr Speaker, I should point out that, in addition to the consideration of reports on the functional reviews at the November Special Premiers Conference, that conference will address the crucial issue of reforming intergovernmental financial arrangements, including issues relating to taxation powers and the extent of tied grants. I am sure that none of us underestimate the challenges which lie ahead in these areas.

However, as a participant in discussions at the July conference, it was most encouraging for me to note the extent to which heads of government and representatives of local government were prepared to consider the various issues in a cooperative spirit and from a national perspective, rather than confining their outlook to the interests of individual jurisdictions or levels of government. I see this willingness as a favourable indication for the success of future conferences, and particularly for tackling the major financial issues I have mentioned.

Mr Speaker, my commitment to promoting intergovernmental cooperation has been evident since my first term of office as Chief Minister. At that time I started a process with the Commonwealth, New South Wales and local governments in the areas surrounding the ACT, which recognised that all these levels of government need to work in a cooperative and consultative manner in order to achieve coordinated delivery of government services in the region.

This approach continues to be an important means of promoting the well-being of the ACT and surrounding region, as is evidenced by the recent release of a draft regional economic development strategy. In this context, Mr Speaker, I should pay tribute to my predecessor, Mr Trevor Kaine, for his efforts in furthering regional initiatives. Indeed, in achieving cooperative working arrangements between the various levels of government, it is essential to put aside political differences and gain bipartisan support, as was seen around the conference table in Sydney last week.

Mr Speaker, the ACT stands to gain from all the national agreements which were reached at the July conference, but I should like to mention three areas which are of particular significance to the ACT. Firstly, I was delighted to be able to secure a place for us on the National Grid Management Council. The policies adopted by the council will have a direct impact on the future costs of supply to consumers - including consumers in the ACT - and I considered it most important that we should have a voice in determining access to the grid and the operation of the council. Our membership is also important in ensuring that there is some balance on the council between State utilities and consumers with no generating capacity, such as ourselves.

Turning to the reviews of human services, I believe that these are a particularly important issue from an ACT perspective and provide a national focus for addressing ways in which we can deliver better services to the community. In promoting effective and coordinated working arrangements between the different levels of government, I consider it essential to ensure that the interests and concerns of the community are addressed. Only then can the objectives of new federalism be translated into practical reforms which improve people's daily lives. At my instigation the communique from the July conference reflects the need for effective community consultation to take place as an important part of the review process.

Mr Speaker, the ACT also has a particular role to play in relation to the reforms of heavy vehicle registration, regulation and charging. This role relates to the way in which legislation can be implemented to set up the National Road Transport Commission. Through their signature to the agreement relating to the commission, the other parties to the agreement have asked us to agree to have legislation enacted in the ACT, which would then be adopted by other jurisdictions. This would be achieved by our agreeing to allow the Commonwealth to use its constitutional power to legislate in the ACT.

While this would create particular circumstances for the ACT, I should emphasise that in all other respects our participation in the scheme would be on an equal basis with other jurisdictions. For example, our voting rights on the ministerial council which will oversee the national scheme would be equivalent to those of New South Wales or Victoria. In agreeing to the approach I have described, it would also be necessary to ensure that certain safeguards were put in place to protect our distinctive position. For example, in view of our geographical location, I believe that it would be essential to make our agreement conditional upon New South Wales becoming and remaining a participant in the commission.

Mr Speaker, as I have already indicated, the establishment of a National Road Transport Commission is a major area of reform which will lead to the increased efficiency of the road transport system. Together with the other jurisdictions, we stand to gain real benefits from those efficiencies. But the proposed approach also provides an opportunity for us in the ACT to make a unique contribution to the reform process. Perhaps most significantly, it allows us to gain recognition as a self-governing territory in the eyes of other jurisdictions, at a time when we are still at a relatively early stage of self-government.

For these reasons, Mr Speaker, I consider it important that we take the step of agreeing to the legislative implementation of the scheme through a parliamentary process, and that the Assembly resolve to adopt the approach that I have described.

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Mr Speaker, I seek leave, on that note, to move the motion which has been circulated in relation to the statement.

Leave granted.

MS FOLLETT: I thank members. I will be very brief in speaking to the motion because I do not think it comes as news to members. Members, I think we should be aware here that in voting on this motion we are in fact taking part in a national reform process. It is a very important process. It is a process which has real benefits for other States and for the ACT. The benefits would, of course, come by way of much greater regulation and much fairer charging in relation to heavy road transport use. I am aware that all of the States except the Northern Territory approved of this reform package. Members should be aware of that largely bipartisan support for it.

Mr Speaker, I would be the last person in the world ever to depart from a position of supporting strenuously the sovereignty of the Australian Capital Territory. On the surface this invitation to the Commonwealth to legislate on our behalf would be such a departure. But I think that, in view of our quite unique position in relation to the Constitution and the fact that we have been called upon by all the States party to this agreement to take this course of action, it might be appropriate for the Assembly to put aside issues of sovereignty and instead to put in their place the issue of a much needed national reform. Mr Speaker, I commend the motion to the Assembly. I know that the Attorney-General, Mr Connolly, will be speaking to this issue and will outline the legal framework in which I am asking the Assembly to operate.

Mr Kaine: Mr Speaker, I am not clear. I do not think that the Chief Minister moved any kind of motion, in connection with either her statement or the document that she has tabled. I think that both of them have a great deal of substance which perhaps the Assembly ought to have an opportunity to debate after consideration. If she has moved that they be noted, then I move that the debate on those two matters be adjourned.

MR SPEAKER: I will clarify that. The Chief Minister did in fact seek leave but did not move the motion. I was going to catch up on that, but thank you for your advice. Chief Minister, would you clarify that and move the motion. Then we can go back to Mr Kaine.

MS FOLLETT: My apologies, Mr Speaker. I move:

That the Assembly -

- (1) notes -
 - (a) that on 30 July 1991 the Chief Minister, on behalf of the Australian Capital Territory, signed an Agreement between the Commonwealth, the States and the Territory relating to the establishment of a co-operative scheme to improve road safety and transport efficiency and reduce the cost of administration of road transport;
 - (b) that the Agreement envisages that, with the consent of the Australian Capital Territory, the Commonwealth will seek to enact Commonwealth Road Transport Legislation for the Australian Capital Territory which law will be the model on which the pertinent law of the States will be based.
- (2) consents to the making, by the Commonwealth, of a law for the Australian Capital Territory which is necessary to give effect to the Agreement.

Mr Kaine: I am not sure that that clarifies it, Mr Speaker. The Treasurer did indicate that she was moving the motion that has to do with the Commonwealth legislation, but I am suggesting - - -

MS FOLLETT: Mr Speaker, can I also move to take note of the paper? Can I move both of those motions?

MR SPEAKER: We will have to do them one at a time, basically. The motion that was circulated in your name, I understand, relates to national heavy vehicle regulation. That is the one we are speaking to at the moment, Mr Kaine; so would you like to adjourn that debate.

Mr Kaine: Mr Speaker, perhaps I can just take a point of order so that I do not disturb orderly debate. As I said, it seems to me that the Chief Minister's statement and the communique from the Special Premiers Conference both contain a great deal of rather weighty material which, I think, some members of the Assembly might want to go into a little more deeply, and I would like to move that the debate on those two documents be adjourned. The motion in connection with regulation, I agree, is an important matter that we should proceed to debate now, if that is the will of the Assembly. I will reserve my comments on that until I know whether it is the intention of the Assembly to go ahead with the debate now.

MR SPEAKER: I would assume that it was intended to go ahead with that debate on regulation at this time.

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MR KAINE (Leader of the Opposition) (4.32): In connection with the motion moved by the Chief Minister relating to national heavy vehicle regulation, the Chief Minister has alluded to the fact that this is a little unusual in that we seem, on this occasion, to be inviting the Commonwealth to legislate specifically for the Territory. Given the position that we have adopted until now, which is specifically that the Commonwealth should bow out of the ACT and not legislate for it, it is an unusual departure.

But I support the proposal in this case, having attended the first Special Premiers Conference and being aware of the background of why this is required to enable the Commonwealth to set the standards under which the States and the Northern Territory will go into this regulation of heavy vehicles. I accept that there is justification in this case for inviting the Commonwealth to legislate as is here proposed. Speaking for the Liberals in the Opposition, Mr Speaker, we would not oppose the proposal put forward by the Chief Minister on this matter.

MR COLLAERY (4.34): Mr Speaker, as a matter of form, I would ask that, where the Leader of the Liberal Opposition moves an adjournment of a debate, you make sure that no-one else seeks the call because there will be an exclusion on this side of the house constantly if there is no prior communication of those decisions.

Mr Kaine: There is no exclusion. It will be debated.

MR COLLAERY: This side of the house might like to know whether those moves are going to be taken. Mr Speaker, I just foreshadow the fact that we are getting to the basic problem of the fictional notion that there is a Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Moore: Ha, ha!

MR COLLAERY: The Labor surrogate, Mr Moore, laughs, of course. Mr Speaker, the motion that Ms Follett has moved is not in the terms that I anticipated. One should recall that the Federal Government, without consultation with this Assembly, used applied law in the Territory to set up the national companies and securities regime. It legislated over our heads. It passed an Act after self-government. There is an Act of this Territory, made by the Commonwealth, in relation to companies and securities. We were specifically excluded - actually excluded - from the room when that was negotiated, and the Commonwealth used its power under section 122 of the Constitution to do it. So, it could do this, whether we assent to this motion or not. One should bear that in mind.

Ms Follett has asked this Assembly to support the making of a law consonant with an agreement, the text of which I have not seen and has not been circulated to this Assembly. There has been sufficient publicity about it for us to understand basically what it is about and there have been some comments from Ms Follett. I would think this may happen again. It will happen because the Commonwealth does not have exclusive power in a whole lot of other constitutional areas and needs to use one of the territories as its basis for model legislation where it does not have exclusive power.

As a matter of form, I would suggest that the Chief Minister develop an understanding with her Attorney that, firstly, the agreement to form the basis of any States applied legislation be tabled in this Assembly so that we know what the terms are. I ask whether that could be tabled and whether it is possible to table it now, so that we know exactly what we are agreeing to. Secondly, the consent of this Assembly is to the making by the Commonwealth of a law to give effect to the agreement.

I believe that the motion should also call upon the Attorney or the Chief Minister, as the case may be, to ensure that the draft model legislation is seen by this Assembly. We are giving a blank cheque. I trust that members understand, but I believe that we are dealing in good faith and I am confident that the Chief Minister knows what is in the Commonwealth's mind. But I do warn her that there was a degree of non-consultation, a degree of quite obstructionist tactics, when the companies and securities model legislation was introduced through the territories power.

I would foreshadow an addition to the motion - I will ask my colleague Mr Jensen to move it - which would effectively require the Assembly to see the model draft. The amendment would call upon the Assembly to consent to the making by the Commonwealth of a draft law in the terms approved by the ACT Government and for the Australian Capital Territory to give effect to the agreement. I would require that the Chief Minister of this Territory see the terms of the law to be applied and would require that of the Commonwealth Parliament.

Mr Berry: That is different from what you told me when we negotiated this issue.

MR COLLAERY: Mr Speaker, I take great exception to Mr Berry's interjection. I have not seen this motion before. I cannot see why there would be a problem in the Chief Minister wanting to see a draft of the Bill. I am sure the Attorney would get a draft. I am positive. We should, as an Assembly, make sure that we see a draft if we are giving effect to it. That is a minor amendment, and I resent the imputation from Mr Berry that we are somehow reneging on an arrangement.

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Mr Speaker, the Rally supports this momentous agreement. We congratulate the Chief Minister on being party to something that breaks down nearly 90 years of dislocation in the country and we support the commonality that the Commonwealth seeks.

MS FOLLETT (Chief Minister and Treasurer) (4.39), in reply: Mr Speaker, it seems that we can dispose of this matter quickly; so I will not unnecessarily delay the Assembly. I thank members for their support of the motion which I have heard. Mr Speaker, may I, firstly, in answer to Mr Collaery's comments, table for the information of members a copy of the agreement that was reached at the Special Premiers Conference.

Mr Collaery also raised the point that, in his view, the Commonwealth could take this action anyway, and possibly he is quite correct. But I would like to state categorically that, before agreeing to the proposal made by the Commonwealth, I made it a condition that they would proceed on a motion from this Assembly. I think that is the right and proper course of action. We are a parliament in our own right. I believe it appropriate that the Commonwealth, on this occasion, be invited by this Assembly to legislate as they wish to do, but I do not believe it appropriate that they should use whatever rights they have in an arbitrary or unilateral fashion. So, I have made it a condition, as I say, that this Assembly consider the issue and vote upon it.

I thank members for their support. As I have said, it is a very important reform package and it will indeed have great benefits for the ACT and for other States. I will be ensuring, to the best of my abilities, in future negotiations on this, that the position of the ACT is well and truly protected and that our rights in relation to the scheme are the equal of those of other States. I think it is important that we have taken the step that we have, because that will assist in the recognition of the ACT's rights. It is, after all, only through our action that the other States are able to take advantage of this reform package. I thank members for their support. I believe that it is very important that the support has been gained through a parliamentary process of this Assembly. Again, I believe that it does in fact protect the position of the ACT and the sovereignty of our Territory.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Motion (by **Ms Follett**) proposed:

That the Assembly takes note of the paper.

Debate (on motion by **Mr Kaine**) adjourned.

WAGES POLICY - GOVERNMENT SERVICE
Ministerial Statement

MR BERRY (Minister for Health and Minister for Sport) (4.42): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement in relation to wages policy to apply in the ACT Government Service.

Leave granted.

MR BERRY: I wish to inform members of the Assembly of the approach this Government is taking to the setting of wages for employees of the ACT Government Service. It is timely that the Government puts its policy approach on this matter on the public record. Officials from the ACT Trades and Labour Council and from unions covering our employees have sought clarification of the Government's position, and members of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission have also raised the matter in recent proceedings.

Mr Speaker, before I enunciate the Government's wages policy, it is important that Assembly members understand the composition of the ACT Government Service. In short, about half of the staff of the ACT Government Service continue to be employed under the Public Service Act. Because of this, the wages policy which applies to half our public service is what is applied to the area of Commonwealth employment by the Federal Government. For as long as these employment arrangements remain in place - the Follett Labor Government presently sees no reason for changing them, and certainly not in the short term - the arguments are compelling for this Government to adopt the same approach for the balance of the ACT Government Service, that is, for those who are employed under territorial legislation.

It should be noted that a significant number of territorial employees are in categories and salary structures which directly reflect those which apply in the Australian Public Service. Even where there are classification structures that are unique to the ACT Government Service, equity and efficiency in overall public administration dictate that, to the extent practicable, there be consistency of treatment and benefits for all staff of the ACT Government Service.

Mr Speaker, let me now turn to what is happening with the wages policy which applies to the Australian Public Service. The Federal Government has decided to honour the agreement it has with the ACTU and to apply that agreement, known as Accord Mark VI, to the area of Commonwealth employment. I should remind Assembly members that the Accord Mark VI agreement provides for \$12 payable from 16 May in return for a commitment to continue the process of award restructuring; three wage increases from September 1991 and March and September 1992 - these increases will be

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strictly conditional on demonstrated productivity achievements and the amounts of the increases will have regard to a market rates survey - and a no extra claims provision for the life of the agreement.

In announcing this agreement in May the Federal Minister for Industrial Relations, Senator Peter Cook, pointed out that it had been 12 months since the majority of employees in the Australian Public Service received their last increase. In the light of the public sector unions' commitment to the agreement, the Federal Government considered that payment of the \$12 was warranted at that stage. Further, the Federal Government, as an employer, had made important gains through structural efficiency in the Australian Public Service, and the public sector unions had given firm undertakings about its continued implementation at the workplace level. Any further increases negotiated as part of the package would be based on achieved productivity.

Mr Speaker, against that background the ACT Government's decision about the application of the Accord Mark VI to the balance of the ACT Government Service, that is, those who are not employed under the Public Service Act, has been a simple one. The ACT Government has therefore decided to embark on negotiations with the ACT Trades and Labour Council with a view to concluding similar framework agreements covering non-APS staff in the ACT Government Service. In return for the same wage adjustments, the Government will require comparable commitments from the unions to continue the structural reform process, and to productivity bargaining as the basis for wage increases.

As regards the ACT Government's business enterprises, the Government would expect that separate workplace agreements would be developed that would reflect their commercial identities and maximise the opportunities to improve their effectiveness and competitiveness. Despite the support across the industrial relations spectrum for the facilitation of new forms of enterprise bargaining, the Australian Industrial Relations Commission in its national wage decision in April refused to authorise a move to a more decentralised system.

Mr Speaker, the ACT Government, therefore, has problems with this aspect of the national wage case decision, and prefers instead to proceed with the approach embodied in the accord as providing an appropriate framework for gearing wage fixation to the ongoing process of structural reforms. This is essential to ensure that we maximise the chances and the benefits of economic recovery. However, despite its dissatisfaction with aspects of the commission's decision, the Government sees the commission continuing to play an important and continuing role as the decentralised wages system evolves. The availability of enterprise bargaining does not mean the end of centralised or industry level processes. In particular, a decentralised system needs to be supported by the

application generally of minimum standards of wages and employment conditions, and occupational health and safety standards and practices. These can be effectively secured only by the central conciliation and arbitration authority.

Mr Speaker, the ACT Government Service faces a severe challenge as the Government grapples with the difficulties of delivering its budget strategy. If we are to live within our means while maintaining the excellence of our public service, reform and restructuring will be necessary. While structural reform will need to reach into every area of our public sector, the change process will vary from agency to agency and from workplace to workplace. The agreements to facilitate the workplace productivity bargaining processes which are integral to Accord Mark VI will underpin the necessary structural readjustments in the ACT public sector.

The active cooperation of the Trades and Labour Council and the public service unions will be vital in managing the essential changes in a harmonious way. As the Minister responsible for industrial relations, I look forward to working closely with the unions to achieve these objectives. Implementation of the approach embodied in the accord is a further important step down the road to reforming our public sector. Mr Speaker, I present the following paper:

Wages policy - Government Service - Ministerial statement, 6 August 1991.

I move:

That the Assembly takes note of the paper.

Debate (on motion by **Mr Collaery**) adjourned.

**HOSPITALS REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT - ACTON COMMUNITY HOSPITAL
FEASIBILITY STUDY
Ministerial Statement**

MR BERRY (Minister for Health and Minister for Sport) (4.50): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement on the hospitals redevelopment project, the Acton community hospital feasibility study.

Leave granted.

MR BERRY: This is a very important statement and before I go into the body of it I think I need to refer to a statement that was made by Mr Stevenson earlier in relation to what he described as Labor's promise to keep the hospital open.

Mr Stevenson: Yes, indeed.

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MR BERRY: Mr Stevenson needs to make sure that when he spreads the word in his electorate he spreads the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help him; there should be no half-truths or misinformation. What he needs to tell the community as he moves around is that Labor promised in 1989 to keep the Royal Canberra Hospital open but not in the state that it had always been in - with a reduced bed capacity and a very different hospital from that which existed before Labor's plan. That is one point.

The second point that Mr Stevenson needs to make sure he tells those people with whom he communicates is that Labor's policy, which has been enunciated on many occasions, is that there ought to be or that there will be, under a Labor Government, health facilities on the Acton Peninsula.

Mr Stevenson: That is a vast difference between a hospital.

MR BERRY: Mr Stevenson interjects and says, "That is a vast difference between a hospital". He ought not argue that Labor promised to keep the Royal Canberra Hospital as it was.

Mr Stevenson: I did not say that, for a start. Why don't you get your facts straight?

MR BERRY: We will just make sure that you have all of the facts straight and then you can spread them.

Now, going to the body of my statement, Mr Speaker, immediately on returning to government I commissioned a study to look at options for possible hospital facilities on the Acton Peninsula. We did that because we were concerned about the level of damage which had been done to our hospital system in the 18 months of the Alliance Government. We had to make sure, Mr Speaker, of what was available for salvage from the hospital system which the Alliance Government had left behind.

I also did this because of the concern we had as a Government about the anxiety and the confusion within the community caused by the Alliance Government's hospital redevelopment program. We were aware, for instance, that some 46,000 citizens had signed a petition seeking to retain the Royal Canberra Hospital at Acton. That has been swelled today by another couple of thousand signatures. We were also concerned about the accuracy and validity of some of the costings used by the Alliance Government to justify their chosen course of action.

The study was conducted by a project team consisting of ACT Government officers and consultants, Richard Glenn and Associates. The feasibility study was oversighted by a steering committee of independent experts who had no previous association with the project. The steering committee was chaired by Dr John Campbell, the Chief

Executive of the Southern Sydney Area Health Service. Other members were Mr John Turner, Acting Chief Executive of the Board of Health; Mr Graham Rogers, a finance expert from the University of Canberra; and Mr Humphry McGrath, a health expert from South Australia.

The feasibility study terms of reference required that a range of best service/least cost options for possible hospital facilities on the Acton site be examined. So, it was no small task. It was never a small task. And, of course, they were given a tight timeframe in which to consider these issues. Mr Speaker, I have now received the feasibility report and it is currently being considered by the Government.

Mr Kaine: I wish we had. Can we have a copy of it, Wayne?

MR BERRY: If you had been in government you could have, but you are not.

Mr Kaine: We will come up on the fifth floor, if that is all it takes.

MR BERRY: You are quite welcome to walk in any time, Trevor, which is quite different from the circumstances that existed when you were in government. You can have a cup of tea. We take care of our old mates.

Mr Speaker, in considering the results of the study and assessing a strategy for the future, the Government will give prime consideration to the importance of providing a comprehensive and high quality hospital system for the people of Canberra. In meeting the highest priority needs of the community, the Government is committed to social justice and to providing accessible and affordable health care.

You will be aware of the problems we have inherited with the health budget and the reality of the need to contain both capital and ongoing costs. You are also aware of the criticism that the ACT health system has received in the past. We have a very real opportunity now to reconsider the longer-term provision of hospital services in the ACT. The Government will be endeavouring to provide the highest quality services at affordable capital and recurrent costs. It will be doing so amidst a variety of pressures to provide new and expanded services. Given the importance of the outcome, the Government will not be rushed into a decision without proper consideration of the issues. Cabinet, of course, will be considering this matter before I make the statement, and I will be making a substantive statement to the Assembly on this issue next week.

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I present the following paper:

Hospitals Redevelopment Project - Acton Community Hospital Feasibility Study - Ministerial statement, 6 August 1991.

I move:

That the Assembly takes note of the paper.

MR HUMPHRIES (4.57): Mr Speaker, I have to say that I find this statement pathetically weak and inappropriate in the present circumstances that the ACT public hospital system finds itself in. Mr Kaine described it as a statement you have when you are not having a statement, and that was dead accurate. It is. I asked Mr Berry in question time today whether the report was available - in fact, I assumed that it was, based on the information that has come to me - and I said, "Will he be prepared to table it straightaway in this Assembly for the benefit of members of the Assembly and of the public of the ACT?".

Mr Wood: Just as you would have done!

MR HUMPHRIES: Just as I would have done. Mr Berry, first of all, has not told the public of the ACT, unlike anything I ever did in government, that he had the report in the first place. He has kept that secret. Do not shake your head, Mr Berry; you have told nobody about it, except presumably your colleagues. There has been no attempt to reveal the existence of that document. There has been no attempt to table that document or to give any indication of the contents of that document.

This is particularly reprehensible, given the critical stage the hospital redevelopment of this Territory is now in. We have reached a vital pass in that redevelopment. Already for some time the renal unit's transfer has been held up because of the Government's prevarication. We now have other critical moves to take place very shortly, particularly in relation to Calvary Hospital's operation, which have been held up for some time, which now ought to proceed, and which cannot proceed while the Government continues to sit on this report and keep it secret.

What happened, Mr Speaker, to open and consultative government? If this is an options paper - things the Government might be able to do if it is of a mind to do so - why cannot we see it now? We are going to see it presumably when it is tabled. Why cannot we see it now? Presumably, Mr Speaker, the desire of the Government to provide the Opposition and others in the Assembly, and in the public, with information extends only as far as it is in the Government's interest to do so. If we are going to see this in the future, it makes a mockery of the claim that this is an open and consultative government. I have had no consultation with the present Government on any substantive issue since it came to power, and I think that

we can expect much more of that in the coming months. What a farce it is to say that this is an open and consultative government. It certainly is not.

Mr Speaker, that document ought to be a public document. It ought to be released as soon as possible. I think the Government is to be condemned for its secrecy on this matter, as it is to be condemned for its secrecy with respect to that report in relation to the Ambulance Service which it received a few days ago. If it is going to make itself in any way credible on that question about being open, it ought to release that document, make it available to the people of the ACT, and then get on with the decision it has to make about the future of this ACT public hospital system.

DR KINLOCH (5.00): Mr Speaker, I would like to endorse the bulk of Mr Humphries' remarks. I also would like to see this report as soon as possible. I welcomed Mr Berry's comments about taking care of his friends. Perhaps he could give us a call and let us know when the document will be ready. We would like to see it, preferably tonight or first thing in the morning.

MR BERRY (Minister for Health and Minister for Sport) (5.01), in reply: There are just a few issues that I would like to raise arising from those speeches. I have to say that I was quite surprised by the hypocrisy that Mr Humphries demonstrated in relation to the release of plans and reports. I take this Assembly back to the preparation of the functional plan for the hospital redevelopment project. The functional plan was required in the normal course of events before one could develop the development plan. Unfortunately, it appears that the functional plan did not match the Government's development plan; so the functional plan, it seems, was delayed and it never saw the light of day. But, most importantly, the master development control plan was not released either.

Mr Humphries: It was not ready yet; that is why.

MR BERRY: He complains about Labor's reassessment of a hospital system for which two very important plans were, in his day, kept secret. Now, the report before the Government is one for government consideration. It perhaps explains why Mr Humphries has been turfed out of the Leader of the Opposition position when he suggests that these reports - important reports, I should add - be released before the Government considers them. Obviously, the preselectors in the Liberal Party have recognised his inability to cope with these important government strategies and operations of government. The important issue, of course, is that the Government will consider it, and it will consider it carefully.

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He also raised the issue of the renal unit; he complained about that and how it might hold up the whole process. In fact, the renal unit is an important part of the Royal Canberra Hospital site and if a Residents Rally policy was to be considered amongst the options the renal unit had to stay there. A Residents Rally policy was considered among the options, so I do not know why the Residents Rally is whingeing. In relation to the review, it was a review of all of the information that is well known. If Mr Humphries had wanted to make a submission in relation to it, it would have reached those reviewing the hospital redevelopment plan.

Mr Humphries: I did not want to make a submission; I want to see the result.

MR BERRY: There was nothing to consult on because I was not conducting the review; a team was.

Mr Humphries: You could have told them to consult.

MR BERRY: I did not have a request from you. It is a bit late to start whingeing now. It is all over. In any event, the Government will consider the matter closely and I will announce its decision next week. We will press on from there with the provision of quality hospital services that are accessible to all people in the ACT across the board.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

MR HUMPHRIES: Mr Speaker, I seek leave to make a personal explanation under standing order 46.

MR SPEAKER: Do you claim to have been misrepresented?

MR HUMPHRIES: Yes, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER: Please proceed.

MR HUMPHRIES: Mr Speaker, Mr Berry implied, in his comments about his cover-up of the document that we were debating just a moment ago, that his failure to release that document to the public gaze or to members of the Assembly can be justified on the basis that I similarly covered up other documents. Mr Speaker, the fact of life is that the documents to which Mr Berry referred - the master development control plan and the functional plan of the hospital redevelopment - at the time he sought them, were not available because they were not yet ready. The documents were not in existence. The document that we debated just a moment ago is in existence. It has been in existence for more than a week and ought to have been presented to this Assembly and to the public. There is a very clear distinction, and I think Mr Berry should acknowledge his obligation and release it forthwith.

BROPHO DECISION
Ministerial Statement

MR CONNOLLY (Attorney-General, Minister for Housing and Community Services and Minister for Urban Services): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement on the Bropho decision of the High Court and the extent to which the ACT Crown will be bound by statute law.

Leave granted.

MR CONNOLLY: Thank you. Mr Speaker, I say at the outset that I am not tabling a copy of this speech; I am adopting a practice. It would have been noted in question time this afternoon that the Labor Party did not take advantage of question time to ask itself dorothy dix questions. When we have an important matter to state to the Assembly we will state it in a ministerial statement. We were repeatedly critical of the former Government for taking up the time of question time when there should have been ministerial statements.

I therefore will briefly be advising the Assembly in the appropriate manner, in the time of ministerial statements, of an important decision that the Government has taken which, while not perhaps noteworthy to the general press, is something that the Assembly ought nevertheless be interested in. I am sure that the former Attorney and any lawyers in the Assembly particularly would be interested. The subject is the extent to which the Crown, the ACT Government, is bound by its own statute law.

Last year the High Court, in a landmark decision, in the decision *Bropho v. State of Western Australia*, held that the old common law rule that the Crown is presumed not to be bound by statute can no longer be relied upon, and that any court will, in future decisions - that is, decisions looking at Acts passed after the Bropho decision - look individually at the circumstances and divine whether or not the Crown is to be bound by statute. That somewhat confuses the question of the extent to which a government is bound by its own laws.

This is a subject on which perhaps it could have been hoped that the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General could have come to a uniform approach so that all governments would take the same view on whether or not they are bound by their own statutes, but unfortunately agreement was not possible. Some States, Queensland and Tasmania, are taking a very restrictive view and relying on provisions in their Acts Interpretation Act to say that no Act will ever be binding on the Crown unless it expressly says that it is.

The ACT Government has considered this matter and has adopted as a general policy that we will, in all future legislation where appropriate, bind the Crown. We will look at it on a case by case basis. We will go beyond that

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by reviewing all existing legislation in the ACT to clear up anomalies as to whether or not the Crown ought be bound. The Law Reform Unit of the Attorney-General's Department is proceeding to do that now. In future legislation before this Assembly we will always have a provision which expressly states whether the law should or should not bind the Crown in right of the ACT.

That will mean, Mr Speaker, that during the course of the next few months, or into next year, we will be in a position in this Territory where, on the face of every ACT law, it will be apparent whether the Crown in right of the ACT is bound or is not bound. The decision of the High Court was a progressive one insofar as it was doing away with an old doctrine that relied on prerogatives and basically saying that modern government is out there interfacing with the community, with industry, and ought to be bound by law just as the ordinary citizen or corporate player is.

The ACT Government will be, I think in keeping with the spirit of that decision, not seeking to rely on antiquated doctrines of Crown immunity and will be going through the entire body of statute law so that future citizens of this Territory or persons seeking to do business in this Territory will know by looking at an Act whether or not the Government is bound. In my view, Mr Speaker, that is a progressive decision and one that should be welcomed by all people in the Territory.

MR HUMPHRIES, by leave: Mr Speaker, I do not want to debate the substance of the statement that the Minister has made, but I do want to raise two brief points. Mr Connolly said, in making that statement, that, given the fact that the Government was now going to eschew dorothy dixers in question time, therefore no written statement would be produced. I am not quite sure what the connection is between those two matters. It would seem to me appropriate that, if a statement is made in any circumstances except emergency circumstances in the Assembly, the Assembly ought to have the benefit of the written statement circulated around the chamber. That is a simple courtesy to other members of the Assembly who are expected to debate that statement, potentially, as soon as it is made, if they so wish.

I would have thought that a matter of this complexity also ought to be at the disposal of members in written form. So, I fail to see the connection between those two matters and I sincerely hope that, in exchange for giving away dorothy dixers, the Government is not going to impose the penalty on the Opposition and the other members, which is that they do not get to look at statements made by the Government and have to wait until the *Hansard* comes out. That would be a most regrettable trend.

Can I also put Mr Connolly, the Minister, right on the question of dorothy dixers themselves. He says that he regrets the practice of the former Alliance Government of using dorothy dixers. Can I remind him - perhaps he does not know - that on the very first day this Assembly took questions of the Government, which was of course in May or June 1989, Mr Wood, who was then the sole backbencher of the Government, indeed of the whole Assembly, rose and asked Government Ministers questions that would, I think, constitute dorothy dixers.

Mr Wood: Come off it. I was extraordinarily careful about my choice of questions, I can tell you. There were a few, in eight months. There were very few - not a persistent, day after day thing.

MR SPEAKER: Order, Minister Wood, please!

MR HUMPHRIES: Apparently, Mr Speaker, Mr Wood is a man more sinned against than sinning. Well, the fact of life is that he sinned first. He did ask questions of his own party Ministers. That was a practice initiated by the Labor Party in government. The record ought to show that the Alliance Government merely continued this practice of the previous Follett Labor Government. Whether that should continue in the future I could not say. Perhaps it ought to discontinue. I am quite happy to accept this new precedent being set by this Government. If it removes the earlier practice, I am very pleased about that, and I would not be disposed to argue about it.

MR COLLAERY: Mr Speaker, I seek leave of this house to make a short statement in reply to Mr Connolly's statement.

Leave granted.

MR COLLAERY: Mr Speaker, the Bropho decision was delivered in Canberra on 20 June 1990 and all of what Mr Connolly says is correct, but my clear recollection is that those decisions were taken by the Law Office and were indicated by me as Attorney-General. I do not want to play any games, but I clearly remember giving and indicating all those directions to the Law Office.

What is more interesting, of course, is that this is a chance to recognise in this Assembly the very strong and progressive bench of the High Court. It was a strong court - Mason, Chief Justice, and Justices Brennan, Deane, Dawson, Toohey, Gaudron and McHugh. As the lawyers will appreciate, it was one of those practically rare joint decisions of that august tribunal. I think Mr Justice Brennan added some comments of his own. The decision has been mentioned by several of us in the past in this chamber, Mr Connolly included. It was in relation to legislation that I believe the then Minister, Mr DUBY, was bringing in. It turned upon whether public servants could be liable for dumping clinical waste at the dump, or words to that effect.

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Mr Jensen: The Clinical Waste Bill.

MR COLLAERY: The Clinical Waste Bill, Mr Jensen reminds me. I believe that the enterprise that Mr Connolly is continuing through the Attorney-General's Law Reform Committee is worthy and should continue. But we should, as a legislature, remember one thing about the Bropho decision. I think it is aptly summarised by Starke, of queen's counsel, in the *Australian Law Journal* issue of September 1990, volume 64, where he says, at page 527:

Whether the Court should have so decided may well be a moot question. The result can, not unfairly, be described as pure legislation, as distinct from what the late Justice Holmes of the United States Supreme Court characterised as "interstitial" judicial law-making. Such a fundamental change in a long established principle of statutory construction should, it may cogently be urged, have been effected, if at all, by amendment of the various Commonwealth and State Acts Interpretation Acts, in the same way as important amendments thereto have been made in recent years.

If I may interpolate, I think this legislature should understand that this was judicial law-making in a classic sense. It pre-empted the activities of the States and Territories Attorneys group in bringing about uniform legislation and, of course, we are all saddened to hear that Queensland and Tasmania are going to go their own way and set forth a very strict test.

Mr Speaker, the decision to attend to the former presumption, if you can use that term, that legislatures would have intended to bind themselves, is worthy; but I believe that Mr Connolly should have secured from his Law Office a considered statement that could have been put down on the floor of the chamber. I respect and acknowledge that he has probably constructed the statement himself. It is his own work. Well, fair enough; but it did leave the non-lawyers of this chamber floundering a bit. I think it is incumbent upon the lawyers in the chamber, when they speak about these things that are complex, to put a document before them.

Ms Follett: No, it did not. I understood it. Speak for yourself.

MR COLLAERY: The Chief Minister indicates that I am being patronising. Well, so be it. The fact is that this was a very complex decision and Mr Connolly has dealt with it in very short terms. Mr Speaker, we support the direction that the Law Office continues to go in.

Sitting suspended from 5.18 to 8.00 pm

AIDEX
Discussion of Matter of Public Importance

MR SPEAKER: I have received letters from Mr Stefaniak, Mr Humphries, Mr Kaine and Mrs Nolan, all proposing that matters of public importance be submitted to the Assembly. In accordance with standing order 79 I have determined that the matter proposed by Mr Stefaniak be submitted to the Assembly, namely:

The enormous damage done to Canberra's standing as a national and international conference and exhibition venue by the Follett Labor Government's attitude to AIDEX.

MR STEFANIAK (8.01): Mr Speaker, indeed it is jackpot time for the Liberal Party, although we seem to have all the marbles in this particular raffle.

Mr Collaery: Was that "jackboot"?

MR STEFANIAK: "Jackpot", Bernard. Frivolity aside, this is a quite serious topic, and I think it is made more so by the direction which Mr Connolly has now handed out. He directs that the National Exhibition Centre Trust:

... adopt a policy of not allowing the ... Centre to be used after 1 December 1991 as a site for the conduct of exhibitions, or similar events, where the sole or primary purpose of the exhibition or event is the displaying, whether for sale or otherwise -

and he might like to look at that -

of arms, armaments, munitions and other equipment used for military purposes.

I think that by using the words "or otherwise" he might preclude even military tattoos, which I hope even the Labor Party would not particularly want to preclude; I hope its ideology does not go that far.

Mr Kaine: I would not bet on it.

MR STEFANIAK: Yes, indeed; one wonders. In times of economic hardship the Government is totally wrong in making it difficult for anybody to exhibit products in Canberra. I will speak briefly tonight in relation to the economic and moral stupidity of what they have done, and perhaps even the moral wrongness of what they have done. I think on all scores they are really missing the point.

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The big problems with what they have done were summed up in a very good letter to the editor by Mr Bob Day, the managing director of Aidex '91. I will quote from that letter. He states that, following reports in the *Canberra Times* in relation to the present Government trying to induce him to cancel the Aidex exhibition, he would like to set the record straight. He says:

AIDEX is portrayed by some groups as aiding and abetting arms sales and exports to countries regarded as having suspect political regimes. This is simply not true.

AIDEX was established in 1989 to provide a Canberra showcase for international and Australian companies wishing to sell defence equipment to the Australian Government.

That is very important. He continues:

At the same time, local manufacturers use the opportunity to promote their capabilities for potential international partners.

Over the next 10 years, Australia will probably spend about \$40 billion on defence, including re-equipment programs. AIDEX provides a focal point for manufacturers wanting to bid for contracts with the Australian Government. By providing this local showcase for most of the equipment on offer, AIDEX helps ensure the most competitive purchasing process.

Giving Australian companies the best possible opportunity to bid for Defence contracts could conservatively save up to \$20 billion over this time in import replacement. I hardly need to point out to the ACT Government that spending money here, rather than overseas, creates jobs, encourages the transfer of technology and expertise to local businesses.

Added to this will be a worthwhile boost to tourist income and increased investment in the ACT.

It is worthy of note that he says:

The 1989 show generated \$30 million for the Australian economy of which \$10 million was spent in the ACT.

He says further:

The Australian Government's attitude towards arms control is considered among the most stringent in the world. AIDEX is conducted well within these guidelines, and with the Federal Government's full support.

Of course, we have a Federal Labor Government. Mr Day goes on to say:

Of the AIDEX exhibition, probably less than 10 per cent is taken up by front-line weaponry highlighted by those who seek to discredit the exhibition. Many of the other products, from paints to clothing to catering supplies, have little relevance to offensive capability.

While I strongly support the right of people to express different opinions, I am very concerned that some people have misrepresented the purpose of AIDEX to suit their own purposes.

Not all of these groups are the same - the Quaker Peace Committee has again this year accepted the provision of a free stand to present its view. We have no quarrel with these people and respect their right to voice their opinions.

AIDEX is not about gun-running or the supply of arms to dubious regimes.

It is about providing an international showcase for both foreign and local companies wanting to do business with the Australian Government Defence Forces, and increasing this country's self-reliance and security.

Mr Connolly's hysterical comments in some of the local media about the British selling mustard gas to Saddam Hussein are way off the point. They are total emotional furrphies.

Mr Connolly: A good word.

MR STEFANIAK: Did you like that? Sir William Keys, the former national president of the RSL and a very well respected man on both sides of the political fence - very much a moderate - was also very concerned at the cancellation. He stated, in the same edition of the *Canberra Times*, that the cancellation would be a folly. He called it, in fact, "the highest order of irresponsibility". He went on to say that the goodwill generated by Aidex would be "terminated on some left wing whim". Unfortunately, that is exactly what appears to have happened. The article went on to state that the local Labor Party Government got advice that it would cost it \$5m in compensation, which is about the tourist budget per annum, to compensate for cancelling Aidex this year. Practicality at least prevailed there.

Sir William agreed that the exhibition would bring at least \$10m into our economy, with an estimated 5,000 people visiting the exhibition from interstate and overseas.

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There are about 140 companies involved in Aidex and it gives them the opportunity to bid for defence contracts. He reiterated that figure of \$40 billion. He said:

... all of that and all the goodwill that is generated by bringing people here together ... will be terminated on some extreme left-wing whim ... Now that is of the highest order of irresponsibility if that happened.

Sir William went on to say that his feeling is that "strict ideology has outweighed common sense and logic". He stated:

I think we are seeing an exercise in emotion here which has got no relation to real facts and real life at all.

... ..

My message to the ACT Government is please look at Canberra as the future venue for conferences of all kinds, not just defence ... It means employment, it means business opportunities for small business.

He said that Canberra was "the best place to host the exhibition because the headquarters of the Australian Defence Force were located here and visited by all overseas military leaders who came to Australia".

Natex has been told - I think by the previous Government, and I am certain by this Government - to make itself pay for itself. I know that a number of groups have already had problems with that. I was involved with the harness racing people who were having a great deal of difficulty renegotiating contracts and sorting out problems in relation to some stables there. The excuse given to them was that Natex has to pay for itself. Yet here we have this Government about to forgo \$10m in revenue coming into the Territory.

Let us face it, Canberra's major industry is tourism, and part of tourism is conferences, conventions and exhibitions. Here we have a big one. It affects not only Aidex; it will affect Natex's ability to hold other exhibitions as well. I am sure my colleague Mr Humphries will be speaking on that matter as well.

In the latter half of my speech, let us look at the moral issue. Let us look at human nature, for starters. If this Government cancels any future Aidex exhibitions - which it obviously intends to do because of this direction - South Australia and Victoria would snap it up; so would New South Wales; so would all your comrades, Mr Connolly, in any Labor State.

Mr Connolly: We will see.

MR STEFANIAK: We will see, because South Australia is building the Collins class submarine. Your comrades in Victoria were very keen and, I think, are doing a lot of work in relation to the Anzac frigate proposals. They are not backward in coming forward when it comes to industry. They know the political realities. They might have stuffed up the economy of their States; but they are certainly trying, and taking every opportunity, to generate business and industry in their particular States. And what are you doing? You are completely crucifying this golden opportunity. So, firstly, now that Aidex will not continue here, some other Australian State will take it; that is for sure.

Also this rather pathetic little gesture by the local Labor Party will have no impact whatsoever on the arms race, or on arms supplies throughout the world. It will have no impact at all on human nature. That is utterly impossible, and I think the Government is deluding itself if it thinks this act will have any effect whatsoever in terms of what it naively hopes to achieve. It will have absolutely none whatsoever.

Another thing I would point out to the Government is that Australia, as they know, is a democracy, a proud parliamentary democracy, which has gone to war on a number of occasions in this century. Sometimes perhaps, as in the case of the First World War, the morals might not have been quite so certain as they have been in other wars; but basically Australians have fought and died in the cause of freedom, to preserve democracy. A sad fact of life is that there will always be bullies. At an individual level, we see them from the playground up. And there will be bullies at the international level. We have seen quite a few of those recently, the last one having been Saddam Hussein.

Mr Connolly: Who bought his guns at arms fairs.

MR STEFANIAK: And who beat him? And how was he beaten, Mr Connolly? Would it have been possible for him to be beaten if the United States and the United Nations countries that went to the Gulf did not have any arms?

Mr Connolly: There would not have been a war if we had not armed him.

MR STEFANIAK: Unfortunately, some wars have to be fought, Mr Connolly. Unfortunately, human nature being what it is, from the time of the creation of human beings, and probably, unfortunately, until we - - -

Mr Berry: Grow up a bit.

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MR STEFANIAK: We have not yet, Mr Berry, and I wonder whether we really will. The only sure-fire way of preventing aggression, and at least ensuring that there is some modicum of civilised, reasonably decent behaviour in the world is for relatively decent countries such as Australia and its Western allies to have the capability to defend themselves against totalitarian, aggressive, very nasty, murderous bullies. And pathetic little actions like you lot are taking in trying to - - -

Mr Connolly: Take the guns away from the bullies.

MR STEFANIAK: This is quite important, because the morals of the issue, Mr Connolly, are that pathetic little actions like this do nothing to help human beings or countries become more decent. Unfortunately, it just gives succour to the more nasty regimes and the more nasty elements around the world. And, despite improvements in recent times, we still see grave problems throughout the world.

I remind the Labor Party, as I think other members on this side have done on occasions, that the reason we now have a degree of relative peace in the international arena, between the superpowers, is that the Western allies - primarily President Reagan, supported by Margaret Thatcher in Britain and the European allies - stood up to a vast increase in Soviet arms in the 1970s and early 1980s. Had that not occurred, Mr Gorbachev would not have got in, and the reforms initiated in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe would have been a pipedream. If you want to look beyond just the economic impact of what you people are doing, you can see that when you closely examine the moral issue you are on rather tentative ground there as well. It is not too late.

I take it from this direction that we will see Aidex go ahead this November. But I would certainly implore you to reconsider your direction, so that Canberra can have future Aidex exhibitions. As is painfully obvious if you listen to Mr Day, the director, arms exports are very well controlled. We have some of the strictest controls in relation to arms exports in the world, and rightly so; we are not a supplier of arms holus-bolus to any sort of regime. Those controls are indeed very necessary, for some of the reasons you may mention, Mr Connolly. But this blatant exercise of blind left-wing ideology is costing the jobs of many Canberra citizens. It throws a tremor of uncertainty into perceptions of Canberra's ability to host various conventions and exhibitions. Is any exhibition or convention now going to be subject to approval by the left wing of the Labor Party?

If it is considered ideologically unsound, will organisers be told, "I am awfully sorry; it cannot go ahead"? That is not a way to do business. How on earth can we engender confidence in Canberra as a convention and business centre? We cannot. We do not have natural industries here. Tourism and conferences are very important. It is

absolutely essential that we utilise what few natural resources this Territory has - that is, our brilliant suitability as a venue for conferences, conventions and exhibitions such as this - to encourage those much needed dollars into the Territory in this very difficult financial time. So, unfortunately, the Government's actions have really done enormous damage to our standing as a national and international conference and exhibition venue. If they have Canberra's interests at heart, they must reconsider this matter, and Mr Connolly should revoke his own direction.

MR CONNOLLY (Attorney-General, Minister for Housing and Community Services and Minister for Urban Services) (8.16): Mr Speaker, I am very proud to be a member of a Labor government that has made the decision that Canberra will not be promoting the international arms trade. I am proud to be a member of a party in government that has made a moral decision on this issue, and a decision that I feel is overwhelmingly supported by the community. Local government is not an easy issue. So often, those of us holding ministerial office in this Territory are confronted with dilemmas. It is all about a dollar here, a dollar there, and whether we can take some money out of one program and put it into social justice programs such as health, education or, in my case, welfare.

We are constantly struggling for more money for causes that we would like to support. We are constantly having to tell people, "We cannot put more money into welfare, housing, education or health". It is not easy; it is hard. There is not a lot of pleasure to be gained from it. But occasionally, just occasionally, government can make a decision that we can take real pleasure and credit from. Just occasionally we can get out from the mere ruck of looking at a dollar here, a dollar there, and make a stand on an issue. And that is what the Australian Labor Party has done on this issue. We are proud to confront this in any forum, any place, any time. We have said that our vision for Canberra is not as the centre of the international arms trade. We have said that on this issue it is not the dollars that count. We have said that we are prepared to forgo future income from future international bazaars.

There was a very strong view within the Australian Labor Party, and I would say within the community, that we ought to have gone one step further and cancelled Aidex '91, and I can understand that view. The problem with that view is that there was a firm contract to hold Aidex '91. We have sought legal advice. The clear view was given that that contract is in existence and, given the position that, as any lawyer would know, if you breach a contract you are liable for the foreseeable damages that flow from that breach, we would be up for millions and millions of dollars in compensation. That would not have been a responsible

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decision to take. But we could say, "No more", and that is what we have done. The *Canberra Times*, at the end of its editorial last week, in congratulating the Government on this issue, said:

How many of us can honestly believe that governments do not have an obligation to consider the world when they make decisions about what goes on within the city limits?

If the decision that we have taken, to say "No more" to international arms bazaars, was followed throughout the world, we would not have the aggression that Mr Stefaniak spoke about. Mr Stefaniak's rather bellicose speech, I think, particularly today, marked an extraordinary insensitivity from the local branch of the Liberal Party - - -

Mr Humphries: Division, actually.

MR CONNOLLY: The local division of the Liberal Party. Well, "division" is a very appropriate word, Mr Humphries; it is an extremely divided party. Mr Speaker, what is today - apart from the first day of a sitting time?

Mr Stefaniak: Tuesday.

MR CONNOLLY: "Tuesday", says Mr Stefaniak. Today is 6 August. What is 6 August? The 6th of August is celebrated by many people - no, "celebrated" is not the word; it is commemorated by many people around the world as Hiroshima Day. It was today 46 years ago that atomic weapons were first used against human beings. People have different views on war and peace and on the appropriate occasions when a nation may go to war, and there are divisions within the community, within the Labor Party and all over on those issues. But all of us would prefer a world where it did not happen. And on Hiroshima Day, on the anniversary of the day on which mankind first unleashed atomic energy against mankind, how inappropriate it is of the local division of the Liberal Party to decide to celebrate the international arms trade. I think that in itself speaks for the views of the Liberal Party on this issue.

Mr Stefaniak gave us a litany of occasions on which states have gone to war against other states and on which there may have been an appropriate or not appropriate response. The point we make is that if the West had not fallen over itself to arm the Middle East over the last decade there would not have been an invasion of Kuwait and there would not have been a United Nations sanctioned action. We are not debating tonight whether or not that action was justified. What we are saying is that if other states followed our lead, if other nations followed our lead, if we said "No" to the international arms trade, you would not have aggression because the aggressor - the "bully" that Mr Stefaniak speaks of - would not have access to high technology arms and equipment.

We saw only last week that it is now apparent that Saddam Hussein had obtained mustard gas - or the necessary ingredients to create mustard gas - from Britain, and Britain has very strict guidelines on arms exports. Mr Stefaniak said that Australia has very strict guidelines on arms exports - as it does, and properly so. What has happened in the past, even with those strict guidelines on arms exports? I noted that we were quite proud in 1989-90 that Australia had secured a licence to export small arms to China. A company called the Austral Gun Company had a significant export contract for shotguns and cartridges to the Chinese defence forces. We could recall that a year or so ago relations with China were all the go and talk of closer cooperation in military and other areas was very enthusiastically supported by all sides of politics. What happened in Tiananmen Square? Arms were used against the people.

We all, in this Assembly, a year ago, stood up and made the appropriate statements opposing and expressing our horror at that outrage, and yet Australia had been quite pleased that it had secured contracts to supply equipment. I know that the correspondent at the *Canberra Times* last week in this debate made reference to what was regarded as another successful export contract from Australia whereby we supplied trainer aircraft to the air force of Burma, now Myanmar. A year or so ago there was a pro-democracy movement in Myanmar. Those of us in this chamber who are members of Amnesty International may have taken part in a recent letter campaign, because the leader of the Myanmar democracy forces, who was elected with his supporters to the Myanmar National Assembly and formed an appropriate majority government, finds himself rotting in a cell in that unfortunate country. Many people have been put down - massacred - by the defence forces of the regime of that country. Australia has had a part, providing some equipment to that regime.

If the nations of the world decided not to sell arms to other nations, war would be very difficult. That is hardly an initiative of the Australian Labor Party, ACT Branch. I think George Bernard Shaw wrote a play, *Major Barbara*, on the subject. If we all got out of this business, we would live in a much more peaceful world. That is the moral dimension that I have spoken of publicly on this issue in the last week. We have been receiving an extraordinary level of support, through my office, on this. This is the only issue, since I have been active in local politics and a member of this Assembly, on which people unknown to me have actually stopped me on the street and said, "Congratulations; good on you. I think you are doing the right thing".

I think most people in Canberra, who form a community that is probably more aware than most communities in Australia of what is going on in the world, are firmly behind the decision of this Government to say, "We are not interested

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just in the bottom line; we think government should take a lead; we think government should give moral leadership on an issue like this". What is the response from the Opposition? "There are a few dollars to be made; we should be in it."

I said last week - and I admit that it was a rhetorical statement, but true nonetheless - that obviously there would be a lot of dollars to be made in supplying chemical weapons to Saddam Hussein. We have a rather large and efficient plant out at Mitchell that does all sorts of complicated things with chemicals, destroying them. Perhaps we should turn that around and take that toxic chemical sludge, containerise it and send it off to the Middle East to whoever wants to buy it to turn it into weapons. Of course, nobody would say that we should do that. But that is the logical consequence of this argument that it is all about the bottom line, it is all about the dollar, and that morality has no part to play.

We say, on the government side of this house, that there are issues on which a government must take a moral stand. There are issues on which a government is justified in saying, "It is not the dollar that we are looking at; we believe that this is right and this is where we stand". And that is the view of the Labor Party on this issue.

I would like to correct some misconceptions on the economics of this issue. It was widely reported in a story in the *Canberra Times* that we were somehow forgoing \$10m by deciding to ban future Aidexes. Stuff and nonsense, Mr Speaker! That is a purely fanciful figure, plucked from midair. Interestingly, one of the exhibitions which were being spoken about as being cancelled, Energex '92, is controlled by the same company that controls Aidex. There was a threat that that would be cancelled if we cancelled Aidex. I said at that time that I thought that was bluff. It is an understandable confrontation between a government and a promoter.

There has been no cancellation of Energex '92. It is still booked in and I confidently expect that it will continue, because the Canberra convention and tourism industry is very competitive internationally. We have an excellent level of facilities for international and national tourists. We have excellent infrastructure. We have two competing venues, each outstanding in its own right: Natex owned by the government, and the National Convention Centre in the private sector. We are the centre of national government. We are conveniently located midway between Melbourne and Sydney. People come to this city for national and international conventions because we offer outstanding competitive advantages. It is a commercial decision to locate in this city and people will continue to make that commercial decision.

There is no question that the Government is not behind this industry, or that the Government is not supporting this industry. But we do say, "We do not want international arms bazaars". That is a pretty clear distinction between international arms fairs and anything else. I think that the community understands it, I know that the industry understands it, and I say that we are losing little or nothing. The Opposition will say, "But we get lots of revenue for this". Well, here is something to think about, Liberal division. What is our gain in holding Aidex? What is the actual dollar going to the Government? You will say that it is about a \$40,000 rent for Natex. What does it cost to police it and who pays the dollar; who pays the cost? I will tell you who pays the cost. The ACT taxpayer pays the cost.

I asked the Federal Police, "What does it cost to police Natex?". That is not a question that had been previously asked. I asked it today and it was rather difficult to give me a bottom line. But what they could tell me was that last time around there was something like 600 hours of overtime worked just at Aidex, which roughly translates to \$20,000 of overtime alone. You can probably double that for the ordinary salary levels, so there is \$40,000. So, there is our revenue gone straightaway to the police budget. You then have to consider, when we have police officers out on point duty at Aidex for three or four days, that they have to be replaced or additional overtime has to be done in their ordinary community policing roles.

So, I would confidently assert - I will try to calculate this further if it comes up either in a question in this Assembly or through the Estimates Committee, which would be a good way to assure us - that just on the question of policing costs it actually costs the ACT Government more for Aidex to be here than if it is not here. So, the economics of the Opposition are ludicrous. This is hardly a revenue earner for the ACT. But even if it were - and this is the moral position that the Government is taking - we say that there are cases where the Government is right in saying, "This is not an issue about dollars and cents; we believe that it is inappropriate for the Australian Capital Territory to be promoting the international arms trade".

That is our position. We are proud to justify it in this Assembly, in this community and indeed, hopefully, at the ballot box next February. We are convinced that the community is behind us on this issue and, as I said at the outset, I am proud to be a member of the Australian Labor Party in an Australian Labor Party government that has made this courageous decision which is a pointer for the rest of Australia.

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DR KINLOCH (8.30): I congratulate the Labor Party for its stand on not allowing the National Exhibition Centre to be used as a site for exhibitions the primary purpose of which is the displaying, whether for sale or otherwise, of arms, armaments, munitions and other equipment used for killing our fellow human beings. Thank you, Labor Party. I do not believe for a moment that this should be described as ideologically left wing. Is the environmental movement left wing? Is concern for our city left wing? I really do not care whether it is right wing or left wing. I am middle wing myself. I think left, right and middle can all join in supporting this particular action of the Labor Party.

I only regret that the one already planned cannot easily be cancelled. I will, in a weird way, welcome that, because I know of the very interesting demonstrations that will be held and that will call for the police that Mr Connolly has mentioned. But it will also mean that our Quaker protest group there will have a chance to talk with those people - they are mainly men - to try to get them to see that, instead of going home at night and having to tell their children that what they do is sell arms, they could ask themselves whether this is not a time for them to change their lifestyle, to change their work, to move into other careers, to move perhaps into environmental work - work of a positive nature for humankind.

So, I have to disagree with my colleague Bill Stefaniak. I understand his interest in guns and so forth; so be it. I do not believe for a moment that there will be enormous damage done to Canberra, as is said in the matter of public importance. Quite to the contrary, I will now put the case to say that the ALP has done well by the ACT as a convention centre. Indeed, we will come out of this as a more effective tourist centre, not damaged as a tourist centre.

First of all, many Canberrans will be relieved that our city will not have to be the centre for this trade. But I think that is a selfish reason, and I think we should set that aside. We need to deal with the charge made against the Labor Party by the Liberal division. But, above all, there is this proper refusal of the ALP to countenance Aidex. I want to talk at some length about tourism. One of the prime requirements for a successful tourist industry is to build on the special features of an area, a region or a city. A tourist centre takes the things it is good at, and builds on them; a ski resort for skiing, Naples for the bay. You could take a whole range of things that cities build on. What we need to do is build on the particular images of our city.

As we do that, if we have appropriate things for our tourist industry, we benefit the economics of our tourist industry. What, then, are the special advantages of Canberra as a tourist centre? I very much like the brilliant publicity campaign run by our tourist people

representing Canberra as "the natural capital". That is well illustrated in photographs, brochures and material in magazines. And what kind of place does it show Canberra to be? A place of peace, of order, of nature, of the environment, of buildings in a natural setting, of our country heritage, of our bush heritage - the natural capital. That is what we should have at the centre of our tourist industry; and, of course, also, the national capital. I recognise that there is one element of our national capital which is related to arms; and that is the Australian Defence Force Academy, and related activities such as those at Duntroon. But, happily, even that academy is linked to a university, to a non-arms-related university.

Setting that aside, basically, another of our natural assets, in the context in which we live as a tourist centre, is that we are the national capital, aiming at the best our country has to offer. The best we have to offer is in education, and in science and technology of a constructive nature. Let us think of the claimed possible loss of one of those exhibitions, an energy exhibition. I do not believe for a moment that some energy exhibition is going to leave Canberra. We are a natural centre for such a display. We offer here a most logical place for such a national and international exhibition, and I hope that in due course - we already have a great deal of this - we will be a centre for medical exhibitions and conventions on a grand scale.

I can think of many conventions that have been held in this city. There was one for Asian studies - literally thousands of people were here. Why did they come for Asian studies? They came because our universities have particular skills in that area. It is also, of course, a natural centre - and let us stress that word "natural" - for national, regional and international cooperation. Let us stress the word "cooperation".

In this respect I would like to see Canberra compared to a city such as Geneva. Indeed, the aspect of our lake and the spout and things that happen here have some similarities to Geneva. Alternatively, to look at a very different part of the world, Canberra could be compared to New York - not the whole city, but that area of New York which houses the United Nations. That is the kind of image we have. That is what our tourist industry should grow on.

I want to make a particular point here. This may seem exaggerated, but I ask you to look at it in a very great historical perspective. As a result of the events in Canberra in January and February of this year, our city, the city of Canberra, may be added to a list of such cities as Nicea in the fourth century of the Christian era, out of which came the Nicene Creed; Trent in the sixteenth century, out of which came the Council of Trent; Edinburgh in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; and Vancouver in our own time - another centre for the World Council of Churches, which met in our city.

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We were graced by that council. It was a great honour to us and it was one of the most successful conferences, from a tourism point of view, ever held in Australia. I like to think of our city, then, to use the Japanese analogy that has already been mentioned, as the Kyoto of Australia, not some kind of armaments centre of Australia. Forever after in world history, Canberra will be seen as the home of the World Council of Churches. Our city has been the centre of faith, peace and, above all, constructive, not destructive, activity.

As to not cancelling the 1991 Aidex, I recognise the particular problems with contracts already drawn up, but it does endanger this image of our tourist industry, our natural capital. So, I ask our tourist industry - any who are here from the tourist industry this evening and my colleague Robyn Nolan who is very interested in the tourist industry - to spread the word that our natural capital is one of the greatest assets we have. We must not do anything to muck it up, to destroy it, or to destroy that image. We need to keep Canberra in this very special nature and very special image.

I have been reading today a marvellous magazine called *Dialogue* which has some very productive and future-looking articles about the nature of the future of cities. I want to stress that for our future we must be, above all - for our tourist industry, for ourselves, for our economy, for the nation, for international activity - a city committed to the protection of our environment. I ask you to look at the city of Belfast, at Beirut, and at what has been happening in Iraq and Kuwait. We are the very opposite of that. We have a chance never to be that. We live in a continent which is the least likely ever to be damaged by arms and wars. Let us keep it that way.

Finally, what of Aidex itself? I do not see them as baboons. No doubt these men - and they are, again, essentially men - have got onto some kind of track whereby they have gone into arms industries, and there they are in their careers - for 10, 15, 20, 25 years stuck in that industry. Here is a chance in 1991 for as many Canberrans as possible to reach them in their exhibition. I call on us all to do this; to help them to get out of it, to help them to stop selling arms and to help them become peace-minded and peace-loving people.

Furthermore, it is likely that international arms merchants will feel relieved that their bizarre bazaar will not take place in a city committed to peace in the future. They can sell their wares elsewhere, in cities and countries which glory in trading in death.

MR DUBY (8.40): Mr Speaker, I do not often admit to making a mistake, but today I am going to do so. I well remember the Aidex exhibition of 1989 - and I think many of us do - when we were regaled with the bold sight of the protesters who revelled under the name Penises for Peace and who tried, in their own way, to bring down that exhibition. At the time, I think a lot of us thought it was a bit of a lark. What I am alluding to is the fact that I thought at the time, in 1989, that that particular arms exhibition was a one-off event. I did not realise - - -

Mr Collaery: Nor did I.

MR DUBY: Mr Collaery says, "Nor did I". I did not realise that there was a standing commitment for that particular event to be repeated in 1991. The reason I am saying this is that I was the Minister responsible for Natex. If I had known at the time, in December 1989 when I became Minister, that this event was to be repeated in 1991, I would have taken all possible steps to make sure that it did not occur this year. I must admit that it came as a complete surprise to me that it was a biennial event that was due to occur in 1989 and, of course, in 1991.

I endorse completely the actions of the present Government in stating that the citizens of Canberra do not wish to be part of the international arms trade. Indeed, there is a relevant quotation in the *Canberra Times* editorial of 2 August - and I do not particularly like reading the *Canberra Times* editorials that often because, for various reasons, I often do not agree with them. However, I think I should quote this one. It says:

The *Canberra Times* has, time after time, given its position on the arms trade: it is unequivocally opposed to the whole abhorrent industry. We need a clever country, but there is nothing "clever" about making weapons to intimidate or kill other humans.

At the same time, this paper has always upheld the rights and freedoms of people to speak, trade and behave as they desire, without censoring public officials peeking at them and punishing them. But just as the right of a woman to physical safety outweighs the need of her husband to bash her, the right to life of anonymous millions of potential war statistics should outweigh the rights of local manufacturers to increase their profits, or their share of the world market.

In that quotation, for "The *Canberra Times*" we can put "The citizens of Canberra". We do not endorse it, and I am frankly a little bit embarrassed that it is actually occurring in 1991.

Mr Connolly: They did not seek your approval, Craig. You were not aware of that at the time.

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MR DUBY: That was simply done. The second point that has been made is that this is going to cost the community substantial sums of money. It is not. Just recently, I tried to obtain the use of a pavilion at the Natex Centre for a time later in 1992.

Mrs Grassby: That would not be the Saturday - - -

MR DUBY: No, it certainly would not. It has nothing to do with anything political, I can assure you. Mr Speaker, I can assure you that that Natex Centre is booked solid. There is a waiting list as long as your arm, plus more, for the use of that site. If these people are not allowed to book in 1993, there will be a queue from here to the end of Civic Square to take the use of that spot. There may even be uses for that spot that will bring more visitors to Canberra and the influx of more money into the economy than we would ever get from an arms exhibition.

I, personally, cannot imagine how many hundreds of people would be coming to an arms exhibition; but, from my understanding of what occurs at Natex, there would be just as large a crowd coming for a whole range of purposes, whether it be a german shepherd dog show, a wine exhibition or whatever. The place is very, very popular, and it is booked solid. This baloney that we are going to lose money from cancelling the 1993 show is, frankly, just that - a lot of baloney. I support and endorse the attitude of the Government. I, frankly, feel embarrassed that I, in my capacity, did not realise that this would be occurring in 1991. I can say only that if I had known I would have done everything within my power to make sure that this current show did not go ahead.

MR HUMPHRIES (8.45): I hate to throw a bucket of cold water over the feverish moralising which is going on in this chamber at the moment, but the fact of life is that those around the chamber who are glorying in their great moral righteousness in keeping away this nasty arms bazaar are forgetting a few salient features of this debate. First of all, it is a misconception to think of this biennial arms exhibition as an exercise in selling principally to people like Saddam Hussein, Colonel Gadaffi or the warlords of Burma or Myanmar. It is, in fact, an exercise in selling arms to the Australian Government. Let us not forget that. The major purchaser of arms at this exhibition - -

Mr Stefaniak: The only purchaser.

MR HUMPHRIES: In fact, I am reminded by my colleague Mr Stefaniak, the only purchaser of arms at this exhibition is the Australian Government - a government of the same persuasion and the same party as that to which Mr Connolly so bravely announces his allegiance, the party which he is so proud to belong to. It is his own party, in Federal government, which is buying these very arms which he says are so repugnant.

It is all very well to say how terribly opposed one is to the idea of people coming and selling arms. It seems to me that the people who buy the arms are equally at fault if there is any moral repugnance attaching to this transaction. What representations has Mr Connolly made about the Australian Government not buying the arms which are exhibited at fairs such as this?

We know, of course, that the arms bazaars are not going to discontinue. While ever governments buy arms - and there is no suggestion by Mr Connolly, Dr Kinloch or Mr Duby that the Australian Government should stop buying arms - there will have to be venues where they can look at what they propose to buy. And, whether that happens here in the city of Canberra or in Wollongong, Sydney, Adelaide, or wherever it might be, it will go on.

What possible benefit has there been to the Government of the Australian Capital Territory in banning this exhibition from the ACT when it will simply move - as it certainly will move - to somewhere else in this country and some other city or community will get the benefit of the trade which is generated by its location there? Even worse, if it goes overseas, Australian manufacturers of arms - of course, there is a very large Australian industry in this area - will lose the benefit of having their wares viewed at home by the Australian Government. The facts just do not stack up, and I think those opposite ought to think about the implications of banning this exhibition of this trade at this time.

There are more issues than simply the revenue to the ACT Government. There are many more important issues than just that. There are many other people who gain major benefit, in a business sense, from the holding of this exhibition in this city. For example, there are the people who supply the exhibition with materiel and infrastructure - conference organisers, caterers, cleaners, people who actually make the thing happen. They all miss out. The people who get their double overtime, or whatever it might be, at the exhibition centre do so because the exhibition is there, not because they happen to be working at that place. The accommodation and hospitality industry stands to lose a great deal of money. No-one can be quite certain of how much. Mr Connolly certainly has not tried to find out just how much. A great deal of money results from the fact that there is an exhibition of this kind in town, to which people from all over the world come to exhibit. Transport misses out - taxis, hire cars, the airlines.

And, of course, there is the question of government revenue. I have to ask, of course, why it is that the Government charges so little and has to expend so much on exhibitions of this kind. It seems to me that, if indeed the figures cited by Mr Connolly are accurate, clearly the ACT Government in the past has been investing in the ACT community's business and economy by having conferences such

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as that come to the ACT where the net outlay on the part of the Government, by way of policing and so on, is greater than the net revenue that it collects. If that has been a worthwhile objective in the past - if it has been worthwhile investing in the ACT economy through that process, bringing people from outside to do business in the ACT - why has it ceased to be so now? There cannot be any good answer to that. Clearly, there is benefit to our community and to our economy, and that is, I think, not lightly thrown to one side.

But I repeat that we have to ask ourselves: What is the morality in banning this exhibition, this trade, from the ACT and yet not banning the people who buy the goods? Mr Connolly said that it was inappropriate for the ACT to be promoting an international arms trade. Yet, of course, in the Australian context, the ACT is the home of the international arms trade in this country, if you like, because it is the home of the Australian Government, and that Government is the largest consumer by far of those goods exhibited at that exhibition.

Dr Kinloch argued that it was unnatural to have an arms exhibition in the ACT; that it ran against the grain of the ACT's natural advantages. That obviously was not apparent to the organisers in 1989 because they came here to the ACT very willingly. Dr Kinloch glossed over the fact that ADFA and other Defence Force requirements are essential to Canberra. Canberra is basically the home of Australia's defence education and defence practitioners. It is a natural place for people to come to if they wish to sell arms to the Australian Government. I really do not think that there is any evidence that the arms trade that occurred in 1989 "mucked up", as Dr Kinloch put it, Canberra's image as a tourist destination. I doubt that anyone cancelled their holiday in the ACT because they saw that there was an arms exhibition going on here at one time in the last two years.

We have to look beyond the rhetoric of this matter. We have to look at what legitimately government ought to be doing, and it seems to me that government, at this time in particular, ought to be promoting the welfare of the ACT economy and the viability of businesses in the ACT. The decision made by Mr Connolly and his Government, to ban these exhibitions in the future, in effect means that the ACT will miss out considerably in that regard. I certainly do not wish to go to the people whose businesses have been damaged by this decision of this Government and say, "Today is Hiroshima Day and we are commemorating the first use of atomic weapons against human beings. Therefore, your business will have to lose the \$20,000 in profit it was planning to make by housing the people who are coming to this exhibition". I certainly will not be saying that to them and I think Mr Connolly would be a very brave man to go and do that himself.

The Aidex outrage is simply a knee-jerk reaction by the ACT Labor Party and the peaceniks who happen to find a home in that organisation. They are finding, I think, fewer and fewer opportunities to rally against their ideological enemies - capitalism, the military, the United States, the Western alliance and so on - so they find expression here in the ACT by banning this trade. I will not feel very happy when that trade moves out and goes to another Australian city, as I am certain it will. I certainly will not know what to say to those businesses that have lost out. I will feel, I think, a little bit of chagrin at the fact that the ACT's reputation will have been compromised and that the reputation of the ACT Government and Assembly as a joke government and a joke parliament will have been reinforced by the stupid, petty and irrelevant decision that has been made by this Government today.

MR MOORE (8.53): Mr Temporary Deputy Speaker, in my study of ethics, in Ethics 1 in the first year, we tried to determine just what morality was. I have heard a series of definitions about morality today and very few of them seem to come to grips with the basic concept of morality - what one ought or ought not do. It is a very simple concept, and it has nothing to do with money. What has happened in this Assembly today, I think, is very clear. The Liberals have a very strong view that money should rule over it. Of course, there is some duplicity in this approach that money should dictate morality.

I have heard a cross-section of this Assembly speak on this issue and take the rational and logical view that we do not want to be part of an international arms trade involved in death and destruction, and for that reason I will shortly seek leave of the Assembly to move a motion that I would like circulated at this stage. That motion reads:

That this Assembly endorses the principle that the ACT should not be used for promoting the international arms trade.

I think it is appropriate that we have a motion. Mr Stefaniak has raised the issue as a matter of public importance, and it is a matter of public importance. It is incumbent upon us, therefore, to take a stance as an Assembly and indicate to the people of Australia, and Canberra, just where we stand on this vile industry - because it is nothing other than a vile industry.

Let me move back to morality, because there is a great irony in dealing with morality. We have had quite a number of calls in my office over the last couple of days from people who oppose X-rated movies. They oppose what they see as some sexual immorality going on. We have had a quite large number of those calls. I have asked the staff in my office to ask each individual, as they call, what their stance would be on Aidex. Interestingly enough, we get a very strange duplicity in the morality of these people, and it is the same duplicity that we get in the morality of the Liberal Party.

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They are quite happy to interfere with the privacy of what goes on in people's bedrooms and things to do with sexuality. This is their response to sex which, to me, is enjoyable, delightful, terrific and great; I really like it. And, to take the analogy just one step forward, it is also a source of revenue for the ACT - although, of course, not a very good source of revenue because the Alliance Government stuffed that one too. These people seem to be petrified by some type of sexual immorality, and I have never been quite able to work out why it is that people are frightened of sexuality.

But at the same time the very same people - and we see them sitting across from us on those Liberal benches - are here saying that, whilst we can take a moral stand about sex, which does not harm anybody, we ought not allow morality to interfere with international trading in arms, which kills and maims. I could go on with a whole series of emotive analogies. Because of the shortness of the time I have to speak, Mr Temporary Deputy Speaker - I am not quite sure when this debate actually finishes - I think I should now take the opportunity to seek leave of the Assembly to move the motion that has now been circulated in my name.

Leave granted.

MR MOORE: Thank you, Assembly; I greatly appreciate it. In that case, I move:

That this Assembly endorses the principle that the ACT should not be used for promoting the international arms trade.

This also gives us the benefit, of course, of allowing anybody who has not spoken on this matter, and who wishes to add to the strength of the Assembly's feelings, to add their view. Of course, it will also allow members the opportunity to be counted as far as voting goes, so that the people of Canberra can see who are the supporters of the merchants and the moguls of death and destruction and who have the courage of their own morality to say, "Okay, we are going to miss out on some money, but money does not dictate absolutely everything and it ought not dictate absolutely everything".

A courageous decision has been taken by the Labor Government, and specifically by Terry Connolly, to direct the National Exhibition Centre no longer to hold these exhibitions. I think that, in taking into account financial circumstances, the Attorney-General has not made this a black and white issue; rather, he has taken a very sensible approach and has said, "Okay, we have had the contracts. We object to it; but we are going to allow the 1991 exhibition, sadly, to proceed. But, from then on, let the message go out to Australians that the ACT and the broad representatives of the ACT are not going to tolerate this sort of exhibition in the ACT. We recognise the

damage it causes across the world and we recognise that we have a responsibility. We are prepared to face that responsibility squarely and we are prepared to do without the particular income".

I still find it difficult to understand the duplicity of people as far as their concept of morality goes - what we ought to do and what we ought not to do. And, if what we ought to do is dictated by what pays most money, how can we have that view with reference to this and the opposite view with reference to X-rated movies? How can we say that governments are not on about interfering with this sort of morality, but we should be interfering with private sexuality? It is a very difficult issue.

I noted a short while ago that Mr Duby and Mr Connolly referred to a *Canberra Times* editorial, and Mr Duby commented on whether he liked to read *Canberra Times* editorials. I imagine that Mr Duby would like reading Ian Warden even less. I am sure it will be a worry to Mr Connolly that he does not get "the most hated man in Canberra" award from Ian Warden; nor does he get the award for "hyperbole of the year", which I graciously received from Mr Warden. No, he gets the "smooth-arm, cannily articulate Mr Connolly". If I were Mr Connolly I would be very worried. When Ian Warden is singing your praises, you have problems.

Mr Humphries: That is right; your days are numbered.

MR MOORE: Exactly. I would think that this is a great worry. Those of us who have received the end of Mr Warden's pen, of course, are aware of the effect that it has.

Where do these arms go? Although I have prepared my speech, these areas have been well covered by previous speakers. I congratulate each of the speakers that we have heard - other than those from the Liberal Party - particularly Dr Kinloch and Mr Duby, on their speeches. They dealt with the concept of the suspect regimes and just where these arms go.

It is quite clear to me that we ought not be party to this type of trading. We can take a moral stand and we can stand up and say it. We can get some people throughout Australia to say, "Hey, the ACT is not prepared to do that; I wonder why not". And, for every person who asks why we are prepared to let that money go, we go a step further to peace. After all, that is exactly what we are after.

The sort of stance proposed by Mr Stefaniak and Mr Humphries in no way heads towards peace. We are in an era of international disarmament. Let us not be part of the international arming.

Mr Humphries: Tell that to the Federal Government.

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MR MOORE: Mr Humphries, this message will go loud and clear to the Federal Government.

MR SPEAKER: Mr Collaery, just before you commence, I advise members that the matter of public importance has concluded time-wise. But, of course, we are now speaking to a motion and therefore we have 15 minutes each for the first two speakers and 10 minutes for any member thereafter.

MR COLLAERY (9.04): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for pointing that out to members. Mr Humphries, speaking for the Liberal Party, categorised the people opposed to this exhibition as either from the Australian Labor Party or peaceniks. I am neither. I am not a pacifist; I am not a Quaker - and I have great respect for and brotherly camaraderie with my colleague Dr Kinloch. I am far from being a pacifist. I have had a career that has embraced seeing the outcomes of the deadly conflicts that have afflicted our world in increasing measure since the end of the great catastrophe of World War II. I have carried a weapon, and I have witnessed dreadful things that relate to the attempts to solve conflict by armed struggle.

I was in Japan a few days ago, and I noticed two things in the short time I was there. Before I went there I had no interest in ever travelling to that country, and I have had the opportunity on a number of occasions. I had no interest because I have some sort of natural hang-up from the Second World War. Anyway, I went there and visited a daughter who works in the far north of Japan, in an area that borders the disputed regions between the Japanese and the Soviets. It is interesting to go to an institutionalised pacifist country, with very little evidence of militarism, even close to the Soviet border. In just about every city I went to there were black fascist vans with loud speakers, and they are travelling around and working very hard in Japan at the moment to develop a fascist right-wing movement. They extol the rearming of Japan and they disturb the community. They go around at all hours of the night, and it is worrying for someone from this community to go and watch that sinister and insidious activity going on in that country which was bombed into pacifism.

I like to think that the Japanese society as it is will not change and that they have reflected on what occurred to them in Nagasaki and Hiroshima and in the enormous fires that swept Tokyo and other cities. In the ACT, many of us are not touched by war and know little about it. Listening to the Liberal speakers, I doubted very much that they had really lived. They have probably not seen some of the awful products of human conflict.

At the moment, the world continues to spend more on arms than it spends on anything else. In the past 10 years \$US8,000 billion was spent on arms. Think of what that could have done for the Third World. The cost of mounting

Operation Desert Shield was \$53 billion. The wharfies in Wollongong refused to load pig iron onto Japanese ships shortly before the Second World War and, with great irony, many of them then marched off with the 8th Division, which was recruited in great measure in the Illawarra, to perish at the hands of the Japanese. Why cannot we live with a tradition in our community that is very Australian - that of being opposed to supporting armed struggle and the resolution of conflict by war? There is nothing wimpy, there is nothing peacenik and there is nothing exclusively Australian Labor Party about taking the view that we need not promote the arms trade.

I certainly accept the need for armed responses in certain situations - and they are classic, philosophical arguments. There is no way that I would show the other cheek, were someone to attack my home. The arms struggle is coming closer to Australia. Malaysia has just bought 300 US Hawk fighters worth \$400m. There will clearly be offsets and attempts by our armaments industry to get into servicing and other arrangements. We are moving closer to those countries in military cooperation. I spent a few years working with the West Papuan refugees and, upon hearing Bill Hayden at one stage, in his then role as Foreign Minister, describe the plight of the Irian Jayans, particularly in the lower Merauke region, as mere cultural disturbance when I had one client with bayonet wounds with me on Thursday Island, I felt cold about our country.

The only way good people - and people who serve their country in direct or indirect ways - can stand up in respect of arms struggles and their terrorism is to, in every small way, support principled moves. I believe that the move that Mr Connolly, his party and his caucus have taken is principled. It is one of those rare occasions when I applaud something that they have done. Perhaps there could have been a little more forward consultation. A little more could have been done by way of calling the various parties in and explaining the view and explaining the positive aspects to Canberra, rather than just dropping it on them. I am not convinced that it was handled as smoothly as it could have been. But I do not want to be churlish and take anything away from the principle that it has set up.

I would dearly love this Australian Labor Party of the ACT to put a little more pressure on the Australian Federal Government over the situation in Timor - the dreadful running sore in that place - and the continuing environmental, economic and military depredation of the West Papuans, right next to our country. You can fly there in an hour or so. Yet we have a lot to say about the Gulf. I believe that the Australian Labor Party in the ACT, if it is serious and has not got into this just as a flash affair, should now take issue with the Hawke Government on its increasing support for governments in our near regions that use violence as a means of subjugating their genuine liberation struggles and proper movements in those countries.

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It is a deadly diet to see weapons sales going on, and I think it is wrong of the Liberal Party to suggest that these sales are only for defensive purposes and will go only to merchants who promote defence as a last resort. That is a myth; there is no way of holding onto where all of these items go. It is not the armaments that are taken away in crates; it is the insidious back deals and offset agreements, the technology transfers that are part of the arms trade and that produce the technology in underdeveloped countries for them to get armaments going themselves - computers and other technological developments - so that they can really maintain power in their dictatorships.

I worry about Mr Moore's motion. I think that if this Assembly endorses the principle that the ACT should not be used for promoting the international arms trade it might suggest that this Territory cannot be used, through the defence services here, to have offset agreements with New Zealand and other proper thinking military partners of Australia. I am not too sure that this does not offend the Anzac arrangements. New Zealand has taken bold steps in non-nuclear approaches; yet this motion would tend to prohibit it from being here in the ACT promoting the international arms trade. If Mr Moore gets a chance to respond to debate upon his motion, perhaps he can clarify what he means and whether he is referring merely to Aidex-type arrangements.

Finally, there is a need for consistency. If this Territory, in a majority vote today, supports this motion, we will have to be consistent in our approach and carry this message to the Federal Government and to all right thinking people in the nation. I expect that there will be an informed attempt to explain nationally why this decision was taken. I call upon the Chief Minister to have the courage to tell her Labor colleagues interstate and other Chief Ministers and Premiers why this decision has been taken and why it has been supported - the variety of reasons - by this democratic Assembly.

MR STEFANIAK (9.14): Mr Speaker, the Liberal Party will move an amendment, principally because Mr Moore's motion, as even Mr Collaery has indicated, is somewhat vague and misses the point. He talks of this Assembly endorsing "the principle that the ACT should not be used for promoting the international arms trade". I formally move the following amendment to the motion:

That all words after "Assembly" be omitted and the following substituted: "condemns the Follett Labor Government's attitude to AIDEX".

I reiterate - and this is the problem with Mr Moore's motion - that Aidex was established here to provide a Canberra showcase for international and Australian companies wishing to sell defence equipment to the Australian Government. It is not to promote the international arms trade as such.

There are a number of other inherent contradictions in Mr Collaery's speech as well. He, I think quite rightly, talked about the effects the motion might have on our joint defence arrangements with New Zealand. I noted also with interest Mr Collaery's recent trip to Japan. We have talked about Hiroshima Day here today. There was Hiroshima and there was Nagasaki and a lot of people were killed there - I think all up about 130,000. However, had that not happened and Japan been invaded, over one-and-a-half million allied servicemen and millions of Japanese citizens would have lost their lives.

Mr Collaery: It is a separate issue, Bill.

MR STEFANIAK: It is not a separate issue, Bernard; nor is your point - and it is a very valid point - about Japanese fascists running around wanting to rearm. Of all countries, Japan - one of the fascist powers of World War II - unleashed a reign of terror throughout Asia. In China, 40 million Chinese were killed by Japanese aggression, starting in 1931 in Manchuria. In fact, not only was it killing people in Manchuria, it was also actively promoting the supply of opium to make that whole province a dope riddled society. There was the rape of Nanking.

Mr Berry: Were they not killed with guns?

MR STEFANIAK: They were killed with opium; they were also killed with guns; they were killed with bayonets. They were killed in all sorts of horrible ways, Mr Berry. So, I think the Japanese people were revolted as much as anything else by the militarism shown in that country over the years. How were they stopped? They were stopped by superior force. Japan, amongst the other fascist powers in the 1930s, laughed at the weak-kneed reactions of the Western powers who simply were not interested in countering aggression with force.

Let us look at a few historical facts. It started, perhaps, with the 1922 naval treaty. The Western powers, Australia included, did their level best to decrease the arms trade. Pursuant to that treaty, we sank our one battle cruiser off Sydney Heads in 1924. We reduced our armed forces. The major powers of Britain, the United States and France did the same - not so fascist Germany, fascist Japan, fascist Italy; nor, indeed, fascist communist regimes such as the Soviet Union. They went on an aggressive rampage. What did we see there? We did nothing at the rape of Ethiopia, a country that was very primitive then and had very few arms. It was overrun by a

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then reasonably powerful Italy. There was the militarisation of the Rhineland, the Anschluss in Austria, Czechoslovakia. The West bent over backwards trying to use peaceful means to stop aggression. It did not work. We had World War II.

Mr Collaery, you made a statement about the Liberals not having any idea of what war is all about. I do not think that is so at all. The Liberal Leader, Mr Kaine, I think, served in Vietnam, as did one of your colleagues, Mr Jensen. Indeed, were it not for the rape of Poland by Nazi Germany, I doubt that I would be here today, because my father would probably still be living there. So, Mr Collaery, I think we do have some idea of what war is all about.

I will also answer Dr Kinloch. Dr Kinloch, I have had a university training; I have also had a military training. I have probably seen a lot more violence at university than I have ever seen in the military. I do not think there are too many people in the Australian military who glorify war. They train to avoid war as much as anything else. You fight if you have to, Dr Kinloch; but I do not think there are any soldiers who want to go to war and who glorify killing. Certainly you, as a former serviceman, would have to agree with that, as I am sure would Mr Jensen as a former member of the Australian Regular Army.

Unfortunately - and I think world events consistently show this - the only way to deter aggressive powers is to be militarily strong. And, unfortunately, to be militarily strong you need arms. You certainly need controls, and I reiterate that Australia has controls to ensure that arms are not sold to ratbag regimes who will use them. We would not, I hope, have a situation where any of our products would end up with someone like Saddam Hussein. But, all right, even if those things happen, so be it. The fact of the matter is that we do our best to ensure that we have controls; but the only way you can live in a world such as this, unfortunately, is to be able to defend yourself and to be in alliances. That, unfortunately, means arms and, unfortunately, in selling arms you need such exhibitions as Aidex.

Let us get back to the point. The problem with Mr Moore's motion is that Aidex is not there to promote the international arms trade. Aidex is there to promote the selling of defence equipment to our own Australian Labor Government.

MR KAINÉ (Leader of the Opposition) (9.20): Mr Speaker, I was not going to speak on this subject, because there is, of course, some justification for the position that the Labor Party and Mr Moore have adopted. I think that the debate has shown that there is a moral element in connection with military equipment that is of concern to many people. As Bill Stefaniak has rightly pointed out, military equipment is of as great concern to military

people as it is to anybody else, because they are very often on the receiving end of it. But I think that the debate tonight has shown how far away from the nub of the problem we can get. It started off, of course, with Mr Connolly talking about selling mustard gas to Saddam Hussein. We do not intend to sell any mustard gas to Saddam Hussein, and Mr Connolly knows it.

What we ought to have been debating tonight is the fact that the Labor Party, in its usual fashion, has used a sledgehammer to crack a nut. Mr Connolly's reaction to the Aidex exhibition is to put out an edict that says that you cannot show any military equipment whatsoever. It does not matter whether it is a piece of uniform or a combat ration pack. No military equipment at all, by that edict, can be shown for sale or otherwise. You cannot even put it on exhibition out there. If somebody is manufacturing a food pack that has been designed for military use, and it also has a civilian application, under that sledgehammer it cannot be shown in any shape or form at Aidex.

Here we are again, with this great consultative Labor Party. They did not go and talk to the people who want to put this exhibition on; they just issued their edict. And you talk about consultation. You simply have no comprehension of the problem. You have no comprehension of the enormity of the solution that you have wrought. It would have been very simple to have spoken to these people and said, "There are all categories of military equipment; there are some kinds we do not want. We do not want your bombs; we do not want your guns; we do not want your tanks". There are other kinds of equipment that are defensive in nature - personal security equipment - that could in no way be seen as being offensive by anybody. But, no, you have to kill it off; hit it with a sledgehammer.

You talk about dropping H-bombs on Hiroshima. That is what you have done on Canberra. In economic terms, that is what you have done to Canberra. If the Labor Party can go over the top of the hill on a subject like this, what is going to be next? They take a dislike to some element of our industry, and they say, "Not in Canberra. We will not have you near us because it offends Labor Party ideology". Never mind the other 70 per cent of Australians who do not subscribe to your Labor Party ideology - "To hell with you lot. We did not get elected here to represent everybody; we got elected to represent only the 60 ideologues sitting over in our Labor Party caucus. That is who we respond to, and to hell with the rest of you". I do not believe that you people could not have sat down in a sensible way and talked to the people who want to put on this exhibition and come to some compromise about what could and could not be exhibited.

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That is what the debate should have been about. It is not about our dropping atom bombs on Japan. We have never had nuclear capability, and nor will we ever. It is not about nuclear bombs and Hiroshima; it is not about mustard gas and Saddam Hussein; it is about defence equipment that our forces might need to defend this country. But I would not have minded if you had drawn the line somewhere and said, "There are some kinds of military equipment that we find objectionable". There are some forms of military equipment that I find objectionable - and I spent 22 years of my life in the military.

But I think you went right over the top, as you so often do. If you had bothered to consult, you might have found a solution that did not go so far, that would not have offended so many people and that would have allowed us to still have some industry in this town. But you do not want that; just drive them all away. Let us not talk about it; let us just hit them with a sledgehammer. Mr Speaker, frankly, I am appalled.

MR DUBY (9.24): Mr Speaker, I must compliment Mr Kaine; that was a wonderful speech. The only problem is, of course, that he did not address any of the issues that we are talking about tonight. We started off talking about - and I quote the matter of public importance:

The enormous damage done to Canberra's standing as a national and international conference and exhibition venue by the Follett Labor Government's attitude to AIDEX.

I think that a number of speakers tonight, myself included, have pointed out that no such damage of any kind has occurred. Indeed, I think it has been pointed out by some speakers that we may well have actually come out on the black side of the ledger, for once.

As I have pointed out, the queue to get into the Natex Centre is very long and very varied. The booking for 1993, I am sure, will be snapped up very quickly by an equivalent organisation. It may well be an organisation that is more profitable for the city. Mr Connolly quite rightly pointed out that the cost of policing another Penises for Peace demonstration will probably more than outweigh the revenue gained by the Territory from the hire of the venue.

So, we have gone on and progressed to bigger and better things. I think, as a matter of principle, the majority of members of this Assembly have said, "As a matter of fact, not only have we not done damage to Canberra's standing as a national and international conference and exhibition venue, but indeed this Assembly supports the stand taken. We do not want anything to do with the vicious armaments trade. It can be somewhere else". No-one is disputing the need for a well equipped, well armed and ready defence force for the defence of our country, and indeed other nations.

Mr Kaine: But you are a NIMBY - not in my back yard. You have adopted Mr Moore's philosophy.

MR DUBY: Please, Mr Kaine, do not wish that on me. Let us get it right. What most of the members of this Assembly are saying is that we abhor violence and we do not want to be part of the international armaments trade. That is a very simple thing. I cannot, as a matter of fact, understand why there would be any objection to it from my esteemed fellow members. Indeed, to me that would be a very honourable thing to try to attain. Every little step taken is a little closer that we get to where we want to be, where there would be fewer armaments and less death and destruction on the world scene.

Accordingly, I find no objection whatsoever to Mr Moore's motion. I think it has been made perfectly clear by the speakers that we are not trying in any way to declare the ACT an armaments free zone or a nuclear free zone; nor are we trying to interfere in any way with Australia-New Zealand relations, or even relations with the United States or anything like that. We are simply saying that we do not want to be part of the arms trade. We do not want displays such as Aidex which entail the best way to take out a platoon in the shortest possible time being demonstrated here in the ACT. We do not want our children to be part of that scene. We know that it is necessary, and we know that those things need to be developed. But we do not want to be part of a bazaar, a marketplace for them, where, as we all know, with the best intentions, these products wind up going to the most strange end locations in the world.

Indeed, there are probably many families today - in countries that are friendly to us - who regret the day that there was an arms display in London, Brussels or, for that matter, Washington; families of people who have gone off to the Gulf and have been killed by armaments that are displayed and sold in the Western world. I think that is deplorable. I endorse the motion entirely, and I think any sensible person should endorse it also.

MR JENSEN (9.29): Mr Speaker, the issue we are discussing tonight is a difficult and complex one. It is not a simple case of right over wrong. As one who has served in our Defence Force, and as a former infantry platoon commander in South Vietnam, as I have said before, anyone who thinks that war and the killing of one's fellow humans is a game or a great adventure has never been involved in such an experience. There is a major difference between training for war and actually being involved in war. I trained at the time because there was a war on, as many of my fellow countrymen did at the time.

Debate interrupted.

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ADJOURNMENT

MR SPEAKER: Order! It being 9.30 pm, I propose the question:

That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Mr Berry: I require the question to be put forthwith without debate.

Question resolved in the negative.

AIDEX

Debate resumed.

MR JENSEN: As I was saying, I and many of my colleagues were actually called and trained to participate in a war because there was a belief on the part of the Government at the time that there was a threat to this nation - a threat that had, in fact, materialised in previous times when the representatives of the country that my colleague Mr Collaery has just recently visited were effectively banging on the back door of our country, rather loudly and with very large and noisy weapons. My father, in fact, was personally involved in the conflict in New Guinea as they sought to stop the advance of the Japanese towards this country.

Unfortunately, that second war to end all wars did not solve the problem. As we have seen in recent times, the desire for power and territory continues. In the country of Yugoslavia, civilians and military members on both sides are engaged in a bloody conflict as some of them seek to protect their homeland while others appear, to me anyway, to be seeking to subjugate their neighbours. What are the Croatian people and the members of the Baltic nations, for example, to do in such circumstances? Are they, as my colleague Mr Collaery said, going to turn the other cheek and cop it sweet? Unfortunately, I suspect not. That is the nature of the human race of which we are part. It is an unfortunate trait, if you like; but is one that we have to live with. Hopefully, as time progresses we will be able to do something about it. But certainly I do not believe that it will happen in my lifetime. So, this is the problem: While we may not want to be involved in such an activity, there may well come a time when an enemy force, once again, is prepared to seek to invade and subjugate our nation.

As has already been said, the national capital is the central focus for our Defence Force, and I guess that that is one of the reasons why the Aidex group has chosen to come to the national capital. The people who make the decisions on the purchase of weapons for use by our Defence Force are here. We have a defence force, and I suspect

that the majority of Australians would agree that there is a requirement for a defence force. Indeed, as I have already indicated, this was the occupation that brought me to this national capital.

The question, however, really is: Do we really want this sort of trade and activity here in the national capital? I suggest that there are other trades and activities that the national capital has chosen not to bring into its confines. Almost from the day this national capital was established, the concept has always been: It will be a national capital; it will be a people capital; it will not be an industrial capital - there will not be smokestacks and other outlets pouring pollution into the atmosphere and into our rivers. The people that were running the national capital made a decision at the time that we would not have a particular industry operating in our city.

So, while we believe that, human nature being what it is, there will continue to be a requirement for people to buy, maintain and develop arms, we believe that it is not inappropriate to decide, as we have done for other industries in the past, that that type of industry is not one that we would seek to encourage here in our national capital.

Some people could argue that I am trying to have two bob each way. Maybe I am, because on that basis you could argue that all people who belong to the defence forces - because the defence forces are effectively the defence industry - should leave this town because we do not want that industry to operate here in the ACT. Okay, that is the conundrum, I guess, that we find ourselves in. But that particular industry, the defence administration industry if you like, has been here almost from the time that the decision was made not to bring industry into this capital. What we are saying is that it is appropriate for that part of the defence industry to operate out of our national capital because it is close to the seat of power.

So, while it could be said that there may be some - how should I put it? - inconsistencies in the arguments that I have put here tonight, it seems to me that, once again, it is not inappropriate, having made similar decisions in the past, for the citizens of this city to say, "We do not want this particular hard edge of the defence industry operating in our national capital".

MS FOLLETT (Chief Minister and Treasurer) (9.36): I will speak very briefly on the motion. I am very pleased indeed that there has been support for Mr Moore's motion from other groups within the Assembly. I think it is an indication to all of us that whenever the issue of world peace arises we always get a lot of rhetoric about it but we less often get any action about it. The fact is that some attempts have been made right throughout the world to actually do something towards world peace in recent years. We have seen the Cold War come to an end. We have Mr Bush

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and Mr Gorbachev actively involved in discussions to reduce arms. We have recently seen, from the Australian point of view, our own forces sent to the Middle East in an effort to restore world peace to an area of the world that was at war. Those people have all, obviously, taken the opportunity to do something towards world peace in accordance with their policies and their duty as they saw it.

I see the step that we are taking here in the ACT as a very small part of such a movement. We are saying as a community that we do not wish to promote arms, or the trade in arms, and we do not wish to see our national capital, and our own home city, used in that way. I think it is very pleasing to see that there has been such support across the parties in the Assembly and that, in effect, it seems that this parliament will be giving its endorsement to an action taken by the Government. I would like to think that, had there been a different government, perhaps this same debate would still have occurred. So, I thank Mr Moore for putting up the motion, and I very much thank all of those members in the Assembly who have indicated that they will be supporting it.

MR MOORE (9.38): Mr Speaker, I indicated to Mr Collaery that I would clarify the content of the motion, and I believe that other members have done so in the way they have spoken to it. We are talking simply about the international arms trade - the trade and the trading, as represented by Aidex. We are not talking about the other possibilities that Mr Collaery raised. That is the content and the meaning of the motion; that is the way it has been discussed tonight. I believe that that is the spirit in which it has been raised.

I believe that the spirit of the Assembly tonight will start a ball rolling that will give an indication to other people that they too can begin to do something about this obnoxious international trade in arms. It is only a very small step, but it is an important step that will be taken in this Assembly tonight.

Amendment negatived.

Original question resolved in the affirmative.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND TEMPORARY ORDERS

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

That, in relation to the proceedings on the Interim Planning (Amendment) Bill 1991, so much of the standing and temporary orders be suspended as would prevent the presentation of the Bill and the consideration of the Bill, at all stages, from proceeding forthwith.

INTERIM PLANNING (AMENDMENT) BILL 1991

MR WOOD (Minister for Education and the Arts and Minister for the Environment, Land and Planning) (9.41): Mr Speaker, I present the Interim Planning (Amendment) Bill 1991. I move:

That this Bill be agreed to in principle.

The Bill amends the Interim Planning Act 1990, which provides for the establishment of the Territory Planning Authority and the preparation of a Territory Plan, and details the procedure for making and varying that Territory Plan. The amendments proposed in this Bill deal with the matter of making and varying the Territory Plan.

The Interim Planning Act sets out the procedures for the approval of draft plans by the Executive and also provides for consideration of such plans by the Legislative Assembly. Under the Act, where a draft plan is placed before the Executive for approval, the Executive has the options of either approving the plan or returning the draft plan to the Planning Authority. If the plan is returned to the authority it may be returned with written directions. These may include directions to revise, defer or withdraw the plan.

Once a plan has been approved by the Executive, the Act requires that the plan, within six sitting days of its approval, be laid before this Assembly. Unless the Assembly passes a resolution rejecting the plan, or part of the plan, within six sitting days of the plan being laid before it, the Minister is required to notify details of the plan's operation in the *Gazette*. Thus it is approved and takes effect on the date nominated in the *Gazette*. Once a draft plan is approved by the Executive there is no provision in the Interim Planning Act for approval of the draft plan to be withdrawn or revoked. In a situation where circumstances may have led the Executive to change its view of a plan which has been approved, there is no scope provided in the legislation to avoid the requirement that an approved plan be tabled before the Assembly.

That is the case now. The Executive has changed its mind. In fact, it is a new Executive - a changed Executive - and, as members will agree, that Executive wants to indicate its policy towards the variations. Some members opposite may not agree with what we are going to do with those variations, but I am sure that they will agree with the right of the Government to be able to impress its view upon these matters.

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The amendments proposed in this Bill will remedy the situation and will provide the Executive with a power to revoke its approval of a plan at any time before the plan is laid before the Assembly. I believe that this is a sensible proposal. There is a gap in the Act that needs to be filled, and this amending Bill will do it.

There is a consequence to the amendment we are proposing. So, related to this amendment is the proposed amendment to the provisions of the Act dealing with the "defined period" during which the Territory, Executive, a Minister or a Territory authority may not do any act which would be inconsistent with the draft plan. The Act presently provides that, in the periods defined from the time a draft plan variation is notified in the *Gazette* until either the day before the variation comes into effect or the day before the variation is rejected by the Assembly or the day before the variation is withdrawn, no act may be done which would be inconsistent with the draft variation. This is, if you like, a protective device to see that nothing can be done that is inconsistent with the proposed draft. It protects what is held at the moment.

The Bill will amend the definition of "defined period", so that it will include a period which commences on the date a draft plan variation is notified in the *Gazette* and ends on the expiration of the day before the date the Executive revokes its approval of the variation. During this period, the Territory, the Executive, a Minister or a Territory authority will be prohibited from doing any act which would be inconsistent with the Territory Plan if it were varied in accordance with the draft variation.

The amendments proposed in the Interim Planning (Amendment) Bill 1991 provide the Executive with the option of revoking its approval of a draft plan before the plan is laid before the Assembly, and will facilitate the planning process by terminating, on the day before the day of revocation, the period during which acts inconsistent with the draft variation are prohibited.

The Bill has no revenue or cost implications, and I commend the Bill to the Assembly. I present the explanatory memorandum for the Bill.

MR COLLAERY (9.46): Mr Speaker, the Rally supports this Bill. The Rally particularly points out that the Bill allows the Executive to revoke an approval only at any time before the plan is laid before the Assembly. Any developer apprised of an approval who proceeded with development work prior to the tabling and passage of a draft variation would do so at their peril and would not be acting commercially. This does not prejudice, in our view, those who get word of a matter being approved by an Executive at any time prior to the tabling and passage of it under the subordinate rules.

As Mr Wood correctly observed, whatever the substantive issue at stake in the draft variations at issue - and they are somewhat historic variations from the Rally's view - the fact is that the democratic process should allow the government of the day to be the master of the processes of government and the executive activity. It might well be argued, as my colleague Mr Jensen has observed, that perhaps this provision should have been in the Interim Planning Bill originally, in any event. But I hasten to say that that interim Bill was drafted quickly and competently by the government draftspersons according to instructions that were prepared quickly when the consultation process was found to be becoming stretched. I make no criticism of the draftspeople at the time; nor would I accept, on the part of any of us who supported the Interim Planning Bill, that we have erred. I do not believe that this situation was precedented and foreseen.

So, briefly, we support the Bill as a proper aspect of good government. The substantive issue affecting those draft variations can, if anyone wishes, be debated or discussed at another time.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill agreed to in principle.

Leave granted to dispense with the detail stage.

Bill agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Death of Mrs Norma I'Anson

MR MOORE (9.49): Mr Speaker, I believe it appropriate at this time to mention the death of Mrs Norma I'Anson, who died on 5 May 1991. It is appropriate that members of the Assembly express their deep regret at her death and tender our sympathy to her widower, Brian I'Anson. Norma I'Anson was a true asset to the Canberra community, dedicating her life in Canberra to helping others. As a founding member and subsequently president and secretary of the Northside Community Service for many years, Norma I'Anson contributed greatly to the community. Mrs I'Anson will always be remembered by those who knew her for her untiring efforts to help establish the Northside Community Service in its infancy at a time of tight fiscal restraint and rapidly emerging needs of the elderly in Canberra. Without her contribution, the service would not be where it is today.

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But her contribution to the community did not end there. Mrs I'Anson was also a founding member of the Mental Health Foundation. She worked actively for the Barton Cooperative, a low-cost housing group; she was a member of the Hospice Association; she was secretary and newsletter editor of the Black Mountain branch of the ALP and served many years in the Public Sector Union.

Norma I'Anson was a quiet, determined achiever. She had a way of bringing people together to achieve a common purpose - to help those in the community who needed help to live a fuller life. It is through the efforts of people like Norma I'Anson that the community spirit inherent in our city remains as strong as it is today. Mrs I'Anson's great talent with people, her compassion for helping fellow beings and her work in the Canberra community will be greatly missed not only by those who knew her but by all those who benefit from her efforts, now and in years to come.

Death of Mrs Norma I'Anson

DR KINLOCH (9.51): Mr Speaker, I would like to endorse Mr Moore's comments. Norma was a member of our Quaker meeting for many years. Over a period of 20 years or more I was very aware of her and her strengths. We watched her enormous courage in her closing months, as some others of you here, I remember, also did. Of course, she would have rejoiced in the motion that we heard here tonight.

Balkans

MR COLLAERY (9.52): I rise briefly to remind members of this Assembly that the events that are occurring in the Balkans affect a considerable proportion of the ACT community. I believe that it behoves members of this Assembly to take an active public interest in those events. It is not the exclusive province of the Federal Government. Whilst international relations may well be the province of the Federal Government, the fact is that there is a significant constituency within this community who have a direct interest in the events there.

I am not going to talk about the groups themselves, other than to say that I believe that more members of this Assembly should take an active interest in those affairs and that we should be careful about revisiting political backgrounds that may stem from the war on the children of those people who are now faced with a conflagration that does not relate to whatever perhaps their parents or their grandparents were involved in in the Second World War.

I believe that our community is acting, to a certain extent, overly cautiously in relation to those matters. I have been corresponding with the Foreign Minister, Senator Gareth Evans, asking him to get Australia and the new world more actively involved in having an international peacekeeping force put together in the same manner in which our country has supported those moves in the Sinai, Kashmir, Cyprus and other places.

I believe that the Assembly should, in proper order and to a proper extent, let that important element of the ACT community know how desirous we are of seeing that conflict resolved, that the combatants be separated and that there be no short-term attempts to gain territorial advantage whilst the European Community wanders and wavers in its attempts to find a peacekeeping role. My view is that the European Community will not solve this matter and it is up to the new world to come in and support those people in what is surely going to become a most bitter and bloody struggle.

Yugoslav Community

MRS GRASSBY (9.54): I rise to congratulate the members of the Yugoslav community who live in Canberra - which consists of many groups from Croatians to Slovenians - on the fact that they, who must be suffering very much over what is happening in their country today, have tried to keep the community here very much together. I congratulate this community on what they have done, because it must be painful for them and their families. This morning we heard a gentleman who had to watch a news broadcast to find that his brother had been killed. Otherwise he would not have known. He does not know where his father is, and he is very worried about how his whole family has been spread all over the place through this war. It must be very hard for these people.

I think we, as a community, should be helping them, maybe by prayers. This is the way I have been asked to help, and I will do so. And we must also accept the pain that they will be going through. But, as a wonderful community, as one of our large group of ethnic communities in this city, they want to see the end of this, as painlessly as can be, and not see their country and their people ripped apart. My heart goes out to them, and I fully support them in the pain they are going through at the moment.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Assembly adjourned at 9.56 pm

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Question No. 414

Private Members' Business - Divisions

MRS GRASSBY: To ask the Speaker -

1. How many divisions been held in the Legislative Assembly in private Members' business up to and including 17 April 1991.
2. For how many of these divisions was Mr. Stevenson not present to record a vote.

MR PROWSE: The answer is as follows:

Date of Vote	Number of Votes	A Vote for
Mr. Stevenson		
Recorded		

Table included.

2475

Date of Vote	Number of Vote	A Vote for Mr. Stevenson Recorded
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Table included.

Number of votes Mr Stevenson
not present for - 7

Number of votes Mr Stevenson
present for - 39

TOTAL	46	
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2476