



DEBATES

OF THE

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FOR THE

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

HANSARD

20 November 1990

Tuesday, 20 November 1990

Petitions:

Weetangera Primary School	4221
Melba Health Centre	4221

Papers	4222
--------------	------

Questions without notice:

School closures - task force	4222
School closures	4223
Arts funding	4223
School closures - bus services	4225
Ministerial travel - basic equipment allowance	4225
Royal Canberra Hospital South - obstetrics block	4227
School closures - tenants	4228
Garbage collection services	4228
Hospital services	4229
School closures - Cook Primary School	4230
Tourism and marketing group	4230
School closures - Lyons Primary School	4231
School closures - Hackett Primary School	4232
Petrol tax	4232
Woden Valley Hospital	4233
Royal Canberra Hospital	4234
South East Economic Development Council	4236
Minister for Community Services	4236

Personal explanation	4238
----------------------------	------

Papers	4238
--------------	------

Special Premiers Conference (Ministerial statement)	4238
---	------

Death of Mr P Harrison	4242
------------------------------	------

School system (Matter of public importance)	4247
---	------

Planning, Development and Infrastructure - standing committee	4265
--	------

Estimates - select committee	4277
------------------------------------	------

Personal explanations	4320
-----------------------------	------

Answers to questions:

Priorities Review Board - recommendations (Question No 209)	4323
Belconnen Community Health Centre (Question No 239)	4332
City Health Centre (Question No 240)	4333
Dickson Community Health Centre (Question No 241)	4334
Kambah Community Health Centre (Question No 242)	4335
Kippax Community Health Centre (Question No 243)	4336
Melba Community Health Centre (Question No 244)	4337
Narrabundah Community Health Centre (Question No 245)	4338
Phillip Community Health Centre (Question No 246)	4339
Scullin Community Health Centre (Question No 247)	4340
Weston Creek Community Health Centre (Question No 248)	4341
TAFE funding sources (Question No 260)	4342
Teenage employment (Question No 274)	4343
Non-government schools - interest subsidy scheme (Question No 275)	4346
Disabled persons - employment programs (Question No 276)	4349
Public and private sector employment (Question No 277)	4351

Tuesday, 20 November 1990

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

PETITIONS

The Clerk: The following petitions have been lodged for presentation, and a copy will be referred to the appropriate Minister:

Weetangera Primary School

To the Honourable the Speaker and members of the Australian Capital Territory Legislative Assembly

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

1. The undersigned attended the annual Weetangera School Concert on the 25th October 1990.
2. The Weetangera School Hall can hold a large number of people.
3. The Weetangera School is the only community facility in Weetangera and is used by a number of different community groups.
4. We don't want to lose our only community facility. We totally reject the decision to close Weetangera Primary School and will continue to work in opposition to it.

The petitioners therefore pray that the Assembly direct the ACT Government not to close Weetangera Primary School.

By **Mr Moore** (from 330 citizens).

Melba Health Centre

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: Our concern at the threatened closure of health centres in the ACT and in particular the closure of Melba Health Centre.

20 November 1990

Your petitioners therefore request the Assembly to: ensure that the ACT Government does not close the Melba Health Centre.

By **Mr Berry** (from 1,236 citizens).

Petitions received.

PAPERS

MR CONNOLLY, by leave: Mr Speaker, I table petitioning letters from 128 citizens of Canberra drawing to the attention of the Assembly their concern that gaming machines are not available in licensed taverns.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

School Closures - Task Force

MS FOLLETT: My question is to Mr Humphries, the Minister for Education. Mr Humphries, given that you intend to set up a task force to look at restructuring the ACT school system, I ask you: Do you admit now that the process that you have used this year was fundamentally flawed? Secondly, will you withdraw your proposal to close any ACT school until that task force has reported?

MR HUMPHRIES: The answer to the latter part of Ms Follett's question is no. Ms Follett seeks to rely in part on the recommendation of the Hudson inquiry when she says that the establishment of a task force is some legitimate response to the present situation and yet she ignores the Hudson report when it comes to the question of whether those four schools indicated by the Government to close should close.

I intend to proceed, as the Government has decided, on the basis of the Hudson report. That report indicates that the Government is entitled to proceed and to make savings from the closure of four primary schools and at the same time to establish a task force to examine the issues of establishing long-term strategies for finding savings in the school system.

That strategy is referred to by Mr Hudson as a small schools policy. That is not the term that I would use at this stage, given that there are many factors, some of which are more or less acceptable to the community and to the Government, in the suggestions made by Mr Hudson. But certainly the idea of a task force to explore future savings strategies is an excellent one and one which the Government has today endorsed.

School Closures

MR STEVENSON: My question is to the Minister for Education. I have received a letter from a member of the Weetangera community who is greatly concerned about the foreshadowed closures of all schools, but particularly Weetangera. The writer wishes to know: Is the Minister aware of the efforts the community groups have made that would enable the Government to achieve its budgetary objectives at the same time as keeping the schools open? With the various options canvassed, do they not reflect the understanding that, by managing schools more effectively and securing savings in other ways, community interests and Government objectives could be reconciled?

MR HUMPHRIES: I think, Mr Speaker, that Mr Stevenson must be aware that the Government has made a decision that Weetangera school should not close and so I would expect the concerns of that person to be at least partly allayed, particularly as far as the Weetangera school is concerned. In terms of the other issues Mr Stevenson has raised, these are issues about which there has been endless and, I think, very full debate in the Assembly. The Government does not resile from the view that there is a case for the closure of some schools. It also has examined very carefully, very thoroughly, over the last several months, issues concerning alternative savings measures. It is partly as a way of picking up those alternative savings measures, including some of those which are mentioned in Mr Stevenson's question, that the Government has now determined to establish a task force which will have the role of identifying strategies for dealing with such issues in the future.

We share the concern of the community that we establish a good basis for dealing with this issue in the future. I believe that, having made the decision in respect of those four schools, the mechanism is a very appropriate one and will carry with it at least the germ of hope that we can settle such debates in the future in a far more amicable fashion.

Arts Funding

MR STEFANIAK: My question is to Mr Humphries in his capacity as Minister for the Arts. I notice with interest three rather ridiculous badges the Leader of the Opposition, Mrs Grassby and Mr Connolly are wearing. If they think they are going to bust this Minister I think they have another think coming.

Mrs Grassby: I think he has already been busted, Bill. You do not have to worry about it.

20 November 1990

MR STEFANIAK: I do not think he has been. Does the Minister agree that the unbalanced nature of arts funding in this Territory jeopardises the survival of important artistic endeavours within this community?

MR HUMPHRIES: I thank Mr Stefaniak for his very well worded question. Of course, Mr Stefaniak is referring to the advertisement which appeared in the *Canberra Times* on Saturday dealing with funding for 1991 through the Arts Development Board.

Mr Wood: Yes, hands-off funding is dead.

MR HUMPHRIES: I might point out that Mr Wood would know all about hands-on funding, given that that was the experience of last year's Arts Development Board grants. So let us not point any fingers in that regard, Mr Wood.

I must say that I was surprised to read the advertisement that appeared in the *Canberra Times*, particularly because throughout the year, throughout 1990, I have been in very constant contact with the arts community about ways of developing good strategies for funding of the arts and for dealing with a whole series of issues of importance to the arts community. I have held regular arts forums with that part of the community and they have been very productive.

I have to emphasise that the decisions that were criticised implicitly by that advertisement were decisions based on advice received from the Arts Development Board - a mechanism which this and previous governments have used to deal with issues of funding of the arts. I do not believe that the individuals and the organisations who signed that advertisement can have it both ways. They criticise the Government for taking decisions based on ADB advice and yet they then attack the Government for not accepting other ADB advice about particular arts grants.

I think I should remind the Assembly that we are in a very tight financial situation, despite which we have been able to increase arts funding in the recent budget by 7 per cent, in line with inflation, and in fact also add \$45,000 for an artists incentive scheme - one of the very few new initiatives to emerge in a funding sense from my portfolio. I have to say that this is a rather good result in the circumstances.

We want to balance pro-am with professional arts, large and small arts organisations. That kind of balance is very important. But that balance, or the unbalance to which those critics referred, is a decision based on advice from the Arts Development Board itself. I believe that it is a good basis and I intend to proceed with it and to build on the consensus we have already established to ensure that we do, in fact, have very balanced arts funding in the ACT.

School Closures - Bus Services

MR WOOD: I direct a question to the Minister for Education. The Hudson report has stated that a bus service should be provided for children from kindergarten to grade 3 travelling to their new school. How would that service be operated, by whom, and at what cost?

MR HUMPHRIES: Mr Wood did not mention the school he was referring to.

Mr Wood: From Lyons.

MR HUMPHRIES: He is referring to Lyons.

Mr Wood: In particular.

MR HUMPHRIES: The question of a bus is very important and I would not pretend for one minute that the Government is going to put aside such a recommendation lightly. Whether such a bus service should be provided in the manner suggested by Mr Hudson remains to be seen. I have discussed with the Lyons school and with others in the last few days the implications of that recommendation and I believe it inappropriate to endorse at this point the idea of a licensed parent-driven bus service.

I believe that there are some problems with such a proposal. I have to say that I do not think that we can endorse such a course of action at this stage. However, I do take very seriously the recommendation that there should be a bus service for those children. Indeed, it was part of the original decision, as I recall, of the Government on the Lyons school and, of course, subject to demand, we will be very interested in providing such a service.

MR WOOD: I have a supplementary question, Mr Speaker. Will the Minister then extend that same principle to children at Hackett school who, indeed, might go in three different directions to new schools if Hackett is ever closed?

MR HUMPHRIES: I do recall that the Government made similar comments in respect of the Hackett school in its original decision. Nothing that has happened today should give reason for that decision to change.

Ministerial Travel - Basic Equipment Allowance

MR MOORE: My question is directed to Mr Kaine, the Chief Minister. I have with me a copy of the front page of the Brisbane *Courier-Mail* of 15 November which reported the conviction and sentencing to one year's gaol of ex-Minister Leisha Harvey on 13 counts. At the time Judge Helman is reported as saying - and I quote in part:

20 November 1990

Nonetheless I must take into account that the office of minister of the Crown places upon a person holding it very heavy responsibilities ... particularly where public money is concerned.

Five of the 13 counts involved money in the order of or less than \$200. Considering this precedent, have you received from the Deputy Chief Minister, or have you requested, the refund of the inappropriately acquitted basic equipment allowance of \$180 which was made public through the Estimates Committee?

MR KAINÉ: Mr Speaker, I must say that I am appalled at the imputation in the question. I would have thought that Mr Moore might have been a bit more careful in his approach to such matters. In specific answer to his question, I know of no impropriety, no illegality. As was said to the Estimates Committee - and Mr Moore is well aware of it - the Minister acquitted his allowances in the manner in which he was advised to do by the Administration.

If there is any problem with it, it is that he reacted to advice by the department which may or may not be incorrect. I have no advice that it is. But I think that any imputation that the Minister has committed a criminal offence ought to be promptly withdrawn, Mr Speaker.

MR MOORE: I have a supplementary question. With reference to the quite clearly set out separately basic equipment allowance of \$180 that is appropriate to public servants, although it is clearly not appropriate to an elected person - nowhere is it set out that such an allowance is appropriate and therefore, unlike the rest of the acquittal which is difficult to adjust, it is - - -

MR SPEAKER: Order! Mr Moore, you are making a statement. That is not a question. If you have something of this nature that you wish to move as a substantive motion, you should do so, and I would ask you - - -

MR MOORE: I am asking a question, Mr Speaker. Will you, Chief Minister, accept that the basic equipment allowance, which is clearly set aside as \$180, which is clearly inappropriate for a Minister to have, is different and that the matter should be resolved quickly?

MR KAINÉ: I have not the faintest idea what Mr Moore is talking about. He obviously has information that is not available to me. If he cares to take it up with me I will look at it; but I am not going to respond to some imputation of illegality from a man like Michael Moore.

Mr Moore: I take a point of order, Mr Speaker. I believe that the Chief Minister's comment was an imputation and I ask him to withdraw it now. I asked a quite appropriate question. He said "illegal from a man like Michael Moore". It is appropriate that he withdraw that.

MR KAINE: I withdraw nothing, Mr Speaker.

Mr Moore: Mr Speaker, I insist that he withdraw it.

MR SPEAKER: Mr Moore, I believe that the imputation was not in the manner in which you have taken it. My understanding is that you have overreacted to those words.

Mr Moore: Not at all, Mr Speaker. He said "an illegal act from a man like Michael Moore". The imputation was quite clear, and I request, once again, that the Chief Minister withdraw it.

MR SPEAKER: Mr Moore, I will review the *Hansard* on the issue and take it up at that stage.

Royal Canberra Hospital South - Obstetrics Block

MRS NOLAN: My question is to Mr Humphries in his capacity as Minister for Health. What is the Government doing to address the concerns about the obstetrics block raised by the Australian Nursing Federation?

MR HUMPHRIES: I thank Mrs Nolan for her question. The ANF did raise, a couple of weeks ago, some concerns about the obstetrics block at Royal Canberra Hospital South. One of the most exciting features of the whole hospital redevelopment program is the design and construction of that new obstetrics block. Over recent years there has been concern about the adequacy of accommodation available for obstetric patients and about the provision of public antenatal services.

As part of the program a new obstetrics block has been designed, in full consultation with obstetricians and midwives and with childbirth community organisations, and I am confident it will significantly improve obstetric services in the Territory. The building will comprise single- and two-bedroom wards with en suites, in contrast to the existing four-bed wards, and it will include a new neonatal intensive care unit and a full range of delivery suites and assessment rooms.

Because it will provide obstetric services away from the main tower block it has been possible to design a much less institutional environment which recognises that women giving birth are not sick but are experiencing a major life event. However, it will have direct and close access to the new diagnostic and treatment block; so the transport time to the operating theatres is minimal when this backup clinical support is needed.

Even prior to the opening of the diagnostic and treatment block, the travel distance to operating theatres within the tower block will be significantly shorter than those currently in place in Royal Canberra Hospital North. The

20 November 1990

building will have direct access to the paediatric wards. Construction is under way or will get under way in the next few weeks and I believe, Mr Speaker, that this will provide, through close planning and consultation with affected parties in the hospital system, a considerably enhanced service to women in Canberra and will put the ACT into a considerably better position than it finds itself in at the present time.

School Closures - Tenants

MRS GRASSBY: My question is also to Mr Humphries, the Minister for Education. Where will the Independent Living Centre at Macquarie and the tenants at South Curtin be relocated?

MR HUMPHRIES: Mr Speaker, I thank Mrs Grassby for her question. This, in fact, is a question that has been asked before and which - - -

Mrs Grassby: We would just like you to answer it; that is all.

MR HUMPHRIES: The answer will be much the same as it was before, namely, that the Government will make a decision when the available evidence is in. There have been some changes in the circumstances in the last few hours. The decision that the Government has announced on the closure of four schools will have to have some implications for other parts of the decisions that have been made previously or that have been mooted previously, and for that reason we will need to examine what are the most appropriate locations for those services.

However, I can assure Mrs Grassby that none of the services she mentions will go by the board, disappear into limbo, or be scaled down, wound back or otherwise put on ice. They will continue to be offered to people in Canberra. The only difficulty will be establishing, through a process of consultation, what the most appropriate location for them would be.

Garbage Collection Services

MS MAHER: My question is to the Minister for Finance and Urban Services. Can he inform the Assembly as to why the Government has divided the north side garbage collection into nine zones, which requires the use of two extra vehicles?

MR DUBY: I thank Ms Maher for her question. The north side garbage contracts were tendered on the basis of an equitable distribution of the number of dwellings to be serviced, taking into account the expected growth patterns

and the waste industry award conditions for the daily average rate of garbage or darg. The redistribution of collection zones, which was necessary because of growth of existing suburbs since the contracts were previously let, will allow for the forthcoming development of Gungahlin and it is shown that nine zones with nine collection vehicles will be required rather than the previous system of seven zones with seven vehicles.

That change to nine zones from the previous seven involves no capital costs to the Government as the additional two vehicles will be provided from reserve vehicles held for the north side collection and the trade waste service.

Mr Berry: Mr Speaker, I raise a point of order. It seems to me that this is a ministerial statement. Could we get some indication from the Minister as to how long he is going to be on this matter?

MR SPEAKER: Thank you for your observation, Mr Berry, but I do not believe that is a valid point of order. Please proceed, Mr Duby.

MR DUBY: If Mr Berry would take the wax out of his ears, he would realise that I have finished.

Hospital Services

MR BERRY: My question is directed to the Minister for Health, Education and the Arts. Mr Humphries, in a 9 November interview on Capital TV you said, in what I would describe as a disgraceful admission:

Naturally not having Royal Canberra means that there is a certain hole in services ...

What is this hole, and which services and how many beds will be cut?

MR HUMPHRIES: Mr Speaker, that comment was taken out of context. The comment was made in the context of a longer answer which was, I have to say, most inexpertly cut from the rest of the statement. I was referring to something quite different and I am very happy to take it up with Channel 10 and to discover the full context of the question and the answer. I think that the context is made very different by the question that was actually asked in that case. In answer to the last part of your question about bed numbers, I have indicated already that there will be no loss of public bed numbers as a result of this reorganisation.

Mr Berry: You have done it.

MR HUMPHRIES: No, there will not be, Mr Berry.

20 November 1990

Mr Berry: You have done it. The waiting lists have exploded through the roof.

MR HUMPHRIES: Mr Berry apparently fails to accept reality. There will be no loss of bed numbers, and that is the position.

School Closures - Cook Primary School

MR CONNOLLY: My question is to the Minister for Education. Minister, what do you expect to do on day one of next year with the children from Cook Primary School when they will not be able to fit into either Macquarie or Aranda primary schools?

MR HUMPHRIES: The question is entirely hypothetical. I am tempted to sit down and say that it is hypothetical because, in fact, the children from that school will be accommodated quite comfortably in both of those two schools.

Mrs Grassby: Sitting on each other's lap.

MR HUMPHRIES: No, they will not be on each other's lap. There is capacity in those schools to accommodate those children. That is the simple fact.

Tourism and Marketing Group

MR STEFANIAK: My question is to Mr DUBY, the Minister for Finance and Urban Services. Would the Minister inform the Assembly about the formation of a New South Wales east region tourism and marketing group? I would ask him how this group actually will fit in with the ACT Government's "Made in the ACT Region" campaign.

MR DUBY: I thank Mr Stefaniak for the question. There has been a longstanding relationship between the ACT Government tourism authority and the surrounding regional areas. This new group was formed in recognition of that relationship following a meeting on 1 November between the ACT and New South Wales tourism commissions and tourism representatives of the councils in the ACT region.

The meeting - an initiative, I might add, of the ACT Tourism Commission - was set up to discuss the tourism marketing activities of each of these bodies and possibilities for cooperative marketing. Members from all the councils covered by the "Made in the Canberra Region" campaign have been invited to be part of the group. The operation of the tourism marketing group will complement the "Made in the Canberra Region" campaign but will involve completely separate activities centring on the unique aspects offered by each area of the region. It is

essential when promoting tourism to focus on the various tourism products offered. The group will meet quarterly to discuss tourism marketing activities and cooperative marketing activities. It has already developed a number of proposals, including improved marketing of events, a sharing of research information and a proposal to encourage intraregional tourism.

Mr Speaker, the Canberra region receives about five million visitors annually, of which the ACT receives only about one and a half million. The population of the region is almost half a million, while the ACT has a population of just over a quarter of a million. Therefore, the new group's activities to encourage tourism throughout the region as well as tourism within the region by its residents are expected to provide significant economic benefits for the ACT and, of course, for the surrounding region.

School Closures - Lyons Primary School

MS FOLLETT: My question is to Mr Humphries, the Minister for Education. It relates to the Lyons Primary School. Mr Humphries, the Lyons Primary School satisfies all of the criteria for a viable small school as set out in the Hudson report and there is also, I think you would agree, demonstrated social disadvantage in that area. So I would ask: How do you and your Residents Rally colleagues justify the closure of the Lyons school?

MR HUMPHRIES: Ms Follett, again, as in her earlier question to me, chooses to accept some things from the Hudson report and to ignore others. Mr Hudson very clearly examined a range of issues concerning the Lyons school, as he did with all the schools that came under his consideration. He examined the criteria for the closure of the school and quite clearly decided that the school should close. It, therefore, did satisfy the criteria for a school to close. I am sorry if Ms Follett's reading of the report does not make that clear; but, if the body of the report is not clear, then, certainly, the conclusion to the report, the summary at the end of the report, makes it quite clear that Mr Hudson believes, on the basis of all the evidence, that the Lyons Primary School should close.

Mr Wood: It can satisfy your criteria for staying open.

MR HUMPHRIES: Apparently, Mr Hudson has some sort of split personality according to the Opposition; he will look at the evidence, show that it proves a school should stay open and then conclude that it should close. I have a higher opinion of Mr Hudson's process of consideration of the issues. I am surprised that the Opposition is prepared, by implication, very subtly to denigrate that, but the fact of life is that they are doing that. His report in fact is the basis for the Government's decision to close the Lyons Primary School.

School Closures - Hackett Primary School

MR WOOD: I direct to the Minister for Education a question concerning Hackett Primary School, and I note that he too has picked and chosen from Hudson, as all people will. You have not accepted everything he said - witness the buses at Lyons. However, Mr Hudson has stated that costs attributed to Hackett Primary School for heating and for major maintenance are doubtful. He questioned those figures. These incorrect costs were shown in budget papers to support the closure of Hackett school and they feel very deeply about that. Will the decision to close Hackett be reviewed as you survey new figures on the real costs of keeping Hackett Primary School?

MR HUMPHRIES: Once again, Mr Speaker, members of the Opposition choose to accept other things from the report. The fact of the matter is that Mr Hudson brought attention to what he considered to be problems with calculating the costs of heating as attributable between Sports House and other parts of Hackett Primary School and came to the conclusion that, nonetheless, there was a good case for closing the Hackett Primary School. Mr Hudson had evidence before him. Mr Hudson clearly examined the issues to which Mr Wood has just referred and yet Mr Hudson still came to the view that the school should be closed. Once again it is not possible to steal bits and pieces from the judgment handed down by the judge and yet then ignore that judge's verdict.

Petrol Tax

MR STEVENSON: My question is to the Chief Minister. I have been contacted by a small business operator who is concerned that their business will be forced to reduce in size because of ever-increasing government taxes. They ask: Why is the tax on petrol not being set aside to be spent on roads, firstly, and, secondly, why do public servants and MLAs receive cars and heavily taxed petrol which is paid for by taxpayers when small business people have to pay their own? Why are they not also required to outlay the money and claim it back at tax time?

MR KAIN: The first part of the question, Mr Speaker, had to do with the question of the allocation of the 3 a litre franchise tax to roads. Mr Stevenson obviously has not done any research at all or he would know that we are already spending more on roads than we collect in franchise tax anyway, and there is no need for any more money than that to be spent on roads in the ACT. I think the last thing you could say is that there is some deficiency in the roads in the ACT. For anybody to suggest that our roads are in such poor state of repair that they need additional money spent on them is absolutely ludicrous.

As to the second part of the question, I suppose it is no different from the general proposition that Mr Stevenson takes a salary which he perhaps thinks he should not take because he did say that if there was any increase he would not take it. There is a bit of an ambivalence there on Mr Stevenson's part; he can take some, but not all. Perhaps he might like to donate his salary to small business so that they can pick up some of their losses in taxes through that course of action.

Woden Valley Hospital

MRS GRASSBY: My question is to Mr Humphries, the Minister for Health, Education and the Arts. What is the Government doing to relieve the increased suffering to cancer patients at the Woden Valley Hospital caused by the lack of car parking now that the car parks are filled with construction work site buildings? You obviously have not been out there to see it.

MR HUMPHRIES: I have been to see the work there, Mrs Grassby. The question is a rather curious one, but that is not surprising perhaps. I do not consider there to be a major problem in the area of car parking for any patients, cancer sufferers or otherwise, at the new principal hospital site. Obviously there will be disadvantages of small kinds, inconveniences of small kinds, while work is going on at the site, but it may come as a great surprise and shock to Mrs Grassby to discover that this is not the first hospital in the history of Australia or the world which has been upgraded and which necessitates some construction work to go on.

It is impossible to avoid the implications of such improvements in the public hospital system, which implications, of course, include some minor inconveniences. I would certainly hope that the hospital takes due account of the need for seriously ill patients to have access to car parking facilities. I am quite confident that they have looked at that question already and will continue to keep it under consideration and that Mrs Grassby's concerns are not well founded.

MRS GRASSBY: I ask a supplementary question. Do I have it from the Minister then, Mr Speaker, that he will make sure that there is adequate car parking for very ill patients who have to attend the clinic for cancer treatment?

MR HUMPHRIES: I am not quite sure how it is that such patients are sufficiently well to be able to drive their cars but too ill to be able to walk from where their cars are parked to the hospital. Nonetheless, if Mrs Grassby has a concern I am happy to address it by looking at what provisions are being made in the hospital system already.

20 November 1990

I reject the assertion that a gross inconvenience has been imposed to date or is likely to be imposed without remedies being adopted and being put in place and I will satisfy myself of the fact that the hospital has taken into account the needs of all patients in the system.

Royal Canberra Hospital

MR BERRY: I have a question for Mr Humphries; but before I ask it, Mr Speaker, I seek leave to table a transcript of a Channel 10 report of an interview with Mr Humphries on Friday, 9 November 1990.

Leave granted.

MR BERRY: As I said, my question is to the Minister for Health, Education and the Arts. Mr Humphries, the steam boilers at Royal Canberra Hospital, the Acton site, are being replaced by hot water boilers. This exercise is being carried out in great haste, with staff being required to work overtime to ensure that the boilers are in place by Christmas. Did this replacement need to take place, since the Minister has announced that the hospital is to close by the end of next year?

MR HUMPHRIES: Mr Speaker, first of all in answer to Mr Berry's tabling of that report from Channel 10, Mr Berry has misunderstood the answer I gave to his earlier question about that clip. I am not suggesting - - -

Mr Berry: I take a point of order, Mr Speaker. Mr Humphries is not responding to the question I asked and I think he is required to do that.

MR SPEAKER: Mr Berry, I believe that the house has given you the benefit of the time taken to present your paper. I think it is only right that Mr Humphries be allowed to respond.

Mr Berry: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: He can make an explanation after question time. All I require is an answer to my question.

MR HUMPHRIES: I will give you an answer to your question when I finish the other part of the answer.

MR SPEAKER: Please proceed, Mr Humphries.

MR HUMPHRIES: Mr Speaker, I was not saying that my interview with Channel 10 was - - -

Mr Berry: I raise a point of order, Mr Speaker. That is not the question I raised with Mr Humphries. If Mr Humphries has an explanation he can give it in due course under standing order 46.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you for your observation, Mr Berry. I have asked that the house allow Mr Humphries to proceed in this manner, as we gave you time.

Mr Berry: No.

MR SPEAKER: Please make a personal explanation at the end of question time, Mr Humphries.

MR HUMPHRIES: Yes, Mr Speaker. To answer the second part of Mr Berry's question, I do not know what the position is as far as - - -

Mr Berry: Would you like me to repeat it? A little bit of water has passed under the bridge since I - - -

MR HUMPHRIES: Yes, it has, hasn't it - a little bit of steam out of the ears. The fact is that work carried on in respect of the Royal Canberra Hospital North site is carried on to maintain that facility as an ongoing facility available to the people of Canberra. There seems to be some misconception, widely pushed and promoted by the Australian Labor Party, that the closure of the Royal Canberra Hospital North, as a hospital, entails the destruction of facilities of a health nature to the benefit of the people of Canberra on that site, and that is totally and utterly untrue.

The fact is that work will need to go on on that site over the next few months and few years to ensure that it continues to be available as a health facility for the people of Canberra. I am happy to examine the particular issue of the boilers. I am not generally in day-to-day command of issues that deal with the erection or the conversion of boilers in the hospital. However, I will take that part of the question on notice and get back to Mr Berry and advise him of any dire political implications of the changing of the nature of the boilers in the Royal Canberra Hospital North.

MR BERRY: I have a supplementary question, Mr Speaker. In the knowledge that Mr Humphries has not been able to advise this place of what those new health facilities will be - - -

Mr Humphries: I will answer that question too, when I come to it.

MR BERRY: Yes. Perhaps he might find out the cost of the boilers and the cost of the labour to install them, and advise the Assembly.

MR HUMPHRIES: Mr Berry has asked about the facilities going onto that site. Although he might allege that he was not actually asking that question, I think that, in fairness, he was, and we are happy to advise Mr Berry about the nature of the services to go onto that site. The Government has made a decision about a number of

20 November 1990

facilities. It wishes to establish a convalescent unit on the site to deal with people who are ill and who are recovering from surgery or other illnesses; also to relocate the Queen Elizabeth II home for mothers and babies onto that site, and I am confident - - -

Mr Berry: How many beds?

MR HUMPHRIES: The same number of beds that are there now.

Mr Berry: Nine hundred? Four hundred? Four hundred and eighty?

MR HUMPHRIES: There are not 900 beds in the QE II home for mothers and babies, Mr Berry. I think Mr Berry should take a little trip to the QE II home to realise what the situation is. He is sadly deluded on that particular point. The third facility we have announced we intend to move to the site in due course is the Jindalee Nursing Home. I am confident that that facility would substantially benefit from relocation from its present site, where a split campus makes for some inconvenience for staff and for residents at that nursing home.

MR KAINE: Mr Speaker, I request that any further questions be placed on the notice paper.

South East Economic Development Council

MR KAINE: Mr Speaker, I would like to produce some answers to a couple of questions that were asked without notice in the past. On 25 October Ms Follett asked a question that had to do with the disestablishment of the Canberra Development Board and the establishment of the South East Economic Development Council. I will table the response. It is a fairly lengthy response and perhaps Ms Follett would care to read it rather than have me read it out in full.

Minister for Community Services

MR KAINE: On 25 October Mr Moore, after rambling on at some length in a completely irrational way, finally got around to asking a question. I will read the question because I think that unless you read the question you really do not know what sort of an answer you should give - - -

Mr Moore: I take a point of order, Mr Speaker. I was hoping that you would intervene and protect me without my having to call for it.

MR KAINE: I am sure he will.

MR SPEAKER: Chief Minister, there is a point of order. Mr Moore, irrational speeches are made at odd times. I do not see that there is any problem. Please proceed, Chief Minister.

MR KAINE: I will read the question, Mr Speaker. This was a supplementary question and it said:

On the matter of lack of policies in welfare, youth, justice, administration, maintenance of law and order, does the Alliance Government then intend, at some stage or another, to present policies in these areas or are we just going to let Mr Collaery work off his - how he feels at the minute.

That was the question. Now, Mr Speaker, I would like to give a response to that insofar as I am able. The response is as follows, and I will table this later - - -

Mr Moore: I raise a point of order, Mr Speaker. Is the Chief Minister quoting from the draft *Hansard*?

MR KAINE: Yes.

Mr Moore: We know what the problem is there.

MR KAINE: I am quoting from the question that you asked, as extracted from the *Hansard*, Mr Moore. In answer, Mr Speaker: the Government is making significant progress in the reform of justice and community services policy, as evidenced by the broad range of new policy proposals announced in the 1990-91 budget and by reforms in the process of being implemented, such as the Callaghan report, the review of ACT adoption legislation, the proposed community advocate, the overhaul of guardianship legislation, the proposed human rights office, anti-discrimination legislation, and so on.

Measures such as the Community Law Reform Committee, the review of juvenile justice and adult corrections, the Youth Minister's Advisory Council and other bodies are involving the community in the development and implementation of policies in this area. I table the responses.

MR SPEAKER: Chief Minister, are you seeking leave to incorporate those in *Hansard*?

MR KAINE: I think that would be a good thing to do. Yes, Mr Speaker.

Leave granted.

Documents incorporated at Appendix 1

20 November 1990

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

MR SPEAKER: Mr Humphries, before we proceed, would you like to address that question that you could not deal with before?

MR HUMPHRIES: Yes, Mr Speaker. Mr Berry, by tabling the transcript of what was broadcast on Channel 10, seems to be implying that my answer to the earlier question he asked on that subject was to the effect that he was misquoting the report on Channel 10. I am not alleging for one moment that he was misquoting the report on Channel 10. What I am saying is that Channel 10's clipping of my interview - that is, its taking of my answer to another question - was taken out of context and that, if one were to play back the full tape of the question asked of me by the journalist and my answer to that question in full, a very different context would appear - very different from the context in which Mr Berry placed his question.

PAPERS

MR COLLAERY (Attorney-General): Mr Speaker, pursuant to section 6 of the Subordinate Laws Act 1989 I table subordinate legislation in accordance with the Schedule of Gazettal Notices for a number of ministerial determinations and regulations made by the Executive. Further, Mr Speaker, I table for the information of members an exposure draft of the proposed associations incorporation legislation.

SPECIAL PREMIERS CONFERENCE Ministerial Statement and Paper

MR KAINE (Chief Minister): I seek leave to make a statement in connection with the Special Premiers Conference.

Leave granted.

Ms Follett: Is it nice and long?

MR KAINE: Yes, it is quite long, actually. You can go to sleep. As members of the Assembly will be aware, and as was recently brought to our attention by Mr Moore, on 30 and 31 October of this year heads of government of the Commonwealth, the States and the Territories, plus representatives of local government, attended the first of a series of special premiers conferences.

Held in Brisbane, this initial Premiers Conference involved very far reaching discussions, conducted with the aim of bringing reform to intergovernmental relations in this country. The meeting provided direction for, and set in

train, detailed work across a range of fronts with the overall objective of achieving efficiencies within and between the States and the Territories and the Commonwealth as well as being directed towards the enhancement of Australia's national economy.

The potential benefits for the ACT of this cooperative approach to such a wide range of issues are considerable. As a contributor to and participant in the national economy the ACT stands to benefit from actions commenced at the conference to make the Australian economy more competitive and flexible. In this regard discussions focused on three main areas: Commonwealth-State financial arrangements, the minimisation of duplication between levels of government, and micro-economic reform, including the reform of regulations on a nation-wide basis.

In relation to Commonwealth-State financial arrangements, participants at the conference recognised the need to closely examine the key issue of the vertical fiscal imbalance between levels of government. Therefore, in preparation for further special premiers conferences, work will focus on, firstly, the reform of the distribution of taxation powers and, secondly, the extent to which tied grants from the Commonwealth to the States could be reduced to achieve greater flexibility in the management of State and Territory budgets.

Successful and enduring reform in this direction would result in reducing the current fiscal imbalance whilst ensuring that the Commonwealth retains adequate means to meet its responsibilities for effective macro-economic management. It is particularly pleasing, Mr Speaker, to note that there was agreement by the Commonwealth that the trend which has seen a substantial growth in specific purpose grants in recent decades should now be reversed.

The unanimity of view on this subject augurs well for a positive result to the work commissioned by the conference. Clearly, reform of Commonwealth-State financial relationships in the manner contemplated by the October Special Premiers Conference would provide the ACT Government with a greater range of options for the management of its budget and the Territory's economy generally. It would provide greater choices insofar as revenue raising is concerned as well as providing greater scope to target the expenditure of funds received from the Commonwealth in a way which meets the special needs of the ACT.

A closely related matter discussed in Brisbane concerned the duplication of services between levels of government. It was recognised that the conditions set by the Commonwealth which attach to many tied grants often result in overlaps between two tiers of government, confusion on the part of those to whom services are provided and general inefficiencies in the use of scarce resources. Accordingly, leaders and representatives agreed to a set of

20 November 1990

clear guiding principles which will form the basis for reviews of a range of functional areas with the fundamental objective of improving the existing system for delivery of programs and services in the interests of our citizens. Significantly, it was also agreed that where, as a result of these reviews, one level of government takes over administrative responsibilities from another it will be fully and fairly compensated financially.

Among the functions to be given priority in this examination of duplication are the home and community care program and the areas of health, aged care, housing, training and labour market programs, child care and the supported accommodation assistance program, all of which are of great significance to us here in the ACT. Significantly for the ACT, it was also agreed that functional areas for review will include consideration of State-type functions in respect of the Territory still retained by the Commonwealth. As an example, the existence of two planning authorities for the ACT is a matter which clearly should be examined in this context.

The question of legislation controls and other functions retained by the Commonwealth which extend beyond its normal relationships with the States is also raised. After all, central to the question of duplication and efficiency generally is the appropriateness of the level of government at which responsibility for a function or power is located. I can assure the Assembly that the Government will be giving particular attention to this aspect of the review. The right of the ACT to determine its own electoral system, to have effective control over and ensure efficiency in the planning of the Territory and to decide how many Ministers we have in our Executive are all important issues in this context.

It was encouraging to see the emphasis given by the Premiers Conference to cooperative approaches between governments to achieve more effective delivery of services and programs, because this is an area in which the Alliance Government has already made considerable efforts. The ACT had, of course, already recognised the necessity of close and productive working relationships between the three levels of government and has given high priority to fostering these relationships in a number of ways. For example, the ACT is working jointly with the New South Wales Government in preparing a strategy for regional economic development in close consultation with the surrounding local governments. In the context of the New South Wales-ACT consultative forum, considerable efforts are being made to systematically address, in a cooperative way, issues of significant concern to the subregion, such as planning, roads and extractive industries.

Similarly, in a key aspect of micro-economic reform addressed by the Premiers Conference, specifically regulatory reform, we have also been seeking to recognise our unique relationship with New South Wales through the

harmonisation, to the greatest extent possible, of our respective regulatory regimes. The heads of government and representatives agreed to a framework and a set of criteria for the rationalisation of regulatory activities undertaken by the different levels of government to remove inefficiencies brought about by varying regulatory regimes.

In addition to agreements on uniform national food standards to be regulated by a national food authority and to the application of mutual recognition in occupational licensing and professional recognition, the conference identified key activities for examination and consideration at following conferences. These include packaging and labelling, agricultural and veterinary chemicals, industrial chemicals and food inspection.

While I will not go into detail, it is certainly worth recording that the conference also placed major emphasis on other facets of micro-economic reform, particularly in relation to government trading enterprises, the national rail freight initiative, road transport, electricity generation, transmission and distribution, and the regulation of non-bank financial institutions. The directions set and the work commissioned in these matters also have the capacity to bring benefits to the ACT in the longer term. They are consistent with and will complement the Alliance Government's own micro-economic reform agenda which we see as essential for the development of the ACT and the Canberra region.

The twin catalysts of the severe financial pressures which face the ACT flowing from Commonwealth decisions and my Government's determination to create an efficient ACT public sector, suitable to our needs, have already put us on a path which will be assisted and reinforced by the longer term outcomes of the conference.

Mr Speaker, reform of intergovernmental relations in Australia will not be an overnight exercise. It will take much hard work and a high degree of commitment to change both at the political level generally as well as at the administrative level.

The extent to which the Special Premiers Conference outcome reflected a shared commitment to new ways of working within the Federation by leaders of varying political persuasions was most gratifying. This meeting also gives a fundamentally new role and life to the Premiers Conference process that will be ongoing, to ensure that enduring and significant change occurs.

Given the importance of a successful long-term outcome to the people of the ACT and the region, I trust, Mr Speaker, that the spirit of cooperation witnessed in Brisbane can be

20 November 1990

mirrored by a bipartisan approach here in the ACT and in this Assembly. For the information of the Assembly, I seek leave to table a copy of the Special Premiers Conference communique.

Leave granted.

MR KAINE: I move:

That the Assembly takes note of the paper.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

DEATH OF MR P. HARRISON

MR MOORE (3.21): Mr Speaker, I move:

That the Assembly expresses its deep regret at the death of Mr Peter Harrison and tenders its profound sympathy to his widow in her bereavement.

On Monday, 29 October, Peter Harrison suffered a severe stroke. Late in the afternoon of Tuesday, 30 October, he died in the Royal Canberra Hospital. I count myself lucky to have been with him during some of his last hours. However, I count myself even luckier to have been considered his friend, and it is that human side of Peter Harrison that I shall refer to later.

Peter Harrison was not only a man of vision but also a man of principle. With reference to that vision, he first saw Canberra in 1951 when it was a city of about 20,000 people. He came to Canberra in 1959 when it was a city of 38,000 people.

It is said that, after Walter Burley Griffin, Peter Harrison had more influence on the shape and character of Canberra than any other person. Some say that his plan was for a city of a quarter of a million people. Early in the 1960s when other people were trying to work out how to shape Canberra, Peter Harrison was trying to work out how to shape a city not of 50,000 people but of 250,000 people, and beyond.

His vision was not just for a city of a quarter of a million but a city that was expandable. The design that we know for Canberra, that we refer to as the Y plan was guided and driven by Peter Harrison. The concept of a series of decentralised town centres, discrete town centres, a decentralised system that other cities try to emulate, can be largely attributed to him. Also attributable to him and his team is that each of those town centres contains major employment centres, the road hierarchy as we know it in Canberra, and the flexibility of proper provision for transport, whether that transport be private or public.

Many people state that Canberra was designed and built around the motor car. That is something that I heard Peter Harrison vehemently deny on many occasions. He claimed that, if the plan was followed appropriately and if the discrete town centres contained the appropriate employment, flexibility existed for either private transport or public transport. In fact, most recently, I heard him say that one of the first steps in going to public transport in the ACT would be for governments to make the decision to remove all cars from their own people; all SES officers would have their cars and their car spaces removed and the same would apply, of course, to us.

That was part of his vision. He was able to see that public transport can work but there is a price to pay. If people want to make that decision, then those who make it should also be prepared to wear the results.

Peter Harrison was a man of principle. The principle upon which he operated was neatly set by the Chief Executive Officer of the National Capital Planning Authority, Lyndsay Neilson, on the Pru Goward show on Wednesday, 31 October, when he stated that Mr Harrison was a man who worked from basic principles and the main basic principle that he worked from was what happened to suit the battler who lived in the suburbs. I think that that is the measure of the man.

He had a strong adherence to the principles on which he was based and he clearly demonstrated the strength of his feeling about losing to the profit of a very few what he perceived as a city of beauty and convenience. When he perceived that happening he returned his insignia of the Order of Australia that he had been awarded and he resigned from the Royal Australian Institute of Architects. A few years ago he felt that there may have been a way to reverse the situation and he became a member of the Residents Rally. When he resigned from the Residents Rally, disgusted by what had happened, he wrote a letter to at least one, but I think all three, of the members that were left. I would urge them to go back and read those letters again.

Mr Harrison was opposed to the overdevelopment of Civic but at the same time he was very much pro development. He always saw the role of development. The difference is that he saw the role of development as planning driven rather than planning as development driven.

The transport problems and environmental problems caused by the overdevelopment of Civic caused him a great deal of anguish. He sought balanced development and he continued to spend the last days of his life fighting for that and working many long hours from his study in Booroondara Street in Reid.

20 November 1990

When he was Chief Planner, of course, he had special tools available to him in the powers of the NCDC and the leasehold system, and he never lost sight of the importance of the leasehold system. That is something that he emphasised again and again in recent days. The knowledge of Peter Harrison in planning matters was encyclopaedic. Bruce Wright, who is a corporate relations adviser to the NCPA, writing in the *Canberra Times*, said:

All his teaching and advice was based on his confidence about the principles of planning in the community interest; his demand for commonsense solutions which responded to people's needs.

Peter Harrison was indeed a man of the people. In the funeral oration in St John's Church, Reid, on the Friday after his death, Professor Max Neutze, himself an eminent academic in the planning field, commented that the best tribute to Peter Harrison is not just Canberra as it is but the best parts of Canberra.

With that in mind, a suggestion was made to me by Terry Connolly shortly after Peter Harrison's death that we should name one of the early suburbs in Gungahlin, perhaps one of the better suburbs, Harrison. It is a matter that I have discussed with a number of members on both sides of the house and it has received a favourable response. The advice I have had from the section in the department that looks after this is that there is no bar to that in particular. I would certainly hope that the Chief Minister, who makes the decision, is very receptive to that suggestion.

Apart from being a planner, Peter Harrison was not only a wonderful friend but also a wonderful human. He was different from other people in lots of ways. One of the images that I have of Peter Harrison is of him taking his two dogs, Patch and Lally, for a walk. He did not do it as other people do it; he put the two on leads and he would sit on his bike while they towed him for several kilometres - about 10 kilometres, I understand - around the suburbs and around the Canberra that he liked best.

One of the things that always amused me, and amused my children, was seeing this 70-year-old-plus man, cigarette in his mouth - he never did give up smoking - being towed along by two mongrels. He had a thing against purebred dogs and thought a mongrel was so much better. Perhaps that reflected his attitude to ordinary people.

One of the other things about Peter Harrison was his empathy with children. He had no children himself and I watched him with my three children. I guess I sometimes go for the word "grandfatherly", but perhaps the sort of role that Peter Harrison played was that of a great-uncle. He was at that time at his softest and at his gentlest.

A true friend does not hesitate to tell someone when he thinks they are off the rails. I know that some people here, apart from me, have been on the receiving end of a tongue-lashing from Peter Harrison; but at the same time he was also most generous in his praise when he felt people were acting appropriately and in a principled way.

It is difficult for somebody like me to say farewell to such a great man and such a good friend. I am grateful to have the opportunity to be in this Assembly. One of the reasons that I am here is through the influence of Peter Harrison and I am grateful to have the opportunity to be able, in a small way, to express my thanks to him.

MR JENSEN (3.32): Mr Speaker, like Mr Moore, I also knew Peter Harrison quite well. He was well known to all members of the Rally, particularly those such as my colleague, Bernard Collaery, who knew him even before I did and before I became involved in the Rally. We worked hard to develop policies on planning and leasehold matters and an appeals process for planning. These, I would suggest, were reflected in the Residents Rally policies and have subsequently been reflected in the policies of the Government. Some would argue that some of the implementation of all those policies has not been as Peter would wish, but I would suggest that there is much of Peter Harrison in the views that have been carried into those policies.

It is true that Peter Harrison wrote to members of the Rally and I, in fact, corresponded a number of times with him. I had a number of phone conversations with him and I think Michael is well aware of the sort of tongue-lashing that Peter Harrison was able to dish out. I can assure you that I copped one or two in my time during the discussions that I had with him. But I valued Peter's views, as did my colleagues. I can assure Mr Moore that once again I will reread that correspondence that Peter sent to me.

I was privileged to be present at the funeral of Peter Harrison and to hear the oration about the role that Peter played in the development of the ACT. Mr Speaker, the Y plan that Peter was particularly involved in certainly has presented us with some social challenges. I would suggest that those social challenges have arisen not because of the concept of the Y plan itself but because of the way that that Y plan was put into place. Some political groups within government within the ACT were not prepared to make the hard decisions in relation to the implementation of the offices and other backup that was required for the outer suburbs of Canberra. That probably is one of the tragedies of the development that has taken place. The area that I come from is slowly starting to realise the importance of the necessary infrastructure to back up the suburban outfields, if you like, of a city like Canberra. It is unfortunate that, in fact, because of the lack of work in

20 November 1990

those areas, there have been a number of social problems. I think it is not Peter Harrison's Y plan that has caused the problem, as some may suggest, but how that plan was implemented.

Mr Speaker, I would like to seek to offer my condolences to Peter and his family, and all the friends and others that knew him over the years. Mr Moore did speak to me about a certain suggestion which I did raise with the Chief Minister. I am sure that at some stage or other that will come up for consideration and I will certainly say my two bob's worth. In closing, I would like to hope that all members of this Assembly will accept the debt of gratitude we owe to Peter Harrison as Chief Planner in the ACT.

MS FOLLETT (Leader of the Opposition) (3.36): I would like to associate the Labor members of the Assembly with this motion of condolence on the death of Mr Peter Harrison and to say, as other speakers have said, that Mr Harrison had a personal responsibility for many of the key features of Canberra as we know it today. He, in fact, led the team which developed the plan for separate towns and for the intervening open spaces - the Y plan, as it is usually known. It was his planners who were responsible for the town centres concept and the neighbourhood centres which provide community facilities close to the people who use them. Mr Moore has spoken of Mr Harrison's perception of the ordinary people in the suburbs as having priority in planning and I think that priority is very much reflected in the work that he did.

Mr Harrison was also involved in developing the hierarchy of roads which we enjoy in the ACT and which in fact has made our roads the safest in the nation. So we certainly do owe him an enormous debt. Those of us who love Canberra must owe an enormous debt to Mr Harrison's work.

He was the Chief Planner for the NCDC from its establishment in 1958 until he moved to the Australian National University in 1967. Apart from his involvement in the planning of Canberra, Mr Harrison was also influential in developing the policies implemented by Labor's Department of Urban and Regional Development during the Whitlam years. Those of you who can remember back that far will remember what a ground-breaking exercise that was, and it was Mr Harrison's views and opinions that led to much of that ground-breaking.

There is no doubt that the fact that we have here in Canberra a modern city with simple and human characteristics is a tribute to Peter Harrison's expertise and his foresight as a planner. He was in fact a very fine example of what a public servant ought to be, and that is a true servant of the people.

Mr Speaker, when Mr Harrison retired from the NCDC the then Associate Commissioner, Mr Bob Lansdown, wrote on his retirement card a comment which I believe is a real tribute

to Peter Harrison. He said, "What else should a town planner be but articulate, consistent, purposeful and occasionally objectionable? In all these characteristics we feel you have excelled". I think that was a great tribute to Mr Harrison on his retirement from the NCDC.

There is no doubt whatsoever that he was an articulate man and a man of vision, a man of passion who was never afraid to carry through his ideas in an extremely purposeful way and who was also never afraid, in defending that vision and defending his view of Canberra, to be quite objectionable on occasions. I think we have all probably experienced that. But he was a greater man for those characteristics. So, we members of the Labor team join in this motion of condolence and offer our sympathy to his widow.

Question resolved in the affirmative, members standing in their places.

SCHOOL SYSTEM

Discussion of Matter of Public Importance

MR SPEAKER: I have received a letter from Mr Wood proposing that a matter of public importance be submitted to the Assembly for discussion, namely:

The failure of the Alliance Government to administer the ACT school system effectively.

MR WOOD (3.40): Mr Speaker, to date the Government has demonstrated its failure to plan the ACT school system effectively. When the Minister, Gary Humphries, announced in March that 15 to 25 schools were to close, he was announcing a planning debacle. It was apparent then that no pre-thought was given to his proposal, and that has become increasingly clear since.

His proposal gave no consideration to the children, who are surely the prime point of interest in our education system. Press reports at the time quoted Mr Humphries as saying, "Nothing will be sacred in our search to save money". Certainly, the education of our children has not been sacred. I want to discuss the complete lack of planning and the very negative impact that that has had. It is interesting that I should do so following the motion of condolence.

It was clear that such a statement was going to be ill considered so early in the life of a new Minister. I think it was barely three months from the time the Government took office. It was simply too early to make the mammoth changes that would be involved in closing up to 25 schools. It was clearly an off-the-cuff decision, and the community has suffered since. It is no simple process to make any changes, certainly in our schools, where the process is so much more complicated and so much more complex if Mr

20 November 1990

Humphries was serious, as he was, about closing up to 25 schools. It was clear so early that there was no planning in this. Let me show you how this has been demonstrated since.

Mr Humphries did not take the time to understand the system. We have a system that is not like systems in the rest of Australia; it is a very different system. It has been planned, as the ACT has been planned, to be very different. It is a failure, I think, on the part of many people that they see education purely in the way that they were educated themselves. I do not know whether that was the fault with Mr Humphries - it may have been but he did not take the time to understand the philosophy behind our system. The philosophy is there. It is clearly expressed. There is a vast amount of written work on the philosophy of education in the ACT. A part of that philosophy is the fact that the neighbourhood primary school is the building block - that much used term - of the suburb. It is a very important part of it. But that was not known by Mr Humphries when he embarked on this course.

Another significant factor that either was not known or was ignored was the fact that this system was to be one of community participation. That point has been expressed so often if you read back to the early philosophy. Indeed, I spent a time in the then Schools Authority as an officer charged with encouraging community participation. I do not think any system anywhere else had such an officer. Not only that, but the whole system grew out of the community.

If someone had read a little on this, or sought a briefing on it, they would have discovered that the dissatisfaction with the New South Wales system in the 1960s and early 1970s had aroused such a community response that the community demanded a better system, and a system in which the community had active participation. Yet the Minister determined that out of the air he could announce massive changes, with a restructuring of the system - I think those are the words that have been used somewhere - and he could do so without consulting with the community. No wonder the planning fell from disaster to disaster. He simply did not know the system; or, if he did, he ignored it. It would have been quite a feat to have come to grips with the system in three months, although I think the opportunity was there in a period before the election.

So the Minister and this Government rushed to act on, I believe, politically philosophical grounds. It sounded good. It sounded like good, dry Liberal stuff; and so this course was embarked upon. Of course, the Rally enthusiastically followed suit. Its members were drawn into this planning debacle. We have seen it all year now, from early in March to the end of the year. We have seen how this incompetence, or this ignorance, has drawn us into a very negative debate right through the year - a debate in which the schools have not been promoted; indeed, they have probably gone backwards.

Mr Humphries said at one stage that there would be no consultation other than on the criteria for school closures. No-one who understood the system could possibly have made such a statement. As it turned out, of course, there was consultation. Might I say that there was a great deal of consultation right up to last weekend, right up to Saturday when there was a succession of people flowing through the Minister's office. He had to concede the point. The Minister did not know and did not think that social consequences were involved. It was not until the impact of school closures was brought home to him by the community and this parliament insisted that there be some look at it that belatedly the Interim Territory Planning Authority and its social planners were brought into the exercise to make their comments. They were recognised after the event, after announcements and not before the announcement that schools would close.

Any reasonable planning arrangement should be based on good information, but the information was not known in March, it is not fully known even now, and every bit of information that we do have today has been dragged out laboriously bit by bit as we have sought answers to our questions. The Minister did not know, early on, and did not even think about gathering information about costs and savings. He said, "We will find that out when we know what schools are going to close", but that is a rather strange way to proceed in planning matters. Eventually the Hudson report was commissioned to get him out of the very deep hole that he had dug for himself in his ignorance of the social factors and the costs of closures.

Fundamental, of course, to any education planning should be the prime educational considerations. I believe that you should not start a procedure of change in education unless at the top of your priority list you have a clear knowledge of what you want to achieve for the children in our schools. From time to time Mr Humphries did say that he was aiming to maintain educational quality. But never was that elaborated; never were we told how that was to be achieved.

If we need further evidence that this whole debacle has been caused by inadequate planning, we need only think back to a radio interview I heard last Friday. It was a clear day after the report had come down and Mr Humphries had not then read the Hudson report; he had read the recommendations only. I recall a similar conversation, this time in the ABC studios, a clear day after the preschool report had been brought down and Mr Humphries said that he had not yet read the report. I do not think you can plan without attention to detail, and we see the lack of it in front of us.

Nowhere has Mr Humphries ever been on top of the detail and, as I have outlined, I do not think he has been on top of the educational philosophies right through. I believe

20 November 1990

that the Hudson report has an implied criticism of the lack of planning in that it recommends that a task force should be set up to look at a way of handling schools as enrolments decline. I can remember papers the Schools Authority, as it then was, put out in 1983 to deal with the way to handle schools as enrolments decline. A great deal of pain and effort went into them. I do not know why they were never attended to as part of this proposal.

It is no wonder that the planning has been in such a mess. The Minister has simply not been able to handle it. We hear reports that it will soon be taken away from him. Well, I should hope so. The education of our children will be better for that. I am sorry to have to say that. We see today how this matter has now climaxed - or almost climaxed, because I do not think it is the end of the story by a long way - with the regrettable decision to close five schools - four primary schools and one high school. The decision today was not taken on educational grounds. It was not based on sound planning. I do not think, today, it was even based on economic grounds, because nowhere are the savings going to match what was earlier claimed.

The decision today was based purely on political motives, as I outlined - that dry liberalism of the Minister. Further than that, it was based on pure political expediency, because today we saw the Residents Rally join forces with the Liberal Party to close five schools in the ACT. The decision has been based purely on the survival of the Government - on political expedience. Survival of the Government is what it is about. You decided that it was better to stay where you are than to keep all those schools open. For the Residents Rally power is much more important than schools. Five schools have been sacrificed for that political power. All this year, we have lost great opportunities. I think we have gone backwards in what happens in our schools. Opportunities for progress have not been taken. There are so many areas that we would be better debating in this Assembly. It is true that we have a good system, but there is much to be done to make it a better system, and that is what we should have been talking about; that is what we should have been planning for during this year.

MR HUMPHRIES (Minister for Health, Education and the Arts) (3.53): Mr Speaker, the Opposition has again taken the opportunity to raise this issue and to try to air once more, almost in a fairly tired fashion I would have thought, the same old arguments that its members have run out dozens of times before in this place. I suppose they feel an obligation to do so to those people who bang on their door and seek their support, but they do it more out of duty than anything else. I sense - if perhaps others in this place do not - a certain tiredness in the approach taken by the Opposition.

The matter of public importance put forward is a fairly broad and sweeping assertion. It does not, of itself, contain much to support it. It does not contain much argument or the germ of much argument. I think we need to look at what the facts are and establish some criteria on which one could measure the sorts of allegations that are being hurled around by the Opposition. Opposition members say that the decisions made by this Government have been driven by political imperatives, that we have not consulted adequately, that we have not taken the time to find out the background and the details of what issues are driving the education system, and that generally the issues have been handled ineptly. I have to say that as far as the ACT school system is concerned there are several indicators which I believe show that a very clear and positive direction has been established for that system under the ACT Alliance Government. We inherited the finest public education system in Australia, and that system remains as strong as it ever was. The fact is - - -

Mr Doby: Even better, it has been improved.

MR HUMPHRIES: I stand corrected by Mr Doby; it has actually been improved. It is actually a better system because of the efforts of this Government, and I want to look at the indicia of support and satisfaction. I will use two criteria to make such an assessment. Firstly, as members opposite know, the Government regularly engages in a process called school review. School review is presently a feature of the ACT public education system. It is a process of assessing all features of the performance of our public education system. This has been undertaken during this year and it has produced some interesting results. More than 90 per cent of parents in the primary area are either satisfied or highly satisfied with the primary education their children receive.

Apparently the Opposition wants to separate the Government that administers this system, the bureaucrats who administer this system and all the other people who run and provide that kind of service from the outcome, but it cannot do that. The fact of the matter is that confidence in the capacity of our system to provide services is still very high, and I believe that as a result of the changes we have brought about it will be higher still. But that is not the only thing that goes into making up an effective school system. There are other ways of measuring satisfaction within the system.

Another way - a very good way, I expect - would be to measure the satisfaction of the workers in the system. Teachers are, of course, a very important part of the ACT education system - a vital component, one might say - and they are capable of expressing their dissatisfaction with what they see in a number of ways. I would like to compare the number of teaching days lost under the Labor Government run by Ms Follett - who has just returned to this debate - with the number of days lost under the Alliance Government.

20 November 1990

During the period of her Government, 3,136.8 teaching days were lost through rolling strikes. A further 1,187.5 days were lost in a one-day strike in August; a total of 4,324.3 working days lost. Under the Alliance Government that number stands at 1,098, just over a quarter of the days lost under the Follett Government. Now, there is an indication, Mr Speaker, that this Government is administering the ACT school system effectively, because - - -

Mr Duby: What were those figures again?

MR HUMPHRIES: Mr Duby asked me to repeat those figures. They were: 4,324.3 teaching days lost during the Follett Government and only 1,098 lost under the Alliance Government, and that, of course, is also over a longer period. This Government has been in power now for almost a year and the Follett Government was in power for not even seven months. I think there is something to be proud about with those figures. It is an indication that there is some satisfaction - if not open and demonstrative satisfaction, at least some satisfaction - with the performance of the Government as far as some areas are concerned. That is backed up by some other very acceptable figures. The retention rates in force in the ACT remain the highest in the country, standing at 96 per cent.

Members interjected.

MR HUMPHRIES: That figure stands at 96 per cent and I think that has been attested to only recently in the recent national conference on colleges. That is an area in which the ACT shines.

It is interesting that in his remarks Mr Wood failed to address one area which I would concede is a weak spot, an area in which perhaps the system has not functioned effectively. I think our high schools are an area of some concern and we have to address that.

Mr Wood: I have said that many times, have I not?

MR HUMPHRIES: You did not in the course of today's debate. I believe that the mounting of a substantial high school development program, as this Government has done, is an adequate and positive response to the problems we see in the area of high school education. The area of preschools has also received attention. The establishment of a preschool task force has demonstrated a very high level of parental support for government preschool education. I do not believe that that system is going to change. The Government is seeking to enhance the quality of that system by exploring a range of restructuring options which are being discussed with a range of key interest groups. We also intend to enhance the quality of teachers and we have taken initiatives to establish a program in that area.

We are reviewing the effectiveness and efficiency of the central office of the administration. The efficiency and effectiveness of that central office was acknowledged by the Priorities Review Board earlier this year. We have made significant moves on literacy and numeracy over the last few months and a green paper has been released. At the same time we have given strong support for the International Year of Literacy. We continue to play an important role in the national collaboration curriculum activities. Of course, all these things have been achieved in the context of smaller resources available for public education and a reduced budget from the time when the Follett Government was in power.

I believe, Mr Speaker, that the evidence is that satisfactory outcomes can be achieved and have been achieved under this Government, and that we are effecting important reforms under this Government and will continue to do so. Mr Wood said that the process of change had been ineptly handled, but seemed to be inconsistent on some other points. At one stage he said that the level of consultation on the part of the Government was inadequate; but, on the other hand, he indicated that, in fact, it had been extremely extensive leading up to the period he mentioned - last Saturday - when a number of school groups discussed with me issues concerning education, particularly those arising from the Hudson report.

Mr Wood: The community demanded it.

MR HUMPHRIES: The fact of life is that consultation on this issue has been extremely extensive. In fact, I would dare say, without any fear of contradiction, that the degree of public consultation and discussion that occurred in 1988, when Mr Wood's party closed - coincidentally - five schools, was considerably less than that which has occurred under this Government in respect of this proposal to close schools. That was considerably poorer and of a considerably less satisfactory nature than that conducted under this Government.

Mrs Grassby: Why do you keep living in the past?

MR HUMPHRIES: The Hudson report may not satisfy those opposite, although I suspect that nothing short of tablets of stone descending from heaven would satisfy those opposite in the way of documentary evidence; but the fact of life is that that process puts any previous processes for establishing a basis on which to close schools to some shame. There was no independent report for the Labor Government in 1988. There was no public consultation of the kind that happened under this Government in 1988. I can only say that Mr Wood is adopting a standard for this Government which he was not prepared to apply for the Labor Government in 1988.

20 November 1990

I have to confess - and Mr Wood has made this allegation - that I began my task as Minister for Education with less hands-on experience in the education sector than Mr Wood possesses on the basis of his having worked in the ACT education system. However, I did have some other compensating advantages: one was the fact that we were prepared to undertake a very comprehensive process of discussing the issues with the community and, like it or not, the process of discussing with the community criteria on which governments would proceed to close schools was a very comprehensive process of public debate. A great many members of the community took advantage of that public consultation debate to contribute their views and to bring them to the attention of the Government, but apparently that does not satisfy Mr Wood. During that time I have also had the advantage of an education administration which was prepared to work very hard to achieve objectives of a kind which would produce positive outcomes for education in the future.

Mr Wood pretends that this Government has imposed its felonious and misguided policies of closing schools on to a reluctant system, and I have to say that on many counts that is wrong. There is evidence, not only at the bureaucratic level but also at the school level itself, that problems have arisen in the Territory due to the nature of some of our schools.

Mr Connolly: It is the "close our schools" lobby. There are posters everywhere saying, "Close my school".

MR HUMPHRIES: I have to say to Mr Connolly that there were teachers in the ACT public education system who said that some of our schools were too small. That was the view put to me.

Mrs Grassby: They were probably all members of the Liberal Party.

MR HUMPHRIES: No, they were not members of the Liberal Party, Mrs Grassby. They were genuine teachers, people with genuine interests in the education system of this Territory. You can belittle that if you want, but the fact is that it is true, and if you did a bit more talking to people in the community you would strike some such people as well.

The decision to close some schools has not been based on political imperatives. It has been based on the sound and reasoned advice of a person who is not likely to give advice to a non-Labor government on the basis of any preconceived political imperatives or ideological predisposition towards our point of view. Whatever denigrations and contempts those opposite might heap on Mr Hudson in a cowardly fashion - - -

Mr Duby: They cannot call him a dry Liberal.

MR HUMPHRIES: They cannot call him a dry Liberal. He is not that. He made it clear that he was not that. I think that in his report you can see a clear strain of advice, a clear strain of the view which is shared, not just by this Alliance Government in the ACT but, in fact, by governments all over this country. I will not live in the past any more, as Mrs Grassby accuses me of doing. I will live in the future. And the future of many education systems in this country is for schools to close. That is the sad but inevitable reality. I have to confess that I do not have any joy in being part of that process. It gives me no satisfaction at all to receive personal abuse from the parents of pupils at schools which are closing; but I have to say that I strongly stand by such a course of action if the alternative is the alternative chosen by many other systems in this country, and that is to sack teachers or to reduce the quality of resources available to schools in our various public education systems. That is a course of action which this Government has rejected, and I am proud of the fact that it has rejected that.

MR MOORE (4.07): Mr Deputy Speaker, it is interesting to note that Mr Hudson entitled his consultation *A Community Divided?*, because that is exactly what this Alliance Government has provided us with - a divided community. But it is not a community divided down the middle; it is a community clearly divided - community on one side; Alliance Government on the other side. The Alliance Government - - -

Mr Humphries: Forty per cent of people approved of our decisions. Remember the opinion poll?

MR MOORE: Mr Humphries interjects that 40 per cent of people approved of their decisions. I think it is appropriate for Mr Humphries to go back and look carefully at that poll and look at how the question was asked and so on. On Sunday, I understand, the Alliance Government had a retreat to worry about its image, and that image, of course, is a tarnished image. The reason it is a tarnished image is that its members set about this exercise of school closures in entirely the wrong way. And they have continued to do so and they have continued backing down as more and more things have come to light. As more and more evidence has come to light the fallacious nature of their decisions and the evidence upon which they have based them has been made clear.

If I can just digress a little to respond to Mr Humphries talking about criteria for success, he talks about teacher satisfaction, student satisfaction and things like that. I think it is time that Mr Humphries went and started to listen - not talk to, but listen - to some teachers and some of the principals and try to determine what teacher morale is like in this system. Whilst we might have a 96 per cent retention rate, which is wonderful, I think that Mr Humphries ought to begin to realise just how low morale is. I think he would also find that parental satisfaction

20 November 1990

at this stage is something very different from what was reported. What he was talking about was parental satisfaction in their own schools. Of course, there was great parental satisfaction in their own schools, and then the Alliance Government and the education Minister set about destroying the things that the parents were satisfied with. The problem is not just that this Minister was determined to make a standard Liberal response on education and that he was trying to out-Metherell Dr Metherell, but that, in fact, his decisions were based on very faulty advice.

One thing that is most interesting as far as this goes is that the Minister has not been able to recognise when that advice has been faulty, and the result of this is not just a lack of credibility for him and for his Government but a growing lack of credibility for the education ministry as a whole. In the Estimates Committee, with reference to section 2.13 on accountability and misleading evidence - and I will talk about that when we discuss the Estimates Committee this evening - it was clear that the committee had formed the view that one senior public servant had misled the committee and that senior public servant was, as was reported in the *Canberra Times*, in the area of education. It was misleading of the committee in a matter to do with planning and a matter to do with the planning of school closures. It is clear that that ministry is now getting even less credibility, because nobody is coming clean; information that ought be readily available as to how the decisions were made is not being made available, because every time any piece of information is made available it becomes very, very clear that it is shonky, that something is wrong with it.

Because of the awkwardness of time, we were not able to seek information concerning one particular set of items through the Estimates Committee. In fact, I wrote personally to Mr Humphries and asked him would he please provide as a matter of urgency information on school closures that dealt with items identified as the agenda for the joint party room meeting on 27 July 1990, when the decision was first made on school closures. It included groups of schools for consideration under two options, enrolment patterns and surplus capacities, bases for recommendations, details of financial implications, implications for special education units, implications for tenants, revised priority enrolment areas, disadvantages of small schools - notice, not advantages of small schools, just disadvantages - recommendations, and maps of regions with priority enrolment areas.

I got a response back from the Minister, who is interested in openness. This is the response, dated 12 November, that I received on 13 November from Mr Humphries:

I refer to your letter ... As Joint Party Room submissions are confidential to the Party Room I am not able to accede to your request.

If you were a member of the Joint Party Room, involved in the decision making process, I would be sending you such material as a matter of course.

No, I am not a member of the joint party room; however, I think it is appropriate that the people of Canberra have access to that information. If we had access to that information once again we would, I am sure, be able to demonstrate the lack of credibility of the information that was presented to you. That lack of credibility goes through to the Hudson report - not because of Mr Hudson, whose credibility I do not question, but because he got his information from the same place everybody else got their information, namely, from a department which now lacks credibility. Mr Humphries, tell us now, if you wish - through the Deputy Speaker - that he had the information that I requested made available to him.

Mr Humphries: Yes, the information he requested was made available to him.

MR MOORE: Mr Humphries interjects that he had available to him the information that he requested. I can remember sitting through the Estimates Committee for three-quarters of an hour to get a single response on something that we wanted. He can have available to him what he requests

- - -

Mr Humphries: He must have asked easier questions than you did.

MR MOORE: Yes, because we may not have known the exact question to ask. What that indicates is that you are not content that the decision you made is aboveboard, that everything you have done about school closures is appropriate. Instead, we have the opposite situation, and that is why there is a great lack of credibility on this decision, on your ministry, on your Government, and also, unfortunately, on the department of education.

I must say that I welcome the reprieve for Higgins, Rivett and Weetangera primary schools, and now, clearly, the fight must go on for the other schools and we must illustrate the same inadequacies that you have demonstrated on Cook Primary, Hackett, Holder, Lyons and so on. We must explore the alternatives, because a series of options was presented by Mr Hudson. It was not just a case of saying, "Okay, Alliance, the thing to do is leave Higgins, Rivett and Weetangera open and close the others; that will be okay". On the contrary, he provided a series of options to you, and, knowing what you know about being given

20 November 1990

misinformation, you ought to have explored those options more. Some of those options provided for a situation where you could still make some savings but at the same time retain the schools, and without cutting teacher numbers.

The alternatives, as far as the Minister is concerned, are either we close schools or we have to cut teachers. Those are scare tactics and they have fooled nobody. The alternatives have been presented to you time and time again, and those are the alternatives that you could easily respond to. Even if they had not been, let us make it quite clear which ministry suffered the cuts thanks to the budget of this Alliance Government. Education and health were the only areas to suffer cuts in real terms. In fact, if you are looking at general areas, there is actually some indication that the area of TAFE was also one to suffer real cuts. That is a reflection of the values of the Alliance Government, not their decision making process, and that is why they have no credibility.

DR KINLOCH (4.17): Mr Deputy Speaker, it is easy to be critical as indeed I, on many occasions, have been critical. I understand that the role of the Labor Party and Mr Moore is to be critical in this instance; that is their job. This is not to say, however, that there are acres of faults in every direction and oceans of disaster. That is not only an exaggeration but an unreasonable level of criticism about our school system. So, I want to stress here many of the excellent developments of the past year, many of which I have seen at first hand.

Let us look, first of all, at the day-to-day continuation of our excellent system in school after school across the system. We have splendid preschools - and this was the year of the preschool task force, a task force undertaken as a consultative arrangement with many of the leaders of the preschool community. We can also see scores of thriving primary and secondary schools, and I have visited many of those. We certainly see - and Mr Moore has spoken about this on other occasions and I know he agrees with me - excellent colleges. They are some of the best schools of their kind in Australia, and they continue.

I have also especially noted special schools of distinction, for example, Cranleigh, and special programs for young people who have recently arrived in Australia, especially in the former Ainslie Infants School and Higgins Primary School. I hope they continue and thrive. There have also been some new developments and the continuation of recent initiatives. I note the welcoming of the first group of fee paying overseas students, especially in our colleges. To be fair about that, that began under the Federal Government and went on through the Follett Government and then to the Kaine Government. I want to say, though, that there was a continuation of excellence in a number of areas for which our Government was responsible.

There has been a most lively and creative series of arts and theatre programs. I am thinking of Jigsaw Theatre in relation to schools, Skylark Theatre in schools and exciting productions in many of our colleges. This is not new; it was not new this year or last year. This has been going on, and it continues and it is exciting. There has been continued commitment to foreign language programs through the LOTE scheme - languages other than English scheme. A special consultant was appointed this year and the special programs went ahead in that area. There has been active and caring participation in the problem of illiteracy, and considerable discussion over the questions of literacy and numeracy. That, of course, has especially happened during the past year.

Some of the attack has been directed at Mr Humphries himself. I will not go over that ground, but I do wish to be fair and to ask all members of the Assembly to be fair in recognising that Mr Humphries himself has been open to members of the public and has been assiduous and conscientious in visiting schools. He has been highly involved in meetings, often meetings at which he was standing in the firing line. He and I and members of the Residents Rally have been here weekend after weekend. We see each other on Saturdays and Sundays, as these groups come to see us, and I think they also come to see the Opposition. I only want to say here that an attack can well be mounted, and you may well wish to do that; but I do not think you should attack Mr Humphries on the grounds that he did not care, or did not go to meetings, or did not involve himself with the public in all those ways. He did.

In most matters - and here I am obviously excluding the question of school closures, where he and I have had obvious differences over the past six months - he and I worked amicably and cooperatively together on a whole range of issues. And all those issues are still there. Those good things continue. Those school excellences continue.

Finally, I come to the Hudson report. I ask the Opposition to consider that report. The initiative for that came from the Residents Rally, that is, members of the Alliance Government. But I want to stress that this initiative was then accepted and carried forward by the Chief Minister, and then was administered by Mr Humphries as Minister for Education. That is to say, an inquiry which, in the end, has a good deal of criticism contained within it was a product of the Alliance Government. What you are looking at then is a Government which saw problems and recognised divisiveness - and I accept Mr Moore's comment about the title of the report. We then did something about it through the Hudson inquiry and the very considerable discussions we have had over the last week. I am not necessarily enthusiastic about all elements of the Hudson report. It would be very hard, would it not, to find a report where you would enthuse about every part? But I do wish to point out the following, and these matters relate to the administration of education in the ACT.

20 November 1990

The outcome of the Hudson report is, I would now stress, an acceptance by the Alliance Government of aspects of the report. Which aspects? First, there is an acceptance of several of Mr Hudson's specific recommendations. There were those three primary schools which were to have been amalgamated. That will no longer go ahead. In other words, the Alliance Government accepted that particular recommendation.

There was an acceptance of what Mr Hudson had to say about Holder High and Weston Creek High, in basic terms. There is a modified acceptance of one of the Hudson options, option C. That is, we did not necessarily accept all of option C. I am not going to say that everyone here agreed with all of option C. That is not necessarily true. But what the Alliance Government did in the outcome, in recognising an inquiry which it set up, was to act on many of the elements within that inquiry. In the outcome of that inquiry I would particularly point to the acceptance of the notion of the Hudson task force.

I want to say that our Government here recognises the very great divisiveness there has been this year. I believe that this is the day when we will cease that divisiveness. We recognise the pain, and I very much recognise the pain for the three or four remaining schools that were not recommended to be saved but were recommended to be closed by the Hudson inquiry. I recognise the pain in that. No-one recognises that more than I - except the parents and children of those schools. But I want to say that we have taken that task to heart, we have taken the inquiry to heart, and we have moved on to do our best to administer the education system as best we can.

MR BERRY (4.25): Dr Kinloch, you will receive no thanks from me for your message of peace and tranquillity, because this will go down as a year that you will long remember, because it will be remembered as the year that Dr Hector Kinloch voted for and, in fact, moved the motion to close schools. You wear the responsibility for that; so, do not try to pass it off with messages of peace and tranquillity.

People are angry for good reason. Ask the people of Cook, Hackett, Holder and Lyons; just ask them how they feel. I would like to come back, just for a moment, to the message that the Minister for Education tried to push in this place, namely, that there is some level of satisfaction in the community about his management of the education system. I say to him: I throw down the gauntlet. Let us go to the polls. Let us go to the polls and we will test the satisfaction levels for your management of the education system. Let us ask the - - -

Mr Kaine: You will get your chance, but not on your terms, buddy.

MR BERRY: I am glad that the Leader of the Opposition - I should say, I am glad that Mr Kaine has risen to the bait, because he will truly end up in the Opposition, where he deserves to be, according to Mr Duby. We long remember the speech of Mr Duby, where he said that he would vote for the Chief Minister as Leader of the Opposition, because that is what he deserved. And what about this Government that squawks about what happened in the past, dwells in the past, and talks about what happened before self-government came into existence in the Territory? Where were they when the people of Cook and Hackett asked for their guarantee of five more years? They were not to be found.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the Minister for Education has pushed expedient inaccuracies in this place on a number of issues. The first one which I mentioned, as I started out on this debate, was, of course, in relation to satisfaction levels. But the greatest inaccuracy he has tried to peddle in this place has been on the issue of consultation. This Minister crows about the levels of consultation. It is another expedient inaccuracy, because he said to the people of the ACT that there would be no consultation except on the criteria for those closures. Let us put that to rest. These sorts of expedient inaccuracies bring nothing but concern about the future of the Assembly and, of course, concern about its credibility. It is because of the performances of the Ministers opposite that that happens.

Mr Collaery will dwell on the past again and again, clawing for something on which to base an argument about the school closures. But what mostly burns him up is that the Labor Party in this Assembly is spotlessly clean on education because the Labor Party members were elected to this place on the basis that they would close no schools in the first term and that they would involve the community in any further discussions. This rabble opposite claims that it is a group that supports consultation, but where were its members when the pressure was put on them to consult? They disappeared.

Today we have had the third final decision of this Government on schools. What sort of unrest do you think that causes in the community, in particular in the schools community? It throws it into chaos - and this Minister, the Minister for Education, talks about satisfaction levels. How can you govern a territory with that sort of decision making process? No wonder the Chief Minister threatens to resign from time to time, because he, too, would have had enough of it, I suspect, based on the performance of some of the Ministers opposite.

Today, Mr Deputy Speaker, we have had the big sacrifice to keep the Residents Rally party in government. It is the big sacrifice. Cook, Hackett, Holder and Lyons schools should have a sign on the front of them saying, "The sacrifice for the survival of the Residents Rally in government". That is what has happened and they will be

20 November 1990

remembered for that; there is no doubt about that. But when will the posturing end? When will this party stop posturing about how it supports education in the Territory?

Mr Kaine: When you sit down; that is about when.

MR BERRY: I am happy to see that the Chief Minister supports the posturing of the Residents Rally party. They are all cast in the same mould. They are a very touchy lot. Did the Chief Minister threaten to resign again to keep them in line? Will we ever know?

Mr Kaine: Several times. I do it half a dozen times a day.

MR BERRY: They are pretty thick; it would take a while for it to sink in, Chief Minister. The Government's case was discredited from day one. The savings were overstated, the costs were underestimated, and, of course, the importance of the neighbourhood school system has been ignored. It has been an ill considered plan from day one. There has been no consideration of the social impact by a mob which has no social conscience. Once again, the priorities of the Government are apparent. Let us make it clear; it is the destruction of the ACT education system against the wishes of the people they were elected to represent. That will go down with the Residents Rally.

Let us take a look at a couple of side issues that are affected by the Government's decision on education; let us take a look at the South Curtin Therapy Centre. Its staff have been kicked from pillar to post from day one, and I must say that it is pretty obvious that in this third great decision on education in the ACT the Government has not had a look at the South Curtin Therapy Centre yet. It was not even considered before the announcement of the decision. We are about to see the second domino effect on those organisations which operate from school premises. First the Lyons school, and then the South Curtin Therapy Centre, and now the Weston Creek Health Centre and the Weston Creek Community Service.

Why should the people of Weston Creek pay for this Government's ineptitude? But they are paying. They are paying dearly. We have preschools, primary schools, high schools and health centres closing, all because of the Government's mismanagement of education. What on earth is going to happen to the Life Education Centre now? What will happen to the Weston Creek Community Service? The service is located in two buildings at Coleman Court in Weston Creek; the community centre, and, of course, the health centre. The Government told the service that they would be split between Coleman Court and Rivett Primary School, but now Rivett will stay open. What happens now? What happens to these all-important services? Who knows. Do we get a fourth final decision? Perhaps. What about the Life Education Centre? It, too, was told that it was going to Rivett. What are you going to do with it? Did

you consider that in the joint party room? I will back it in that you did not consider it. You would not know. It is another knee-jerk reaction. You may have to threaten to resign again, Chief Minister.

What will be the fate of these and other services which were told that they would have to move to Rivett? The Government has not considered it. It is interesting that members are laughing at this point in the debate, because the repercussions of these school closures will be felt in those very important community services long after this mob have gone.

The list goes on in relation to this Government's decision on school closures. It is an accountant's plan. So, what the members did to try to justify it was to get themselves a review. But that did not work either. In fact, it showed the flaws in their original decision, and the community is again up in arms over the behaviour of this Government - and deservedly so. I have to say that the parents and friends of the Higgins, Rivett and Weetangera schools are to be congratulated on the great battle that they put up in relation to these school closures. It was a good win. But the fight is yet to occur in relation to Cook, Hackett, Holder and Lyons. The fight is not over. I am happy to be associated with a struggle to secure guarantees that the Labor Party gave before it was elected to this place; and that was that no schools would close in the first term of this parliament. Our participation with the community would have led to a better result. We do not dwell on the past, Mr Collaery. We look forward to the future.

MR KAINE (Chief Minister) (4.35): Mr Berry asked the question and he got the answer. The posturing has just finished. He is the expert at it; so he ought to know.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I do not know when the Opposition will ever recognise that the debate is over. How many MPIs have we had on this issue over the past few months? I have to say to them that mere repetition of argument - even if it is cogent - adds nothing to the debate. And that is all we have had - repetition, repetition, repetition. I presume that Opposition members are working on the basis that if they say it often enough, no matter how untrue it is, somebody will believe it. That is the basis they are working on.

The simple fact is that this debate is not supposed to be about school closures, but about administration. I have not heard any member on the opposition benches talk about the administration of the schools yet. They are absolutely obsessed with the fact that this Government has taken issue with the problem and has closed some schools. They are absolutely obsessed by it, and they think they are on an election winner. I have news for you. It will not get you 10 votes, because everybody out there knows that you are a bunch of hypocrites; everybody knows that your policy provides for school closures.

20 November 1990

Ms Follett: On a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker: I object to the term "a bunch of hypocrites", and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr Kaine: It is commonly used, Mr Deputy Speaker. They use it all the time over there.

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not think that is a problem. Continue, Chief Minister.

MR KAINE: We will go through *Hansard* and produce a lexicon of the words that they use over there.

Their policy says that they will close schools. It is in your policy statement, and you know it. Yet you come in here and you debate day after day and criticise this Government because we close schools. We implement your policy, and you do not like it.

Mrs Grassby: It is not. It is not in our policy.

MR KAINE: It is in your policy. Read your own policy. The simple fact is, Mr Deputy Speaker -
- -

Mr Berry: But we are clean; you are dirty. That is the problem.

MR KAINE: We will get to you, Mr Berry, Mr "do nothing" Berry. That is your solution to everything - do not do anything, because if you do anything you might get criticised. You did nothing on hospitals. All you did was dither.

Mr Berry: On a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker: I raise the issue of relevance.

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not think he has reached that stage at all, Mr Berry. Continue, Chief Minister.

Mr Berry: Mr Deputy Speaker, I am also concerned for his health because he looks as though he is just about to blow a fuse.

MR KAINE: I am not going to blow a fuse, but you might when your day comes. Mr Wood talks about dry Liberal stuff. Have a look at Victoria; have a look at South Australia; have a look at Tasmania. Dry Liberal stuff! Good on you, Mr Wood. Where are the Liberals in those three States that are closing schools and firing teachers? You talk about destroying the education system. Have a look at what is happening in those three Labor States. You want to watch what you say because they are boomerangs.

Mr Moore, of course, in his usual fashion could not stick to the point either. His whole attack was a personal denigration of everybody concerned, as is his usual case. Mr Hudson got his information, he said, from the same place

that everybody else did. Have a look at page 3 of Mr Hudson's report. He will tell you where he got the information. It came from 44 submissions that were directed to him. It had nothing to do with the information that we had to hand; he got 44 submissions. But, of course, Mr Moore will not concede that, because Mr Moore is absolutely obsessed with this particular problem and he cannot get out of the hole that he has dug himself into. I will conclude, Mr Speaker - - -

Mr Berry: It is going to be a pain in the neck for you for a long time.

MR KAINE: Mr Berry epitomises the Labor Opposition - do nothing, do not make any decisions, do not face up to the problem - - -

Mr Berry: We do not close schools, and we promised we would not.

MR KAINE: You could not make up your mind about the hospital; you could not make up your mind what to do about the \$7m that was overspent; you dither and you always hope that if you do nothing the problem will go away. The problem will not go away. This Government has dealt with it. This Government has had the fortitude to face up to the issue. We have done it. The decisions will stick, despite your assertions that they will not. The decisions will stick, and in a year's time you will get no benefit whatsoever out of this pantomime that you have been going through. You will get no benefit for your pantomime and your posturing and your hypocrisy - none whatsoever.

MR SPEAKER: The time for the discussion has expired.

PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE - STANDING COMMITTEE
Report on Residential/Suburban Fences

MR JENSEN (4.41): Mr Speaker, I present the following papers:

Planning, Development and Infrastructure - Standing Committee - Residential/Suburban Fences -
Report No. 5, dated November 1990.
Copies of minutes.

I move:

That the report be noted.

It gives me great pleasure this afternoon to table the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Planning, Development and Infrastructure on residential/suburban fences in the ACT.

20 November 1990

Members interjected.

MR JENSEN: I note, Mr Speaker, that there are some derisory comments from across the other side of the chamber; but I would have to refer them to the terms of reference of the committee, which suggest that it was the Assembly, as a whole, that put this reference to the committee. It was not something that the committee did itself; it was referred to it by the Assembly. Therefore, if you want to make any comments in relation to who raised this issue, it is this Assembly that referred it to the committee, not the members of the committee. Let us get that straight from the beginning.

Mr Speaker, before making my comments on this report and the process that we followed, I would like to refer briefly to the additional statements by Mr Berry. I note that they are a straight copy of what he included in the committee's report on the capital works program, despite the fact that I would have expected Mr Berry to produce further arguments. It seems to me that on issues like front fences for the ACT the ALP should have seen fit to participate fully in this process and to seek a bipartisan view on the issue. I would also suggest that the report provides a balanced view of the issue and makes recommendations which could be seen as being at odds with recommendations made by ACT Government agencies. Such recommendations could be seen as being what the real processes of Assembly committees are all about, namely, looking at the issues, reviewing the evidence and then bringing down recommendations for consideration by the Assembly as a whole and the Government. I might add at this juncture that Mr Berry, in fact, was provided throughout the process with all documents, including drafts of the report.

At this stage, I would like to comment briefly on an unfortunate situation which occurred when a copy of the draft report, which was being considered by all members of the committee and was made available to all members of the committee, was passed to the media. Unfortunately, the media saw fit to see this as some kind of scoop and made a front page story out of the draft. This unfortunately caused some concerns in the community when some aged persons and other businesses were concerned about the possible effects on them and their businesses - concerns which were clearly unfounded. As chairman of the committee I would like to express my regret at what was a clear breach of the standing orders of this Assembly. It could be seen, in fact, as a clear contempt of the proceedings of the Assembly and the committee system.

Mr Speaker, section 13 of the Federal Parliamentary Privileges Act 1987 provides for penalties of some \$5,000 for an individual and \$25,000 for a corporation for the unauthorised disclosure of evidence. Cases of the premature release of private deliberations and draft reports have generally been pursued by the House of Representatives as matters of contempt. Page 713 of

House of Representatives Practice refers to three cases, and in all cases those responsible were identified by committees of the House of Representatives as being guilty of contempt. Therefore, Mr Speaker, I would call on all of those involved with the Assembly and the reporting of proceedings to ensure that they respect the conventions that apply to the proceedings of our committees and ensure that there are no more cheap headlines and no unfounded concern such as has flowed from the two occasions on which draft reports of the Assembly committees have been prematurely disclosed.

Mr Speaker, I would now like to return to the report, and in doing that, acknowledge the support provided to us, the members of the committee, by the committee staff, who have worked hard to ensure that this report has been tabled today. They play an important role in the process. While I will not name them, members and those who work in the Assembly know to whom I am referring.

Mr Speaker, the committee has made a total of seven recommendations, and I would now like to make some comments about these recommendations and about some of the background to the report. This issue has been around in the ACT for some time. From the view of the political process, it goes back to 11 November 1975, a red letter day in the political history of Australia. It is very interesting that front fences were on the agenda of the old House of Assembly on the day that a Prime Minister was getting the riot act read to him on the steps of the old Parliament House. However, the last time that it was formally considered by the Assembly, or the political group within the ACT, was in May 1983. A major survey of front fences in the ACT which was undertaken by the NCDC in 1982 was used as a basis for a series of recommendations by the old House of Assembly's standing committee on city management. However, all that came from that report was a release, in September 1984, of a revised set of design and siting policies which allowed for the construction of courtyards, subject to certain conditions.

These policies have continued since self-government, and the recommendations of this report seek to advance this process of change a further step forward. One of the first things that the committee observed was a general lack of enforcement of the policy. At least 3,700 structures were identified in 1982 which were considered to be illegal.

Mr Berry: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: it was a few moments ago and it has taken a little while to sink in, but it seems to me that Mr - - -

Mr Humphries: It usually does.

Mr Berry: I think I raised the point of order; you will get your turn later. Mr Jensen inferred that I had something to do with the leaking of this report. I would ask that that be withdrawn, if that was the case.

20 November 1990

MR JENSEN: I do not believe I said that, Mr Speaker. I spoke about Mr Berry's non-participation in the report - - -

Mr Berry: Did you infer that?

MR JENSEN: I indicated that he had received a copy of the report as all members had, and I then happened to continue on in my speech to comment on the fact that the report was leaked.

MR SPEAKER: Mr Jensen, if that was unintentional, would you withdraw it if there is an inference there?

MR JENSEN: I will be only too happy to withdraw any unintentioned indication that Mr Berry may have been responsible for the leaking of that report, if Mr Berry is, in fact, worried about that.

MR SPEAKER: Please proceed. Had you concluded your remarks, Mr Jensen?

MR JENSEN: No, I had not, Mr Speaker; I was interrupted by a point of order from Mr Berry.

Mr Speaker, the committee was advised that only 13 cases of illegal fences were examined in the past three years, and only seven notices were issued. The majority of those cases were referred to the Building Controller after complaints by neighbours, with the exception of one case where officials of the planning authority had noted an illegal fence and that happened to be referred to the Building Controller for action. The committee was concerned about the unfair and discriminatory nature of the 1984 policy implementation. Accordingly, we recommended that any policy on residential/suburban fences in the ACT should be enforced if it is to have credibility. One of the key points, as we see in recommendation No. 1 which came from paragraph 4.6, is that there should be an extensive promotional campaign to ensure that the people of the ACT are fully aware of whatever the policy may be in relation to householders.

Another important aspect is the provision of adequate resources to administer that policy, including the processing and assessing of applications. Then, of course, I think another important aspect is procedures for objections and appeals. It is also very clear that one of the major and very important recommendations of the committee is that, in cases where there are illegal structures in place, approval must be obtained for any external structures before any residential properties are sold. That relates to not just fences, but any external structures. It includes fences and walls in place at the time. So, the process of application for a front fence - if it falls within the guidelines that may be adopted as a result of this report - should be able to be put in place.

The issue of front fences always brings up the issue of the dog problem. The committee noted that the Government has taken up this challenge, which I might add was initially started by Mrs Grassby in her capacity as the previous Minister responsible for dogs and dog problems, to ensure that the community participated in this process. The current Government has announced a number of measures which are aimed at bringing the dog problem under control and we recommend, as a committee, that action be started on them very quickly. Once again, of course, another important aspect is the need for adequate resources and staff to ensure that the new policies in relation to the control of dogs are fully and effectively enforced. What we also recommended, which was very important, was that the implementation of those new control measures was required to be subject to ongoing reviews.

Two problems that we noted during our investigations related to environmental issues. We followed this up by inviting comments from conservation groups and the Parks and Conservation Service in the ACT. There seem to be some problems with some of the plants identified as suitable for hedges. Some were causing problems in the indigenous ecosystems of the ACT, particularly the Canberra Nature Park. The committee was concerned to ensure that those plants that were identified on that list and which were not suitable for hedges were removed from that list. That was one of the issues that we took up.

Another issue that we considered was the concern about the current practice of using brush fencing in the ACT. Following some investigations it was identified that the material for brush fencing is brought into the ACT mainly from an area in New South Wales. In fact, there are problems. Problems have been identified in Victoria and South Australia where this material has been used for similar fencing in those States. There was some concern that this could be causing some problems to the ecosystem in the area from which the plants had come to the ACT, which is the area of West Wyalong and Mount Hope. However, unfortunately, unlike Victoria and South Australia, no work has been done on the possible effects on the environment there.

In the absence of any clear evidence to suggest that this was the case, the committee decided that it would recommend that the ACT Government take action to initiate, through its membership of the Australian and New Zealand Environment Council, an examination of the effects of the use of this material as a fencing aid and its effect on the environments of New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia. I think it is important to remember that, where a product or a process that takes place in another State is having an effect on the environment, we are, indirectly, affecting the environment of another area. Action should be taken in much the same way as the Government has adopted a policy not to accept any gravel that is removed from the Murrumbidgee River because of the effects on that river. It is a similar sort of policy.

20 November 1990

One of the other issues that were considered was the fact that there are other options to front fences and they include the provision of moundings and screenings of plants. One of the key recommendations of the committee was to ensure that advice was available to those who wished to take the option of planting on moundings, particularly on corner blocks and areas beside walkways. As an assistance and an aid to that, it was decided that we should also ensure that there was some provision for a temporary structure to enable the protection of these plants during their early life. That was one of the issues that were raised with members of the committee by people who appeared before us.

On that basis, Mr Speaker, I would like to end my remarks by thanking all those members of the community who participated in the process and were prepared not only to submit submissions to the committee, but also to appear before us in public hearings. I think this is an important process for the development of the ACT Legislative Assembly and the committee process within the ACT.

MRS NOLAN (4.56): Mr Speaker, as a member of the committee I shall speak briefly on the report of the Standing Committee on Planning, Development and Infrastructure in relation to residential/suburban fences. I think it is probably appropriate that I should reiterate the terms of reference that were before the committee.

The reference was whether changes should occur in relation to the current policy concerning fences on suburban and residential building blocks, including whether restrictions on front and side fences should be eased and whether restrictions on the material from which such fences are made should be eased. The second part of that was that the committee was to report by the first day of sitting in April 1990. There have been several extensions of the reporting date since then and I might say that I am quite pleased to see that this report is finally being handed down this afternoon. I would also like to thank those involved from the committee office and the *Hansard* office for their assistance in getting this report completed.

The issue of front fences and whether Canberra residents should or should not be able to construct a fence has been around for many years. It is an issue on which I have held a personal view in favour of changing the current front fence policy, and that personal view was something that I have held ever since I arrived in Canberra. I was the person who put the original motion to the Assembly, and then the Assembly moved it to the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Committee to investigate the issue. It certainly was some considerable time ago - in July last year - and since then I have become a member of that committee. I was not a member of the original Planning, Development and Infrastructure Committee. I then took the view that as a member of the committee I would weigh up all

the evidence and then come to a position. I have done that on several committees in regard to several issues in relation to the particular personal views that I have held. I have put those to one side and taken on board the evidence that is put before the particular committee.

However, as I also mentioned when I spoke to this particular motion in July last year, I have had the issue of front fences raised with me by many people in the community, especially people in the Tuggeranong Valley. It has been raised by many people, and for all sorts of reasons. Last year, when I first raised the issue in the media, we were certainly well aware of previous committees. There were, in fact, three committees of the House of Assembly. It is an issue that obviously has been around for some considerable time. I want to touch on those previous inquiries a little later, but I would also like to mention briefly that the *Chronicle*, I think it was - one of the suburban newspapers - ran a poll, and quite a large sample of people showed the extent to which they were concerned about the issue.

I would like to mention now that the policy that our city planning authorities have adhered to, which supposedly prohibits the existence of front fences, has been one that has set Canberra apart from other cities in Australia, although there are small residential areas in other cities that have a no front fence policy. Westlakes in Adelaide is one that particularly comes to mind, and there are other very small areas that were identified to us.

The no front fence policy has supposedly remained consistent for many years, as I said. However, there are many illegal structures, and that has been touched on in the report as well. The last identified record was in 1982. So, it is some considerable time since we were able to ascertain just how many illegal structures there are out there in the community. The report touches in some detail upon why nothing has been done since then. Given that we know many or most people in the community are law abiding citizens, they recognise the policy is one that currently prohibits them having a front fence and therefore they would not be looking to put forward a structure.

The reason why this has been the attitude of Canberra's planners is that they believe that front fences are not conducive to a garden city environment and the garden city environment is the theme which Walter Burley Griffin envisaged for Canberra's future. The committee is of the view, though, that the two can be consistent. As we drive around the suburbs, especially in the inner Canberra area, and we see front fence structures, we see just how well they fit in with the garden city concept.

As I said earlier, the no front fence policy has been questioned on several occasions in the past, including 1975 and 1983 when it was debated in the ACT House of Assembly. Each time there was significant support for easing the

20 November 1990

existing policies. In fact, when this issue was reviewed in 1983 by the then House of Assembly's standing committee on city management, the committee came up with a set of recommendations which are not dissimilar to those listed in the report tabled before you today.

It is interesting to note, too, Mr Speaker, that when the 1983 report was debated in the House of Assembly the recommendations, with few amendments, were put to the vote and subsequently accepted by the house. In fact, our own Chief Minister, my colleague Mr Kaine, when speaking on the recommendations in the 1983 report - which included under recommendation 3 a statement that the House of Assembly support a policy permitting the erection of approved front fence structures - said:

Mr Speaker, I think that the recommendations made by the committee are eminently sensible and I agree with them. Let me perhaps rephrase that; I support them.

Our own standing committee's report has carefully considered, we believe, the alternative views on the current no front fence policy in the ACT. We have acknowledged the validity of many of the points of view put forward and we have concluded that the policy does need changing, but not totally deregulating.

The committee has given three main recommendations, the first of which allows for the construction of approved front fences providing they are constructed along seven basic guidelines. These guidelines not only will help maintain Canberra's garden city environment theme, but also will allow Canberra's residents a choice to erect a front fence giving them increased visual privacy and better security for their children and their property.

I would like to read into the record those recommendations listed at the conclusion of the report:

The committee recommends that:

the current policy on residential/suburban fences in the ACT be changed to include the following provisions:

- . an amendment which allows for the construction of approved front fences in accordance with the following:
 - (a) the maximum height of such structures does not exceed 1.2 metres in height;
 - (b) the materials used for the construction of such fences and/or walls should be the same or similar to those of the main building;

- (c) the fence/walls be constructed as an integrated part of the development and suburban/residential building blocks;
- (d) such constructions meet specified standards of workmanship and materials;
- (e) such constructions shall be at least partially screened and softened in appearance by landscape planting;
- (f) appropriate procedures for neighbours objections and appeals machinery available to all parties are established; and
- (g) permission has been granted in writing from the appropriate authorities (or the ACT Heritage Committee where appropriate) to construct such a fence/wall.

Mr Speaker, I believe that the report tabled before us today provides considered and appropriate recommendations on the future direction of one of Canberra's most contentious planning issues, and that is why the committee certainly has my full support in relation to these particular recommendations.

There is one other area that I specifically want to comment on, and that is section 5 of the report, in particular paragraphs 5.6 and 5.7. That is not to say that I do not support all the recommendations in the report - I certainly do - but in the time allowed I would like to touch briefly on those. They are issues that have been raised by the community at large for some considerable time. In a statement to the Legislative Assembly on 23 October - and this is stated in the report - the Government has already foreshadowed that a series of new measures will be introduced next year in an attempt to control the dog problem by amending the Dog Control Act 1975. (*Extension of time granted*) The committee and, in particular, I want to say, I strongly endorse these proposed new measures. I do not believe that they can come quickly enough. I think this is something that has been around the agenda for quite some time. The committee recommended that:

the proposed new measures aimed at bringing the dog problem under control be introduced as a matter of urgency;

adequate resources, including staff, are provided to ensure that the new policies are fully enforced; and

the implementation of these new control measures be subject to ongoing review.

20 November 1990

I am sure that the great majority of people out there in the community are expecting those particular recommendations to happen fairly quickly. I am sure that they will. They have certainly been around for some considerable time and, as was mentioned earlier by Mr Jensen, they were first given notice of over a year ago.

In conclusion, Mr Speaker, I would also like to state that I do not believe that there will be many fences popping up all over the place. I think that what we have done here as a committee is to give people the opportunity to have a choice in such matters. I think this is something that is very important for those residents in our suburbs. The freedom of choice is a very important principle, provided that there are guidelines in place. The recommendations in the report tabled today will offer that choice and those guidelines. I commend the report to the Assembly.

MR BERRY (5.08): This report, Mr Speaker, is a disaster for Canberra if it is accepted by the Government. Firstly, I want to talk about some comments that Mr Jensen made in relation to the Labor Party's participation in committees which are chaired by Executive Deputies. Our position has been made clear, and I will not dwell on it for too long. I think we have been proven to be correct in believing that the participation of Executive Deputies, so close as they are to the Ministers of - dare I say it - their choice, has rendered the process of committees in which they participate ineffective. I think it has been rendered ineffective by the perception that the community would have of the independent nature that committees ought to have.

I will refer to the last couple of paragraphs of my additional statement to the report. One only has to refer to Lord Denning's statement when he said:

The court looks at the impression which would be given to other people. Even if he was as impartial as could be, nevertheless if right minded persons would think that in the circumstances, there was a real likelihood of bias on his part then he should not sit ...

I will read into the record my final paragraph, which states:

I repeat that the Labor Opposition is keen to participate fully in an Assembly committee system which is not under a cloud regarding its independence.

Mr Speaker, I will go back to the report. I heard Mrs Nolan say that she weighed up the evidence. I have had a look at the evidence as it appears in the report, and it seems that the balance did not work too well because this has boiled down to a win for the noisy minority in this town. I note on page 13 of the report that, from the tens of thousands of householders in this

Territory, there were 37 written submissions. To say that the evidence was weighed up in favour of front fences, when only 37 written submissions supported front fences, seems to me to be an outrage.

Some of the other areas of concern relate to the cost of policing. I wonder whether we will end up with a fence police. One hundred thousand dollars to \$1.5m would be spent on the policing of fences. Certainly, if there is a policy it ought to be policed - there is no doubt about that - but I wonder about spending \$1.5m when schools and hospitals are closing, by this Government's actions.

Mr Connolly: It is offensive.

MR BERRY: It is offensive. Thank you, Mr Connolly.

Mr Wood: What about all the bureaucrats to process the applications? What is that going to cost?

MR BERRY: Indeed. The report, Mr Speaker, outlines the history of the front fence policy in the ACT. This city is famous because of the absence of front fences. All of our tourism promotion highlights this city as the garden city, and it is because, as I said a moment ago, of the absence of front fences.

Mrs Nolan: There are some lovely front fences around inner Canberra, with lots of garden.

MR BERRY: As the report notes, the garden city character has made Canberra a unique and distinctive city. I will come back to what you said, Mrs Nolan, because there is some talk from the ACT Heritage Committee on that issue. We, as Canberrans, are justifiably proud of our unique and distinctive city, and most of us want to protect it - except for 37 who want front fences, it seems.

Some in Canberra would prefer to have front fences - 37 of them, it seems - but, as the report indicates, a change in policy would not necessarily overcome the problems that they identify, such as security, burglars and dogs. Big dogs may get over a 1.2-metre fence. My dog could not, but other people's dogs could. They could do on your front lawn what people seem to be concerned about. I do not think front fences are the answer to it; the answer is dog control.

There is no evidence that a change in front fence policy would affect these issues to any marked degree. The Labor Party is happy to look at measures to bring the perceived dog problem under control, but we are still waiting for this Government to bring in the legislation. Mr Doby, I think, has promised legislation, but it goes along with a lot of other promised legislation which we have yet to see. I think the community is well aware that this mob opposite

20 November 1990

is good at promising things, but it is not very good at delivering legislation. I refer to the promised human rights legislation which Mr Collaery would like to have in this place.

Mr Speaker, it is interesting to note that, of all the submissions received, all of the community organisations and all of the government agencies argued for the retention of the current policy. How can it be said that the evidence has been properly weighed up? There were 37 submissions for front fences and everybody else was against them. It does not make sense to me.

The case has not been made out for changing the policy, and it will be changed to suit only a few citizens. The costs will be high - for policing the Act and, more importantly, in terms of the degradation of our city. There is no doubt about that. Who will benefit? If we talk about popularity, as with the schools issue, I would be happy to go to the polls on this one, too, because I think the people of the ACT do not want front fences. There will always be the few who will benefit, but the majority will suffer because of what will happen to the city.

Mr Speaker, I referred to the arguments against the changes to existing policy. The main argument, as is described in the report at page 14, is that it would affect the garden city character that has made this place a unique city today. It is one of the great hidden secrets of the world, I suggest. As I said, all community organisations and government organisations argued that the current policy should be retained.

The ACT Heritage Committee, which the Residents Rally has been seen to support in the past, on my recollection, argued that it was essential that the current restrictions on residential fences be maintained so as to ensure the continuity of Canberra's planning ideas. The Heritage Committee stressed the need to pay particular attention to maintaining the policy in heritage areas because the value of these areas is attributed in part to the absence of front fences. It was noted that 63 per cent of the illegal fences were found in inner suburban areas of the ACT, and that is also mentioned earlier in the report.

Mr Speaker, the National Trust of Australia (ACT) expressed the opinion that no significant grounds had been offered "to suggest the current policy be discontinued and the historic tradition of no front fences be not maintained". The report says:

The National Trust informed the Committee that the concept of no front fences was an integral part of Canberra's planning and historic integrity and should not be seen as an isolated component of the planning system in Canberra.

This committee has said that this policy should change and that this city should be lumbered with front fences. The committee has failed, and the Labor Opposition calls on the Government to ensure that this report is not adopted because it does nothing for the future of Canberra. It destroys a whole lot of hard work which has been put into ensuring that this city is a unique place. I think the Government should reject the committee's recommendations.

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

Sitting suspended from 5.18 to 8.00 pm

PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE - STANDING COMMITTEE
Schools Location - Referral of Paper

MR HUMPHRIES (Minister for Health, Education and the Arts) (8.00): Mr Speaker, I table the following paper:

Schools location - suggested format for proposed bill and draft content, prepared by Mr G. Evans, Board member, Hawker College, dated October 1990.

I move:

That the paper be referred to the Standing Committee on Planning, Development and Infrastructure for inquiry and report.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

ESTIMATES - SELECT COMMITTEE
Report on the Appropriation Bill 1990-91

MR JENSEN (8.00): Mr Speaker, I present the following papers:

Estimates - Select Committee - Appropriation Bill 1990-91 -
Report, dated November 1990.
Copies of minutes.

Pursuant to the resolution of the Assembly, the Speaker authorised the printing and distribution of the report on 5 November 1990. I seek leave to move a motion authorising the publication of the minutes.

Leave granted.

20 November 1990

MR JENSEN: I move:

That the Assembly authorises the publication of the Minutes.

I do not propose to speak to the motion. I think it speaks for itself.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

MR JENSEN: Mr Speaker, I move:

That the report be noted.

The role of an estimates committee, as identified in *House of Representatives Practice*, on page 47, allows the parliament "to examine, more closely than is possible in the committee of the whole, the proposed expenditures contained in the main Appropriation Bill for each year".

Unlike the Federal Parliament and some States which have two houses of parliament, with an upper house as a house of review, this Assembly does not have such a provision.

Ms Follett: Thank heavens.

MR JENSEN: It is therefore appropriate to have an estimates committee process for this Assembly, and this year's process followed on from the establishment of an estimates committee to consider the Follett Labor budget last year. I was pleased at that time to serve as the chair of that committee, as I did this year.

I would just like to comment very quickly, Mr Speaker, on an interjection that came across from Ms Follett in relation to the mention of the fact that there is only one house in the ACT. While I am not necessarily suggesting that there should be two, because clearly that would be ridiculous, I would want to make a comment in relation to what happened in Queensland over a number of years with the control of executive government over the Parliament because of the fact that there was no house of review. On that basis I think it is important that the committee system and - - -

Mr Berry: It was only because you conservatives had control of it.

MR JENSEN: I am afraid, Mr Berry, that I do not see myself as a conservative in the line of Uncle Joh, for example. I would have some difficulties with that, I would suggest. I would hate to be considered as a conservative in the line of Uncle Joh.

Mrs Grassby: Of course he is not conservative. He is only to the right of Genghis Khan, isn't he?

MR JENSEN: The fact that I was in the military, Mrs Grassby, does not necessarily mean that I am to the right of Genghis Khan, as you may wish to say. However, I just thought I would make that point because I think it is important that there is a process by which the role of executive government can be reviewed.

When the Senate established the estimates committees in 1961 there was some criticism, suggesting that it evaded the spirit, if not the letter, of the Constitution. However, while there may still be some concern in some quarters, the process is now an accepted part of parliamentary practice in Australia, and I am sure it will be a major part of that process here in the ACT.

One fact that may have been overlooked in the discussions and comparison between the estimates committee process in the ACT and the processes in other parliaments, specifically the Federal Parliament, is that in the ACT all - and I repeat, all - Ministers appear before the committee; unlike in the Federal Parliament where the Prime Minister and the Treasurer, for example, are able to duck the committee and pass the buck to the senators that represent them in the Senate. This report clearly shows that in the ACT Ministers were required to appear before the Estimates Committee to have their appropriations looked at.

Another aspect in this Assembly was the decision taken by the committee to allow questioning by non-committee members. You may recall, Mr Speaker, that last year's Estimates Committee, which looked at the budget of a minority government in fact, was made up of all members of the Opposition. In this particular case it was decided that it was appropriate for non-executive members to be in a position to ask questions of the Ministers in accordance with the standing orders, which provide for that to take place. And that did take place. While I must admit that at some times some members of the Opposition probably sought to make a little bit of a meal of that provision, I think that by and large it worked reasonably well. I might even suggest that it might not be inappropriate for other members to participate in some of the hearings of other committees as well, particularly in an area that interests them.

I want to now move on to the fact that there was criticism in some quarters about the time taken. In fact, I think it is fair to say that the Estimates Committee sat for - certainly in public hearings - twice as many hours as it did last year. I guess there were a couple of reasons for that. One was that last year it was a new Assembly; we had been in operation for a period of only seven months, and many of us were still finding our way around the parliamentary process, if you like. This year, of course, more of us were more familiar with the process and we had had a little more time as a group to consider the process. That is one of the reasons why I believe the proceedings took a little longer.

20 November 1990

There is another reason why the proceedings took a little longer, and I guess it was a bit of a disappointment to me, as chairman of the committee, particularly considering that last year the committee made specific recommendations in relation to the provision of information to the committee. In fact it recommended that the Administration make more information available to the Estimates Committee prior to its deliberations rather than immediately before the start of questioning. There seemed to be a little bit of confusion as to the availability of that information, and some departments unfortunately were getting their information together on that general area just prior to the hearings. That was a disappointing factor from our point of view.

Another problem, of course, was that budget paper No. 5 this year did not provide information at subprogram level. So clearly that had to be made available as well. There was a limited time available in some cases for that information at subprogram level to be given to the committee. In fact there were at least two occasions when the committee members expressed concern that considerable amounts of information were provided just prior to the hearings. Consequently, the committee decided that there would be a short delay so that it would have a chance to study the information that was provided to it. A couple of the report's recommendations flow from that, and one is that future budget papers contain financial information at subprogram level. I will be interested to hear the comments of the Chief Minister and Treasurer on that matter.

Another thing we were concerned about was the possibility of making the budget papers themselves a little more user friendly. That was something that came across during our discussions with people that appeared before us. The committee found budget paper No. 2 particularly helpful as a basic document, as it provided a good overview of the budget and its process and the various major initiatives. In fact it is quite possible that the budget papers themselves are not widely promoted within the general community. However, it seems to me, and the members of the committee, that budget paper No. 2 is one that probably has more readable information in it, and the committee suggests that that particular paper be a little more widely distributed, because it is quite readable and an easy document with which to consider the budget process.

Another matter that we looked at related to the distribution and sale of the first two sets of budget papers with the aim of avoiding large stocks of surplus budget papers remaining in future years. That is an important issue, particularly when we are seeking to reduce the amount of paper that we are producing. The committee also recommended that a questionnaire be included in the budget papers, accompanied by publicity to encourage users of the papers to complete it. We also suggested that there

might be a discussion, if you like, amongst the various agencies to see how the budget papers could be set out in a more user friendly form.

One of the other recommendations of the committee that related to the provision of information was that a select committee be established, comprising the same membership as that of the Estimates Committee, to examine matters related to future estimates committees, including the form the revised budget papers may take.

The approach that we adopted on this issue was that the members of the existing committee - the one that disbanded when the report was provided to you, Mr Speaker, on 5 November - had some experience in the process, and it was appropriate for them to discuss the issues in a more informal manner with the members of the various agencies with a view to coming up with a process by which the information could be provided to the Estimates Committee in sufficient time to enable the members to consider it and thus, possibly hopefully, reduce the amount of time spent in those hearings. That is important from the point of view of the costs of running the committee, because there are costs associated with that.

The committee was also concerned about some of the programs that relate to program budgeting. In fact, one particular program, program 15, community services, covered a number of subprograms which were quite diverse. The committee seemed to consider, as did the people who appeared before us, that there were some problems in coming to grips, if you like, with the performance indicators, which are an important part of program budgeting, for that particular subprogram because of its diversity, which ranged from disability services through community welfare to sport and recreation.

There seemed to be a suggestion that that situation needed some looking at. We were led to believe that the Office of Public Sector Management was encouraging agencies to complete the corporate planning process and that it may wish to assist the various agencies to review the program and subprogram structure within that area. In fact, it was quite clear, from our point of view, that the community services people were quite ready and willing to get on with that job, and that was why the specific recommendation for the justice and community services department was made by the committee.

During my time in the chair and during my questioning, I tended to concentrate on the aspects related to program budgeting and performance indicators. Once again, there were times when it seemed there were some problems in coming to grips with the effect and the process of program budgeting. That is not an unusual problem, because the ACT has only recently gone to program budgeting and I think there needs to be a little more work on that. Therefore, because of the time factor, the committee recommended, once

20 November 1990

again, that the Public Sector Management Board might have a look at a review of program and subprogram objectives and performance indicators, including the measurement process. It seemed to us that there is not much point in having performance indicators as part of your program budgeting if, in fact, you are not able to work out whether you are achieving what the performance indicators suggest you should be achieving.

Probably to save a bit of time in that area, the committee considered that agencies should put this information in their annual report so that the Estimates Committee could then use that as a basis for assisting it in its questioning process. Once again, that may have produced a reduction in the amount of time necessary to consider that, because the questions would have been answered in the reports that were provided to the Assembly.

Once again, I refer back to the requirement for supplementary information. The committee considered that that was another matter the proposed select committee I have already mentioned could look at, with a view to recommending what standard format, if you like, should be available. Some of the agencies provided quite detailed information which was useful and in fact meant that considerably less time was spent questioning about those issues.

This report is effectively a majority report, if you like. It is a very important report because all members of the committee sought to provide for the consideration of the Assembly and the agencies a reasonable comment on the process of the budget in the ACT rather than seeking, in this report anyway, to come up with divisive comments in relation to those issues. That is one of the important factors, from my point of view. I would like to say a word of thanks to the members of the committee who were keen to take on that role and ensure that we did have a pretty well unanimous report to put before this Assembly.

There are many other things that I could comment about but I am sure they will be taken up by other members of the committee. (*Extension of time granted*)

I would like to close by saying some words of thanks to all members of the committee staff, as this is something that cuts across all their areas, who assisted the committee in preparing advice during the process of deliberations and also were involved in assisting with the preparation of the final report. It goes without saying that we all - my fellow committee members and I - appreciate quite strongly the amount of support that was given to us during the committee process and stages. With those few comments I would like to conclude my remarks and pass on to other members of the committee to make their comments about the report.

MR CONNOLLY (8.18): Mr Speaker, at the outset I would fully endorse Mr Jensen's vote of thanks in effect to the committee staff - Ms Malmberg and other members of staff who assisted the committee. The Estimates Committee sat long and arduous hours and had a very short time frame for deliberation and report, and the efforts of the committee in preparing this report in that extremely compressed time period, and often after working late hours, are most commendable.

The Estimates Committee performs, as Mr Jensen noted, a very important function of government. It provides the only opportunity for this Assembly to effectively scrutinise the operations of government in a detailed fashion. Question time is, of course, important in the Westminster tradition. It provides an opportunity for members of the Assembly to ask Ministers of the Executive Government questions relating to the administration of their portfolios, but the nature of politics and the nature of this Assembly is such that in question time you can deal with only a few issues on a day, and there is not the opportunity for detailed follow-up.

At the Estimates Committee hearings, once a year, Ministers are subjected to that detailed scrutiny - full and complete examination of their portfolios by members of the committee and, in effect, cross-examination, which may go on for some period of time, by those members of the committee interested in pursuing a line of questioning. It is the only opportunity for members not in the Government to obtain this information, and it performs an important role in ensuring honesty and straightforwardness in administration - and I am not suggesting that there was not that, but it is an important function.

Some criticisms were reported in the media at the outset of this committee's inquiries. We heard reports that Treasury officers were quoted as themselves conducting an inquiry into the inquiry. There were reports that an inquiry would be held into the cost of the Estimates Committee report. At an early stage the committee asked the Chief Minister whether there was any substance to these reports and whether the Government was, in fact, pursuing its own inquiry into the inquiry. The Chief Minister, fairly promptly, advised the committee that that was not the case, and I was very pleased to hear that. It would be appalling if the Executive Government were to embark on some form of media campaign to discredit the Estimates Committee because it felt the Estimates Committee was taking too much time.

The Estimates Committee did take a long time over its inquiry but, as is noted in the report, that was principally because of the inadequate manner in which information was put to the committee. There was some controversy on the very opening day of the committee deliberations when the committee, in effect, refused to sit. Perhaps it could be said that it withdrew its labour; the committee went on strike. The reason for that was that

20 November 1990

we had requested, well in advance, additional material to be supplied to the committee. Not only had the chairman requested that in advance but also, it must be said, last year's Estimates Committee had put the Executive Government on notice that additional information would be required by the Estimates Committee.

What we got, on the morning of the first day of sittings, was a pile of documents, some two-and-a-half to three inches thick, lobbed on our desks at about 8.30 in the morning with a view to commencing public hearings at 9 o'clock. The committee said, "That will not do", and full credit to the committee for saying that. Let us hope that that will never happen again. It did, in effect, happen the next day with Mr Humphries' material which did not arrive in time and, because of the late hearings the previous day, the committee again said, "This will not do", and delayed its hearings. But it must be said that we noticed an improvement from there on, and I hope that this will never occur in future years.

The important recommendation that is made in the unanimous main report of this committee provides guidelines for the Executive Government in producing information in an appropriate fashion. Also, as Mr Jensen noted in his remarks, the recommendation for a further select committee to be established to give the Government guidance on the form of information and documentation provided by the Government in the budget process would again help to save future time of this Assembly in producing public accounts information in a form that is accessible and understandable and provides a simple basis of comparison.

It is obviously very difficult when different agencies present information in a different fashion. A simple standardised format of additional detailed information would go far, I think, in reducing the time that Ministers and officials will spend before future estimates committees, and will simplify the process of public accountability and scrutiny of government decisions, because at the end of the day the Estimates Committee is not there for the benefit of members of the government or opposition who serve on it or for this Assembly. At the end of the day it is there for the public, and the information that we are suggesting should be made available is required so that it can be made simply available to members of the public.

Accountability has been stressed in the remarks in the chamber this evening and in the report, and it was a matter of grave concern to the committee, as it unanimously noted, that the committee was forced to the view that a senior public servant had misled it when giving evidence. The senior public servant was identified in the *Canberra Times* after the publication of this report as Mr Willmot of the Ministry for Health, Education and the Arts.

The evidence that the committee felt to be misleading was in relation to questioning about advice given by the Interim Territory Planning Authority to the Government in relation to school closures. In effect, Mr Willmot was asked whether the Planning Authority had recommended against the closure of any schools. Mr Willmot said no. The correct answer was yes. The ITPA in a report - which, in fact, members of the Opposition had available to them, so they were able to pursue this matter, but which we may not have had and we may not have known about - had recommended against closure of certain schools.

It would have been perfectly proper for Mr Willmot to say, in answer to that question, "There were certain recommendations but, on advice from my officers and in relation to other advice, I declined to follow that", or "In my view that advice was wrong". It is perfectly proper for a public servant to say that. But it is a very serious matter when the answer given was no. We were aware that that answer was misleading because we happened to have the report in front of us. But what if we had not had that report in front of us, Mr Speaker? That information would have guided the committee to a wrong conclusion - and it is a matter of very serious concern when that happens. As the committee says, we formed the view that the matter would not be taken further and that the mere bringing of this matter to light should bring to bear heavily on the minds of all future witnesses who appear before the Estimates Committee that this type of activity is simply unacceptable.

If a senior public servant is being questioned in an area of controversy, an area going to the heart of controversial government decision making, it is always open to that officer to refer questioning to his or her Minister, and it is the Minister who quite properly can take the heat. But it is unacceptable for a senior officer to give advice that is misleading.

I would also like to place on record my particular concern about some other evidence from another senior officer in that same department but in relation to the health area. Mr Bissett made some remarks about waste in the health area. We were discussing Jindalee Nursing Home and he gave as an example of wasteful use of labour resources the persons who provide the food at Jindalee. He said that it takes 25 people to serve 100 meals and, indeed, I think Mr Humphries endorsed the view that that seemed pretty wasteful, and on we went to some other questions. I thought about that for a minute and that just did not seem right and I brought him back to it. I said: "Do you mean 25 people are there to serve 100 meals?", so that I serve my four and then I go back and read the newspaper and Mrs Grassby serves her four and so it goes. He said, "No, that is not the case. They operate on shifts". And we found that there were about seven or eight there at any one time serving these meals. We pursued it and we found that what they did was very much like what they do in a restaurant.

20 November 1990

They effectively wait; they take orders, get the meals out, clean it up afterwards, and clean the kitchen up afterwards. It was fortunate that the committee had on it, in Mrs Nolan, a person with experience in the restaurant trade. She was able to tell the committee that in her experience that ratio of persons attending to meals served is about the industry standard; it is about right.

If we had left it, if we had not pursued the matter, the evidence on record would have been: this is wasteful use of labour resources - 25 people to serve 100 meals. Yet by pursuing it at the end of the day we find that - and this was agreed - it is about the ordinary ratio. I am not saying there that Mr Bissett misled, because he gave a true and correct answer at every point. But, if we had not pursued the matter, if we had not chased that particular rabbit down that burrow, the committee would have been left with a very misleading impression of the evidence.

That issue of accountability remains, in my view, the most important contribution that this Estimates Committee has made. We should note that these recommendations were unanimous and, because there were three members of the Government on that committee as opposed to Mr Moore and me, it is obvious that they have support across the floor of the chamber. And I hope that the Chief Minister will look seriously at endorsing these remarks. The remarks of the committee in relation to procedures are not and should not be taken to be partisan. They should apply equally and will apply equally to future Labor governments as to the present Alliance Government. It is getting accountability right at an early stage of this Assembly's life that is important.

Mr Speaker, they are my general remarks in relation to the procedural matters. In relation to the substantive matters, that is, my impression of the budget - and that is effectively what we are asked to do on the Estimates Committee - I, of course, was compelled to make some additional remarks. In essence, those additional remarks were that I could not accept the Government's view on school closures and, indeed, the information that was available to us at the time of the report was clearly right. What I said was clearly right. We said that we did not accept the projected savings on the school closures which were then confidently projected at the \$3m-plus mark. Indeed, Mr Hudson's report, accepted in part by the Government, indicates that that figure was indeed wrong. Precisely what the actual figure is we will not know.

Another important point that I felt compelled to make in the dissenting report or the additional comments was in relation to the oft repeated claim by the Chief Minister that money allocated by Ms Follett, when Chief Minister, in relation to a certain new policy proposal, the domestic violence refuge, had already been spent on other things. We had heard this in answer to questions in this place and we heard this from the Chief Minister in evidence before

the Committee. But later on, when we were able to ask the Under Treasurer, the Under Treasurer said, on page 1439 of the transcript:

I think the answer is that the money was not spent. Treasury took it off the budgets of the relevant programs and the money was not available to be spent.

Mr Speaker, would it not be pleasant if we had the Under Treasurer to ask questions of during question time? How much more informed this place might be. The other obvious aspect of concern was in relation to travel. What an extraordinary finding of the committee that in comparable periods of time the Follett Government spent just under \$7,000 on ministerial travel while this lot over here spent just under \$40,000 - mostly, it should be pointed out, the Attorney-General and the Minister for Finance and Urban Services. Mr Kaine travelled at about the same rate as Ms Follett and Mr Humphries, given particularly the nature of his two portfolios which take up the bulk of government expenditure, travelled an amount that we cannot particularly quibble with. By far the bulk of that extraordinarily extravagant junketeering was by these two Ministers in the centre at the front bench. How embarrassing it was for them to have that put forward.

The other area of concern is obviously health. That is where the big lie is made apparent. This Government claims to be careful with public expenditure, but this Government is a big taxing, big spending Government. It is clear from budget paper No. 2 that your taxation revenue is 20 per cent up on last year's budget and your expenditure is equally well up - a figure for total recurrent expenditure in budget paper No. 2 of 30 per cent. This is a big spending, big taxing Government, spending tens of millions on hospital redevelopment projects, throwing money down the drain to save \$8m a year, says the Minister for Health. We are going to spend \$158m - it will be a lot more, but he says that we are going to spend \$158m to save \$8m. But, as I said to him during the Estimates Committee, if that is your logic, go across the road to Westpac; you will get 12 per cent and save a lot more on \$158m. It is gross financial irresponsibility and big spending.

MR STEFANIAK (8.33): Mr Speaker, I have been on a number of committees, of course, including last year's Estimates Committee; but it was with some trepidation that I went on this committee, especially after all the drivel spoken by the Opposition for about an hour and a half when I was put on it because Carmel Maher had to leave the Assembly on something which came up and precluded her from continuing on the committee. So when I went to my first meeting I was not too sure what to expect.

I must say that going through the deliberations was probably a lot less tedious and difficult than the very lengthy hearings which the Estimates Committee had this

20 November 1990

year. I have heard with interest the remarks made by Mr Connolly and, up until perhaps his last tirade, a lot of what he says, I think, has some weight. Certainly I would agree that Estimates Committee hearings are areas where Ministers, and you as Speaker, are examined and cross-examined to be made accountable for expenditure of government funds. That is appropriate and proper.

I think though, in reading through the transcript in relation to this Estimates Committee, there was probably a hell of a lot of so-called cross-examination and questioning which was really irrelevant and, indeed, just served to waste a lot of time - - -

Mr Duby: And public money.

MR STEFANIAK: And, effectively, public money. It behoves all members of the Assembly to ensure that questions are in fact relevant and to the point so that time and, indeed, public money are not wasted.

Ms Follett: Are you criticising your chairman?

MR STEFANIAK: No, I am not criticising the chairman. I am criticising the fact that a number of people at the Estimates Committee probably asked many questions that were irrelevant. That being said, I appreciated the chance to contribute during the formation of this report. I am not going to go over ground which the chairman, Mr Jensen, has gone over or, indeed, some of the areas gone over by Mr Connolly. I will just go through a couple of specific areas in this report. Before I do, I will mention one other criticism I have, not so much of what has been said here tonight - although I note that Mr Moore has yet to speak - but of some unfair comments made by certain members opposite in relation to travel by Mr Collaery and Mr Duby, and especially in relation to some minor amounts which they expended and had to give back, which they took in good faith and on good advice at the time from their public servants. I recall certain comments being made about how they should resign as Ministers in relation to some very minor amounts of money which, really, were taken by them, for all the best reasons, on advice from their public servants and in good faith. I think those comments were rather cheap and should not have been made.

Mr Connolly: It was not the Opposition. What did the Opposition say?

MR STEFANIAK: No, it may not have been. It might have been another member in this house, Mr Connolly; but I do not think those comments should have been made and I think they were rather cheap shots.

There are a couple of points which I will speak on in relation to this report. Firstly, at point 3.68, some very positive things did come to light. I am pleased to see that the report raised that matter and, indeed, during a

hearing into program 15.5, the committee heard that there was no direct link or liaison between the ACT Tourism Commission and the ACT Office of Sport, Recreation and Racing.

The committee was advised by the ACT statistician that sport contributed a certain figure to the tourism industry in the last 12 months, some \$7.39m. Certainly, from my experience, I think it would be considerably more than that; but, at any rate, that was the figure. And it was indicated that there was not all that much assistance from the Tourism Commission. It is early days yet.

The relevant Ministers indicated that certainly that was something that should be looked into and improved, and it was a very valuable point that came up. It enabled the committee to recommend that the Tourism Commission and the ACT Office of Sport, Recreation and Racing develop a coordinated process to increase the benefits to the ACT from tourism arising from sporting events. A survey was done at the Australia Day Sports Carnival, where about 40 different sports are played, and I think that indicated that over \$4m came into the ACT coffers through the people who came to Canberra and spent it on that three-day weekend.

Indeed, that is a significant injection of funds, and a significant proportion of that, I think, estimated by the ACT statistician. Of course, there are other events which come to Canberra and which can come in the future, especially some major events such as the Masters Games and Golden Oldies competition, which, experience in other States shows, brings considerably more than \$4m to a Territory or a State. I think that is a very positive recommendation.

I now want to dwell on the future estimates committees. Indeed, the report deals with this at page 17. The committee thought that the timing and indeed the intensity of the Estimates Committee hearings each year will, of course, be compacted by necessity into a very short period of time; that is, the time between the introduction of the Appropriation Bill and the passage of the Bill, which is necessary to avert the cessation of Supply. The sittings of this Assembly, of course, also limit the time available to the committee.

The committee believes that there are a number of difficulties arising out of the timing of the establishment of the committee. In particular, the Ministers and the agencies received short notice of the timetable for the hearings, plus the details of the request for extra information. The committee felt that the Estimates Committee should be formed as early as is possible, and we felt that the committee could be formed prior to the Assembly agreeing in principle to the Appropriation Bill, as that Bill can be referred to the committee for an examination at that stage and the necessary preliminary work could be undertaken by the committee.

20 November 1990

We believe that the latest the committee should be formed is at the time of the introduction of the Appropriation Bill by the Treasurer. If this had occurred on this occasion that would have given us an extra week, to the total time of seven weeks, from formation to the reporting date. Most importantly, it will allow hearings to commence in the first available non-sitting week. The committee could even be formed prior to the winter adjournment.

We believe that Ministers and agency heads should be aware each year that the Estimates Committee hearings will generally be held in the first block of non-sitting weeks following the introduction of the Appropriation Bill, and - - -

Ms Follett: We have read it, Bill.

MR STEFANIAK: Have you? Good. They should be prepared to attend hearings at that time. The committee was of the view that there is no barrier to the establishment of a standing committee on estimates to which the Appropriation Bill would be referred each year a matter that could be considered, if not next year, in the next Assembly. We recommended, accordingly, that the future Estimates Committee be established at the time of the introduction of the Appropriation Bill into the Legislative Assembly by the Treasurer at the latest.

The committee also looked at ways of improving accountability. Indeed, this year it chose two areas for detailed examination, namely, travel and the use of consultants. The committee that examined the witnesses - I was not part of that - felt that that was beneficial. Accordingly, it felt that the future Estimates Committee could consider selecting at least two areas service-wide for a detailed examination each year. Those areas would not be indicated but would be selected so that, effectively, all departments would be on their toes and would make sure all the i's were dotted and the t's crossed, and everything was in order when the information was provided to their Ministers to go before the Estimates Committee.

The committee also felt, in addition to that, that it would be of value for each Estimates Committee to select one subprogram per portfolio to examine in detail, so that that went right across the areas of responsibility for the five relevant people appearing before the committee - namely, you, Mr Speaker, and the four Ministers - and, accordingly, that recommendation in paragraph 4.17 was made.

I think a lot of the comments made and the dissenting remarks by Mr Connolly and Mr Wood in relation to school closures really do not have too much to do with the Estimates Committee but just have a lot to do with politicking. Nevertheless, and despite that, a number of very sensible suggestions for improvement have been made by this year's Estimates Committee.

The report is considerably more detailed than the report of the estimates committees on the hill. I think there was some further good fine tuning of this year's committee over last year's committee, which was the first by this Assembly, which can only benefit the operations of this Assembly.

I would, however, remind all members of the Assembly that the Estimates Committee is there to adequately and properly scrutinise government. It really takes away from the stature and work of that committee for people to indulge in cheap political shots and I think our future Assembly should be a little bit wary of that.

MR MOORE (8.42): Mr Speaker, unfortunately, because I have been at a public meeting, I arrived at the Assembly a little late this evening and missed the speeches of the other members. I hope I do not cross too much of what they have said. It is interesting to note some of the unjustified comments that Mr Stefaniak was just making about scoring cheap political points.

The role of the Estimates Committee clearly is to look at government expenditure, to scrutinise it in detail, to draw attention to where decisions are being made that are not based on good information and that may mean the inappropriate spending of money, and to draw attention to where decisions are made with the intention of saving money when that may not be appropriate. So in fact the issue of school closures and other issues that were drawn attention to by the Estimates Committee were appropriate and valid issues and it is of great credit to the Estimates Committee and each member of that Estimates Committee that they were prepared to stand up and make public the information they had found out.

Mr Jensen is just leaving, but perhaps he can hear me. It is a credit to Mr Jensen, as chair of that committee, that he was prepared at all times to allow people to question exhaustively and to present their opinions. As I have said, I believe that Mr Jensen played it straight at all times.

Mr Duby: It is a shame that you did not.

MR MOORE: I hear an interjection from Mr Duby who says that it is a shame that I did not play it straight. I can understand why he feels a little jaded in his position. I claim that I certainly did play it straight. The Leader of the Opposition, Ms Follett, stood aside and allowed me to go on the Estimates Committee. The Alliance Government was not prepared to allow the Estimates Committee to work in a completely bipartisan fashion, the way it had on the previous year; but instead set it up in such a way that they had the numbers on the committee.

20 November 1990

However, I reiterate that credit is due to Mr Jensen and other members of the committee for taking it issue by issue and not doing it on a political basis. I believe that it was not done on that basis. I believe that was why we were able to have a completely bipartisan, no dissenting report committee. There were some additional comments, but they were just that - additional comments, not dissenting comments at all.

The most important function of the Estimates Committee is accountability. I believe that what has happened in the ACT, through the very thorough work of this Estimates Committee, through this very thorough and lengthy report, is that people in government and people in the public service are aware that whatever they do will be scrutinised at some stage or at least will be open to scrutiny and that scrutiny is open to public comment.

That brings me to one of the minor difficulties of the Estimates Committee. Because of the way it was put together in the original motion, it was left in a position where there was some doubt as to whether it actually had the right of parliamentary privilege. I think that that is something that ought be corrected next year.

Mr Collaery: Before you go off - - -

MR SPEAKER: Order, Mr Collaery!

MR MOORE: I am glad I hear Mr Collaery interject. It is an issue that I thought I should raise this evening. It is an issue that I raised in question time today in a perfectly reasonable way. I questioned the Chief Minister. Mr Collaery had inappropriately acquitted a particular part of the travel allowance - not through his fault, I quite accept that, but through the advice of the public servants who said that they had given inappropriate advice. However, there is a particular part - the acquittal of Mr Collaery's basic equipment allowance - that clearly stands out separately from the rest of that acquittal. He is not entitled to that particular equipment allowance, in any sense of the way I can see it, and I believe it is appropriate for that money to be returned to the ACT Government.

Today I gave the Chief Minister the opportunity to do so. I pointed out in my supplementary question that section 73 and section 14 of the Australian Capital Territory (Self-Government) Act would bring into question whether or not Mr Collaery would be entitled to his seat. Instead of pursuing the matter along those lines, I have suggested instead, in an appropriate way, that Mr Collaery look at this particular small part of the allowance and that he return the money to the people of the ACT.

Mr Collaery: I challenge you to repeat that outside the house.

MR MOORE: That is the particular issue. Mr Collaery challenges me to say that outside the house.

Mr Collaery: Again, I should say.

MR MOORE: Oh, again outside the house. Mr Collaery, I am drawing attention to the basic equipment allowance of \$180. It clearly is done separately as an acquittal. It was clearly given inappropriately, not through your fault. I stated that to start off with. But I am now saying to you that the appropriate thing for you to do is to return the money. It is very simple - return the money. I am giving you the opportunity to avoid becoming a Leisha Harvey.

Mr Collaery: A \$400,000 house in Reid, thank you!

MR MOORE: I wish it was. The next thing that concerned me greatly was the notion of adjustments that are made within the budget. I think it is appropriate that adjustments be made within the budget, but that also has to be able to come under scrutiny. I believe it is the case that government departments are in the position of being able to justify no cuts in their expenditure by saying, "We are making a certain amount of cuts", and then making adjustments on top of that and having no way of comparing the adjustments from one year to the next year. When it really boils down to the crunch we have to work out what we are spending this year, what we are spending next year, do a comparison and then try to determine whether or not we have made real cuts.

In looking through it, it became quite clear that there were no cuts in this budget. The capital expenditure had a 15 per cent increase and there was a 9.3 per cent increase in the recurrent expenditure, or 2.3 per cent in real terms. The only areas to suffer cuts were the areas of education and the arts and technical and further education. They are the only places to suffer real cuts, and you can find that in the - - -

Mr Collaery: He does not understand. He cannot understand. He has no idea of reading a document.

MR MOORE: Mr Collaery once again interjects, "He has no idea". Well, Mr Collaery, the reality is that the people of Canberra can see through and accept that some people have some credibility and other people have none.

The credibility question also brings us to the issue in education and the misleading of the Assembly committee by Dr Willmot, which is reported in paragraph 2.13. Dr Willmot, of course - - -

Mr Connolly: Mr Willmot.

MR MOORE: Mr Willmot then secured an apology in the *Canberra Times* which I consider totally inappropriate. What clearly happened is that he was given verbal advice but

20 November 1990

subsequently, after that, he was given written advice. It is quite clear that when somebody says that the verbal advice disagrees with the written advice, and the written advice has come after the verbal advice, the verbal advice cannot possibly take priority. So, it was a clear cut case, as far as I am concerned, of misleading evidence. It was totally inappropriate. I draw the Assembly's attention to the fact that this is not the first time. I have been through a Senate *Hansard* of 14 April 1988 where the same situation applied on the previous round of school closures. You would think that the man would have been more careful.

It is a warning to other public servants that when they come before an Assembly committee they should take very, very careful note of what they are going to say and be very careful about making sure that what they say is in fact accurate. I think there were other members who certainly ran on a very fine line, I must say. However, I think this was a clear cut case. Many issues in terms of education have been raised as far as this budget goes. I see that I have run out of time; so I think I will leave it there.

MRS NOLAN (8.53): Mr Speaker, I rise just very briefly in this debate on the Estimates Committee report. As a member of the Estimates Committee, I support the report which was tabled to you on 5 November. I am sure all members have had it for some time.

The Estimates Committee is a very important mechanism for examining the expenditure proposals contained in the Appropriation Bill 1990-91 and I fully endorse the remarks made by Mr Jensen and other members of the committee in relation to that mechanism or scrutiny.

I must say, Mr Speaker, as a member of that committee, that I think the recommendation in paragraph 4.10 is absolutely essential. Paragraph 4.10 states:

The Committee recommends that:

future Estimates Committees be established at the time of introduction of the Appropriation Bill into the Legislative Assembly by the Treasurer at the latest.

I wholeheartedly support those earlier comments by Mr Stefaniak. I believe, as does the committee, that it is very important that the committee be established early, so that the committee and Ministers and officials are able to come to mutually acceptable times and so that information can be readily available early, rather than have a considerable gap, as we had this year after the committee was formed, before the questioning and scrutiny can occur.

Mr Speaker, this report is detailed and much has already been said about it, but there is one particular recommendation that, like Mr Stefaniak, I particularly want to mention. It is the recommendation in paragraph 3.69. I will read that into the record and make a few brief comments on it. It states:

The Committee recommends that: the ACT Tourist Commission and the ACT Office of Sport, Recreation and Racing develop a co-ordinated process to increase the benefits to the ACT from tourism arising from sporting events.

Canberra and the ACT, unlike other States, does not have a substantial private sector industry base. We do not have other industry of a scale anywhere near that in other States. Tourism is now our No. 1 industry in the Territory. I think the latest figures show that we have over 1 million visitors to the Territory each year. However, that really is not enough. Occupancy rates have been particularly unhealthy this last year, although there are now signs of improvement and that is very welcome, I am sure, to all members of the tourism industry. In fact, visitor numbers to attractions have been less than last year for many of the public and private sector attractions and I believe that there need to be significant boosts to tourism in this city at this time.

Like the committee, I believe that Canberra has a marvellous opportunity, which has not been fully explored, to increase visitor numbers to Canberra by a better coordinated approach to link sport and tourism. Mr Speaker, as we all know, we really have some wonderful facilities. We have some very good sporting facilities in this city compared with those in cities around the rest of Australia. Two that come to mind, obviously, are the Australian Institute of Sport and Bruce Stadium. They are just two.

We also have an enormous number of people in our community participating in sport in this city. I believe it is something like 150,000, or very close to that figure. That is the latest registered figure. That does not take into consideration, of course, those men, women and children who participate in sport but are not members of an officially registered team or teams or officially registered individual members. I think that figure speaks for itself.

Sporting groups travel out of this city all the time to attend championships and competitions. Very often they are accompanied only by volunteer officials. Consequently I believe that they are severely handicapped in bidding to obtain similar events and carnivals in the ACT in the following years. This is where I believe it is absolutely vital to have that link and to have assistance from the Tourism Commission, a very professional body which is able to give them assistance in bidding to get those events and carnivals held here in Canberra. The link between the two will be of great benefit, not only obviously to Government but also certainly to the community as a whole. During the committee's deliberations and while receiving evidence we heard from the sports Minister and his officials of the

20 November 1990

great benefits that would flow to the city and of ways of improving that link. It is unfortunate that the evidence clearly showed that at this point in time there were not those substantial links.

The benefits of those links to encourage visitors to come to this city and the dollars that they will spend here will certainly increase those visitor numbers and, I believe, put Canberra well and truly on the map as a national and international sporting location.

In conclusion, Mr Speaker, I was unable to attend many of the hours spent questioning Ministers and officials, but I would like to thank committee staff for their contribution and for the long hours of duty spent on this report. I recognise also the number of hours that all members of the committee put in, not just the latest members but also Ms Maher as well. I know that she spent many hours as a member of that committee during the times of questioning.

I also acknowledge that there were other members of the Assembly who, while they were not members of the committee, did come forward and spend some quite considerable hours there. So, with those few brief comments, Mr Speaker, I will leave it there. I look forward to hearing Mr Kaine's response to this document.

MR KAINE (Chief Minister and Treasurer) (9.00): I am very pleased to have the opportunity to respond to the report of the Estimates Committee on the Appropriation Bill 1990-91 because it constitutes an important part of the continuing debate on that Bill and we will continue that tomorrow. On behalf of the Government I would like to thank the committee for their report. I think that the Government generally acknowledges the work undertaken by members in examining the detail of the expenditure proposals contained in the Appropriation Bill and I believe that the analysis by the committee will contribute to debate on the Government's expenditure proposals.

Mr Speaker, members will recall that when I tabled the Appropriation Bill I stated that the goals outlined in the Alliance Government's budget strategy, delivered in early 1990, were the basis for the 1990-91 budget. I think those goals bear repeating. They are, firstly, to promote the development of the private sector; secondly, to produce a balanced recurrent budget; thirdly, to minimise borrowings; and, fourthly, to make better use of the Territory's existing capital base.

To achieve these goals the Government has had to make a number of difficult decisions and the 1990-91 budget incorporates those decisions. The Government accepts, of course, that the committee need not endorse our strategy. Whatever their view, the proceedings and report of the committee are an essential contribution to the debate on the Government's budget strategy, whether they agree with it or not.

Mr Speaker, the committee made a total of 19 recommendations. I do not propose to speak to each of them individually; rather, I will seek leave, in a few moments, to table the Government's detailed response to each of those recommendations.

However, before doing so, I would like to take the opportunity to comment on a number of broader issues raised in the report. The committee has commented that they see a need for a select committee, comprising the same membership as the estimates committee, to be formed to examine in greater detail matters relating to future Estimates Committees, including the form that the budget papers might take. Whilst I accept that the establishment of select committees is a matter for the Assembly to determine, the Government does not consider, in this instance, that there is such a need. The committee has clearly expressed its requirements for future information, especially as to the early availability of estimates at the subprogram level. The Government will ensure, Mr Speaker, that these matters are addressed next year, possibly by the introduction of detailed explanatory notes to be presented to the committee. I will be seeking the views of all Assembly members on the existing budget papers and ways that they might be enhanced to serve their purpose better. These would be most welcome and will be considered in the preparation of the 1991-92 budget papers.

The committee has also recommended that future estimates committees be established at the time of introduction of the Appropriation Bill into the Legislative Assembly by the Treasurer, at the latest. The Government supports that view. The early establishment of the 1991-92 Estimates Committee, and the use of a standard form of explanatory notes, including financial details at subprogram level and reconciliation statements to show the situation from one budget year to the next, would, I think, meet the needs that the current committee has identified. I emphasise, Mr Speaker, that the Government has no desire to avoid providing necessary information to estimates committees in a useful format.

Mr Speaker, I now turn to another matter raised in the report, and that is expenditure restraint. Mr Moore has commented that there has been no real restraint and that there is not a satisfactory method of comparing the extent of program and overall budget adjustments from one year to the next. I have said that we will introduce reconciliation statements next year to make that comparison easier. But the Government rejects Mr Moore's contention and reasserts that this is a budget of prudent restraint.

In developing the 1990-91 budget this Government has recognised the need to prepare the ACT for the likely reduced levels of funding that will be forthcoming from the Commonwealth when the real term guarantee expires, now in seven months' time.

20 November 1990

To continue to maintain high quality services in this transitional environment, my Government has had to restrain expenditure. In doing so, the Government has recognised the overfunding identified by the Grants Commission and the legacy of years of neglect left by the Commonwealth. Against this background the Government has introduced a number of major initiatives in this budget which are not just cost-cutting. They include restructuring initiatives approved on the basis that significant ongoing or longer-term savings will result from an initial outlay. It is these one-off outlays which result in a real expenditure increase this year with the aim of achieving reductions in expenditure in future years. That has been achieved within a balanced, recurrent budget. I believe that that is a prudent course of action to follow.

In total, expenditure reductions and savings flowing from these initiatives will result in savings of \$18m this year and \$40m in a full year. This information, Mr Speaker, is clearly identified in budget paper No. 2. Either Mr Moore cannot read, or he does not want to acknowledge what he has read.

The increase of 15 per cent expenditure on ACT public sector capital works is primarily attributable to the commencement this year of construction work associated with the principal hospital redevelopment project and increased activity by ACT Electricity and Water, funded from its own resources, not from the consolidated fund.

The up-front investment to redevelop the hospitals will produce significant ongoing savings in later years while maintaining high quality health services. In case Mr Berry is going to interject, let me say that we are spending approximately \$60m less than he intended to spend on the same reconstruction program. Further, Ministers and supporting officials have gone to some lengths to assist Mr Moore in understanding the various adjustments made between last year and this year and the Government agrees to give further consideration to reconciliation statements, as I have already indicated, to assist the estimates committees in future years.

Mr Speaker, the report also made reference to the use of consultants by the ACT Government Service. Following the committee's report I have initiated a joint review by the Office of Public Sector Management and the ACT Treasury on the use of consultants. The review will further examine the information provided to the Estimates Committee on the 1989-90 consultancy use, together with the guidelines, to ensure that the best value for money is being obtained both now and in the future and that ACT Government Service staff are used in preference to consultants wherever possible. The Government agrees that we should be using our staff to the best advantage and not using consultants unless it is absolutely essential. We do not argue with that concept at all.

The committee spent some time reviewing travel expenditure but did not make any specific recommendation. However, I have written to each of my ministerial colleagues indicating that I am also concerned about continued growth in expenditure on travel.

Mr Connolly: Does it apply to them or just their departments?

MR Kaine: Yes. I have asked that they advise program managers to carefully consider the necessity of all proposed travel expenditure with a view to reducing it, and this will be given close scrutiny by the Government. Another matter raised by the committee was the funding of travel expenses for the Legislative Assembly program. I refute the suggestion that I gave a direction to you, Mr Speaker, concerning the level of funds available to the Assembly for all travel, including that of committees. There was discussion of the Speaker's travel bid, along with other bids in your budget as part of the budget cabinet process. However, the Legislative Assembly program is a program no different from any other Government program and the same management principles apply. The Speaker has to justify his bid, exercise restraint in expenditure control, and then exercise the same freedom as other program managers have to allocate funds provided for other operating costs.

Budget Cabinet imposed no different constraints on the Speaker than were imposed on other program managers. Decisions were made in all cases on levels of expenditure that the Government would fund and it is just as well, Mr Speaker, that we exercised some constraint. I would like to raise a point that Mr Moore seems to have a certain obsession about travel costs and I wondered why. I have discovered why; it is because he is an expert at it. I will table for incorporation in *Hansard* in a moment, Mr Speaker, some interesting information. Mr Moore has attacked the Deputy Chief Minister for spending \$6,273 on business travel to go on government business to attend ministerial meetings.

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

MR Kaine: I would seek a short extension of time, Mr Speaker, at this time.

Mr Moore: Mr Speaker - - -

MR Kaine: I have already sought a short extension; so you cannot chop me off, Mr Moore. Keep trying, but it will not work.

MR SPEAKER: Mr Moore, what is your point of order?

20 November 1990

Mr Moore: Mr Speaker, the Chief Minister has just suggested that I have attacked Mr Collaery on those grounds. I have not done that at any stage. It was how the travel was acquitted.

MR SPEAKER: Order! That is not a point of order. That is a personal explanation. Please do not raise points of order that are not valid.

MR KAINE: I sought an extension of time, Mr Speaker.

Mr Berry: I move:

That the debate be now adjourned.

MR SPEAKER: No, Mr Berry. The Chief Minister did seek an extension.

MR KAINE: I sought an extension of time. Since I am making the Government's response to this report I should have the courtesy of the extension. (*Extension of time granted*) Thank you, Mr Speaker, and thank you, members.

I was making the point that Mr Moore has this obsession and, as I said, well he might. The Deputy Chief Minister, as I said, spent \$6,273 on travelling on government business. I will table this document, Mr Speaker. Mr Moore, who is so obsessed with travel and is so concerned about restraint and expenditure of public moneys, has spent \$15,231 on travel - not on government business, on private travel purely for self-gratification. This is the man - - -

Mr Moore: I take a point of order, Mr Speaker. This is an imputation on the Assembly. I have done no travel that has not had the approval of the Administration and Procedures Committee.

MR KAINE: Is this a point of order, Mr Speaker, or am I being interrupted?

MR SPEAKER: Order! That is a personal explanation. Chief Minister, I would ask you to clarify whether it was private travel or committee travel.

MR KAINE: Oh, I do not know what it was for, but it was public money, Mr Speaker, and obviously for personal gratification - not on any government business.

Mr Connolly: I raise a point of order, Mr Speaker. Assembly business is not personal gratification.

MR KAINE: I am sure it was.

Mr Connolly: I need a direction on that point, Mr Speaker. Sanctioned Assembly travel cannot be described as private travel for personal gratification.

MR SPEAKER: Order!

MR KAINE: You cannot have it both ways. It is interesting that the only capital city of Australia that Mr Moore has not visited - I will draw it to his attention because I am sure he will want to go there - is Hobart. He has been to every other capital city. So, Mr Speaker, if I did not think that I would get a complaint from the other side of the house I would use the word "hypocrisy", but I dare not do that. I would have to say that this is the best example I have ever seen of double standards - what is good for me is not good for the rest.

Mr Speaker, I table this document for incorporation in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

Document incorporated at Appendix 2

MR KAINE: In concluding, Mr Speaker, I reiterate the Government's commitment to its budget strategy, which I have outlined before - a strategy which recognises that the ACT Government and community must now rely more and more on their own resources to establish a strong and prosperous Canberra rather than on high levels of Commonwealth assistance. The expenditure proposals outlined in the Appropriation Bill and the supporting budget documentation achieve the goals of that strategy. Once again, Mr Speaker, I commend the Bill to the Assembly. In doing so, I table the Government's detailed response to the committee's report.

MR BERRY (9.14): I move:

That the debate be now adjourned.

The reason I have moved that the debate be adjourned tonight is that the Government's response to the Estimates Committee report is a detailed document that is 12 pages long, but the Chief Minister did not have the good grace to provide it to the Opposition in order that a speech could be ready for delivery - - -

Mr Collaery: You did it for us, did you?

Mr Kaine: They did nothing for us, but they expect us to be courteous to them.

MR BERRY: Mr Speaker, I do not mind trying to speak in the debate, but I am not getting much help from the members opposite.

MR SPEAKER: Order! Please proceed, Mr Berry.

20 November 1990

MR BERRY: The issue that is before the house is the adjournment of debate on this matter which is of some import to the community of the ACT. It is important that the Opposition be given adequate time to consider all of the document. This is a debate on the adjournment, I take it?

Mr Jensen: It is on the adjournment of the debate, Wayne.

MR BERRY: I was just looking at the time allocated for the adjournment debate.

Mr Jensen: Do you mean the adjournment of the debate or the adjournment of the Assembly?

MR BERRY: The motion is: That the debate be adjourned.

Mr Humphries: The debate, not the house.

MR BERRY: No, that the debate be adjourned. The Chief Minister has not had the good grace to provide a copy of his speech to the Leader of the Opposition in order that a detailed response could be made in this place to the Government's position on the Estimates Committee report. I think that is a quite gutless approach because it seeks to ensure that there is no criticism of the Government's position. That is not to say that it will get away with it; but, as a matter of principle, the Government ought to give notice of these things. Just a couple of hours would have done, in order that a response in the Assembly could have been prepared and debate on the issue could have been expedited. It seems to me to be quite outrageous that the Government is playing silly games again on issues such as this. That is why the motion for adjournment has been moved.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr Berry. The question really is not open to debate. I allowed that to slip through, unfortunately. I did put the question at that time.

Question resolved in the negative.

Mr Moore: Mr Speaker, I wish to make a personal explanation.

MR SPEAKER: Mr Moore, would you bring that up at the end of the debate, please.

MR COLLAERY (Attorney-General) (9.17): Mr Speaker, I rise to nail someone. I wonder who it is. I am going to nail someone to his pillar. This member opposite delighted in detaining me and, I think, more than six senior government servants into the late hours to fiddle around in the pursuit of an issue to enable him to go out of the Estimates Committee hearing and create confusion in the public mind and to - - -

Mr Berry: On a point of order: these gratuitous insults that we are just about to be lined up for - -
-

MR SPEAKER: Order! What is the point of order, Mr Berry?

Mr Berry: The point of order is that the Minister ought to maintain his attention on the Estimates Committee report rather than stray off the beaten track because of some embarrassment over something that Mr Moore has raised. The members of the Opposition basically want to hear debate on the Estimates Committee report, not settling old scores.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr Berry, for your observation. I do not know that it is a point of order, but I would ask Mr Collaery to be relevant to the issue.

MR COLLAERY: Certainly, Mr Speaker. I concede that Mr Berry would know all about old scores.

Mr Duby: Old what?

MR COLLAERY: Old scores.

Ms Follett: They are all drunk.

Mr Kaine: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I require that to be withdrawn.

MR SPEAKER: Order! Please withdraw that remark, Ms Follett.

Ms Follett: Mr Speaker, I am faced with a bunch of braying dogs who cannot control themselves in any fashion in this very important debate. I am forced to conclude that it is not their normal state.

MR SPEAKER: I ask you to withdraw your conclusion.

Mr Kaine: Mr Speaker, I want that statement withdrawn.

Ms Follett: They are not all drunk.

Mr Kaine: I want that statement withdrawn.

MR SPEAKER: It has been withdrawn. Thank you, Ms Follett.

Ms Follett: Some of them are.

MR SPEAKER: Just a moment. I believe that is a qualified withdrawal.

Ms Follett: I withdraw, Mr Speaker.

MR COLLAERY: Certainly, Mr Speaker, I approach this with an entirely sober mind. I have been savouring this moment for some weeks. I stayed upstairs and waited to give Mr Moore some of his treatment because he deserves it.

20 November 1990

Mr Berry: On a point of order - - -

MR SPEAKER: Mr Berry, he really has not started yet.

Mr Berry: He is talking about Mr Moore more than the Estimates Committee.

MR SPEAKER: Please get to the point, Mr Collaery.

Mr Berry: You seem to be wasting your time, Mr Collaery.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr Berry, for your observation. Please start on your point, Mr Collaery.

MR COLLAERY: I refer to paragraph 2.11 of the Estimates Committee report on the Appropriation Bill, and I refer to comments in relation to overseas travel. The comment is made that the issue came to light only as a result of the Estimates Committee hearings. Mr Connolly, in a somewhat unusual statement, accused the Ministers of junketeering in the context of that issue that was raised in the Estimates Committee report. So it is quite proper that the Ministers should respond to that issue. It is entirely relevant, but Mr Berry does not want us to have the right of response. He never allowed that in his firemen's union; he does not want to allow it here.

Mr Berry: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: that is a clear imputation.

MR SPEAKER: Order! I am not sure what was imputed.

Mr Berry: It is hardly likely that you will find out with this rabble. There was an imputation that something in my past life was done in an untoward way. It struck me that there was some sort of an imputation that I had done something that was extremely bad in my former career. I think those sorts of imputations ought to be withdrawn.

MR SPEAKER: I do not believe that is a valid objection, Mr Berry. I really do not think it was that serious.

MR COLLAERY: Mr Connolly referred to Ministers of the Crown junketeering. He must have known what he meant when he said that. He is legally trained. It is a very serious allegation, and he chose to make it during this debate in the context of travel. He also said in that debate that the Follett Government had spent \$7,000 on travel and that this Government has spent a considerably larger sum. Well it should have, Mr Speaker, subject to the constraints that the Chief Minister places on it, because this Government, unlike the Follett Government, has taken its proper place at ministerial meetings throughout the country.

Those ministerial meetings involve the arrangements that all governments in this country, of whatever political complexion, make to secure the agreements, the protocols and the shares of revenue that make this Federation work.

It has been a great sign of the immaturity of those opposite and why they lost government that they failed to recognise and make any inquiry as to the nature of the travel and the fact that it was to sit with their Labor colleagues, in large measure, at ministerial meetings. This showed a great deal of naivety on Mr Connolly's part in calling that dedicated, obligated role junketeering. I think it showed up himself more than the Ministers. It was beneath him.

But Mr Moore does not get the same latitude from us. We expect him to take every possible conniving advantage of these facts, and he did that, Mr Speaker. He did that when he went on WIN, Channel 4, on 26 October 1990 and said:

... particularly Mr Collaery we know was aware of the legal opinion and he has himself done the very thing - - -

Mr Berry: On a point of order: I do not think it is the actions of Mr Moore that are under notice, Mr Speaker. The issue is the Estimates Committee report, and I recall your instructions to Mr Collaery to remain relevant.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you again for your observation. I believe Mr Collaery is coming to the point.

MR COLLAERY: I am responding to something that Mr Moore said tonight. On WIN 4 on 26 October he went on to say:

... Mr Collaery we know was aware of the legal opinion and he has himself done the very thing that he pointed out through his Law Office that I ought not do.

Tonight Mr Moore said - he is wriggling - "it was not Mr Collaery's fault".

Mr Moore: I am not wriggling at all.

MR COLLAERY: He is wriggling. Mr Speaker, I want to put on the record, in terms of the report of the Estimates Committee, the manner in which Mr Moore used the opportunities given to him. He used the opportunities to ask questions and suggested expenditure levels that the Chief Minister has entirely refuted in his address, showing the complete inability of Mr Moore to understand the appropriation process. In the *Canberra Times*, in that famous trilogy article of 26 October 1990, he is also reported as saying that according to him the error could have serious repercussions under section 14 of the self-government Act.

Mr Moore, the record should show, was given a legal opinion before he made those comments. He was provided with a legal opinion, as were all other members of the Estimates Committee. That legal opinion indicated in explicit terms to Mr Moore that the provisions of section 14 do not apply to MLAs in their capacity as Ministers. That was the most

20 November 1990

explicit advice available to the committee and to Mr Moore, yet he chose to speak to a journalist, Mr Uhlmann, and make a statement which was entirely contrary to the evidence given only a short while before and the written material provided to him in the Assembly. Thus, we had the *Canberra Times* say, quite wrongly and without relevance to the opinion of the Law Office of the Territory, that an error could have cost two Ministers their seats.

The *Canberra Times* report goes on to state that Mr Moore sought a legal opinion on the procedure before he travelled overseas. He certainly did not, Mr Speaker. (*Extension of time granted*) The legal opinion was sought by a government that was concerned about travel, as we remain concerned. Mr Moore is shown up palpably and obviously to have done those things for reasons best known to himself, and whatever his motives were they were designed to cause hurt and harm to Mr DUBY and me. He exhibited, in my view, Mr Speaker, clear malice towards members of this Assembly.

Mr Kaine: Malice aforethought.

MR COLLAERY: As the Chief Minister said, malice aforethought. Mr Speaker, the Estimates Committee hearing was also taken up with a number of issues concerning performance indicators. During the hearing, late one evening, Mr Berry arrived in the Estimates Committee room. He asked a question about whether we could measure the recidivism of offenders. Having asked that question and got an obvious answer, he left the committee room. Lo and behold, true to form, he went straight out to issue a pre-prepared press statement. It did not matter what the answer was, because it was a stupid question; it had no sense to it. He issued a press statement that the Government could not measure its expenditure in the youth justice area because it could not measure recidivism. That is the approach of some members to the Estimates Committee process. They were not the sitting members, except for Mr Moore, and I regret that Mr Connolly subsequently blotted his copybook in a big way.

Mr Speaker, it should rest on the record that Mr Connolly saw fit to take on board ministerial travel to attend ministerial meetings as junketeering. I will make sure that all his Labor colleagues in this country have a copy of that statement in *Hansard* and are well aware of the naivety and the inexperience of this member in making such an absurd suggestion. Whilst we will forgive journalists, particularly the occasional journalist who is inexperienced in these matters and who has reported the travel without referring to the numbers of portfolios held and the legislative obligations, we do not forgive politicians here who well know that they have totally abused and misused the circumstances of this travel.

Mr Speaker, as I said, the Follett Government failed to take its place at ministerial meetings around this country. It was a minority government; it was too scared to leave town.

Mr Duby: There was a pilots strike.

MR COLLAERY: When there was not a pilots strike it could not go. But it found time to go to Melbourne to give a couple of radio interviews and to meet Carmen Lawrence, and it found time to go to the football in Sydney. I can assure you that it is not the standard of this ministry.

Debate interrupted.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Assembly do now adjourn.

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

Question resolved in the negative.

ESTIMATES - SELECT COMMITTEE Report on the Appropriation Bill 1990-91

Debate resumed.

MS FOLLETT (Leader of the Opposition): Mr Speaker, I seek leave to make a short personal explanation.

MR SPEAKER: I have already asked Mr Moore whether he will wait until the end of the debate, Ms Follett.

Mr Moore: But since that time, Mr Speaker, I have not seen anything in the standing orders that indicates that we should wait until the end of the debate. We should wait until the end of the time of the person speaking. Perhaps you could draw my attention to it, but I am not aware of it.

MR SPEAKER: It certainly is not in the standing orders, Mr Moore. It is just the convention that we have adopted, and it allows the debate to continue.

Mr Moore: There is clearly a good break now, Mr Speaker. It would be an ideal time to allow personal explanations by me and Ms Follett.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you for your observation, Mr Moore. I am not sure who else is speaking on the issue.

Mr Moore: Under standing order 46, Mr Speaker, I wish to make a personal explanation.

20 November 1990

MR SPEAKER: I call Mr Humphries.

Ms Follett: This is a farce.

MR SPEAKER: Order, Ms Follett! For goodness sake! It is the procedure of this house that we wait and make personal explanations at the end of the debate. We have done it every other time. Why is it now a farce because it applies to you?

Ms Follett: Mr Speaker, it is not because it applies to me but because Mr Moore was on his feet and moving a motion.

MR SPEAKER: No, he was moving the same motion, in relation to which I asked him to wait. He was quite happy to wait, until you stood. Please proceed, Mr Humphries.

MR HUMPHRIES (Minister for Health, Education and the Arts) (9.33): Mr Speaker, like the Chief Minister, I welcome the report of the Estimates Committee. I acknowledge that the committee does a very difficult job. Having sat on both sides of the table now, I appreciate that it is not easy to be either a witness before the committee or a member of the committee. The workload is very heavy. In the circumstances I think the committee deserves congratulations for its report.

I welcome particularly some aspects of the report. I think the suggestion of standard forms for supplementary information is excellent and obviates a problem from both sides of the fence, as it were, that information sought either might not be the information actually obtained or might not be clear in the mind of the person providing it. A standard form will greatly alleviate problems in delivering information in terms of the request made.

It is also obviously appropriate for the Assembly to examine the suggestion that the Estimates Committee be established earlier in the parliamentary year so that its recommendations can be examined in sufficient time for an adequate response to be prepared by the Government and for other things to occur. Many other aspects of the report deserve commendation, and they received it in the response tabled by the Chief Minister earlier tonight.

In my view, Mr Speaker, the emphasis placed by the committee - and indeed, I must say, by governments of both persuasions - on the achievement of certain performance indicators is both a good thing and a bad thing. I believe that it is appropriate for government departments, when setting targets for themselves, to have certain goals, and that is a desirable test that all spenders of public money ought to meet.

By the same token, I would sound just one note of caution in respect of that process. It is not always possible to make a very sound, qualitative judgment based purely on

quantitative measures or indicators. In other words, a narrow view that the achievement of certain performance indicators is the only test of whether a government department or a budget program is achieving certain goals can either hide a multitude of sins or, on occasions, not show a situation of some concern. I think people sometimes have to make qualitative judgments about the performance of government departments or particular programs, and that means that we need to be flexible about the way in which performance indicators are provided. I am not arguing for one minute that we should not have such things - of course we should - but I am arguing that we should be exercising the greatest caution about the way in which particular performance indicators are applied by government.

What gave me most concern in this report, Mr Speaker, was the additional comments at the back by Mr Moore and Mr Connolly. When opposition members sit on such a committee - I include Mr Moore in that context - there is a tendency to want to use it as a way of finding dirt in relation to a government and then using that dirt in suitably spectacular fashion to make sure that a government is thoroughly rubbished and that its performance is denigrated as much as possible. That is a natural and perhaps not unexpected role for an opposition. To some extent that applies, I think, to everybody who is in opposition.

But we have to draw a line between fair criticism and unfair criticism, and between criticism which is based on facts and evidence and criticism which is not. In particular, I noted Mr Connolly's comments earlier this evening that he does not agree with the Government's expected savings on school closures and considers that this area has been left up in the air. At the time he made those comments he may have had a point, but since that time the Hudson report has come down. He argued in debate earlier this evening that somehow the Hudson report vindicates his and his party's position on that matter. It is a question of where one starts, I suppose.

If one side alleges that savings of \$3m can be achieved but the other side says that no savings can be achieved, and the final verdict is that savings of \$2.5m can be achieved, frankly, I would rather be on the side that said that there were some savings to be made. That, I suggest, is the case here. He also said, rather curiously, that the Hudson report, although pouring doubt on the \$3m figure that the Government had put forward, had not indicated what the figure would be, in its view, for the achievement of certain savings.

He said "What the final figure is, we will not know". I have to draw Mr Connolly's attention to the report which indicates quite precisely Mr Hudson's view of the savings, with the revisions made to the program that he suggested, and that figure is slightly under \$2.6m.

20 November 1990

I am also very concerned about the suggestions made in the additional comments by Mr Moore concerning Dr Willmot. There is a very strong tendency on the part of those opposite to denigrate public servants, particularly senior public servants. I wonder why this is.

Mr Moore: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: There is no comment on Dr Willmot by me in the additional comments. There is no reference to Dr Willmot or anything to do with him in the additional comments.

MR SPEAKER: Order, Mr Moore! Thank you for your observation. Please proceed, Mr Humphries.

MR HUMPHRIES: Mr Speaker, I stand corrected. The comments appear in the body of the report. I know that Mr Moore was not very enthusiastic on that point in my appearance before the committee. I can assume only that he concurred with that recommendation going forward.

I think we need to look very carefully at the allegation made by Mr Moore. As I said, there is this tendency to denigrate public servants, particularly senior public servants. I suppose they are seen as fair game. It even goes apparently to the extent of calling, in this case, Dr Willmot "Mr Willmot", which somehow denigrates him that little bit more than would otherwise be the case.

Mr Duby: It was even done again tonight deliberately in the debate.

MR HUMPHRIES: Yes, it was done deliberately tonight as a device to denigrate the public servant concerned.

Mr Moore: He has an honorary degree.

MR HUMPHRIES: It is not an honorary degree. I notice that the report says that the view was formed by the committee that one senior public servant had misled the committee when giving evidence. Dr Willmot was the person referred to subsequently in the *Canberra Times* article.

I should point out to the Assembly that Dr Willmot takes the suggestion of misleading the committee very seriously and has obtained a legal opinion from a firm of solicitors in Canberra, the gist of which is that at that time he correctly answered the question that was put to him. I might refresh members' memories as to that question. Mr Moore asked:

With your discussion with the planners -

note those words -

did they actually make a recommendation on Hackett as to whether it should be closed or stay open?

Mr Moore was, I think, at that point clearly referring to comments made by Dr Willmot with reference to verbal discussions between the ITPA and him and his department on the question of school closures. Very clearly they were on that particular feature of the ongoing debate with various elements of the administration. In that respect, Dr Willmot - - -

Mr Berry: Mr.

MR HUMPHRIES: Dr Willmot, I think, with respect, answered quite accurately the question that was put to him. He said that, in the context of those discussions, no recommendations were made. That is the position. I affirm that position, and I think Mr Moore - - -

Mr Moore: What nonsense! He has no records of them, and the only evidence that we have is written evidence.

MR SPEAKER: Order! Order, Mr Moore, please!

MR HUMPHRIES: I stand by the view that it was the correct information to put to the committee, and I stand by it here in the Assembly. I think that Mr Moore should exercise great caution before he touts that suggestion elsewhere.

Mr Duby: Scandalous behaviour.

MR HUMPHRIES: It is behaviour which is unbecoming, particularly given the great power - - -

Mr Moore: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I believe that that comment should be addressed to the whole committee. Mr Humphries is dealing with the report of the whole committee without dissent.

MR SPEAKER: Order! Thank you, Mr Moore, for your observation, but I would ask you to make a personal explanation, if you feel that is necessary. Please proceed, Mr Humphries.

MR HUMPHRIES: (*Extension of time granted*) I note, Mr Speaker, that an apology was published in the *Canberra Times* on Saturday, 10 November, in which that point was made. I quote from that apology:

The article -

namely, the article of a few days before -

incorrectly reported the question put by Mr Moore which was in fact concerned with discussions Dr Willmot had held with the Interim Territory Planning Authority. The ITPA Report referred to in the article was received after those discussions were held.

20 November 1990

Clearly, the *Canberra Times* was satisfied on that point, but it appears that Mr Moore is holding out. There appears to be some difference of view between him and the *Canberra Times*.

To touch on other things that were raised in the debate, Mr Connolly made an interesting reference to the poor economics inherent in the Government's decision on the hospital redevelopment project. Showing that he has a rather poor command of figures, he said that spending \$158m to achieve an \$8m saving was a poor investment, that if one went to the Commonwealth Bank and invested the money one could achieve a rather better rate of return and that it would be a much better use of that money. I must correct the figures. It is \$154m in 1989 dollars, and the saving is \$8.5m on a similar basis.

Mr Connolly: I think the point still stands.

MR HUMPHRIES: Maybe so. But that ignores a number of reasons for spending that money, quite apart from making a saving - in particular, establishing a principal hospital in the ACT. It will improve significantly the quality of health care in the ACT, as recommended by the Kearney report which Mr Berry accepted, which is why he decided to establish a principal hospital. That money would have to be spent anyway because of the poor quality of the existing Royal Canberra Hospital North site.

Putting that to one side, I ask Mr Connolly: if he finds the investment of \$158m to produce an \$8m return a poor investment, what would he say about investing \$210m to receive a \$5m return? Presumably he would say that it is an even poorer financial decision. Yet that is the decision made by his colleague Mr Wayne Berry. That was a decision that Mr Berry made in government - to spend \$210m to achieve a saving of \$5m. If it made poor sense in the case of our decision, Mr Speaker, how much poorer sense did it make in the case of Mr Berry's decision?

Other comments have been made by Mr Connolly in respect of the health program. At the beginning of his remarks about health programs he said that the argument that there is a demand for a second private hospital in Canberra has not been demonstrated. I want to remind Mr Connolly of the development of the idea of having more private hospital beds in the ACT. It is not an idea that originated from this Government. In 1986, the Commonwealth Labor Government approved a threefold increase - from 91 to 270 - in private hospital beds in the ACT. This dastardly Alliance Government, which is hell-bent on privatising health services in the ACT, is increasing private hospital beds in the ACT from that figure of 270 to a grand total of 300 - an extra 30 beds!

Mr Berry: That is a distortion.

MR HUMPHRIES: It is not a distortion; it is a fact. It is an extra 30 beds, Mr Speaker. Big deal! All the indicators point to a need for those additional beds. That need is to be met by this Government, in line with standards and levels of private bed use which apply elsewhere in this country and which the ACT is below at present - a situation which this Government is intent on ensuring is rectified. I believe that it will enhance the quality of health care available to people, particularly those people who presently have a limited choice with private health insurance in the ACT.

MR SPEAKER: Your time has expired, Mr Humphries.

MR DUBY (Minister for Finance and Urban Services) (9.48): Mr Speaker, like other speakers before me, I compliment the Estimates Committee and recognise the vital role that it plays in the budgetary process of the ACT Government. It is a very time consuming and hard task. I guess it is a necessary one, of which the Government is not afraid in any way. Indeed, given the number of hours of public interview and interrogation of Ministers and members of the public service, in a lot of ways I am quite surprised, Mr Speaker, that the recommendations of the committee seem to refer to mere matters of format that future estimates committees would like to see. They refer to the way in which they would like to have information presented to them.

I am very pleased to note that no areas within my portfolios, namely finance and urban services, have been singled out for particular mention. It would appear that the committee is satisfied with the general level of expenditure and the way in which those moneys have been spent by my department. For that I am grateful. I believe that my department and the areas within my portfolio responsibilities spend their money responsibly and well.

However, there is one thing that does, frankly, interest me, and that is the way in which certain members of the Opposition, particularly Mr Moore - I notice also, with dismay, the comments made by Mr Connolly this evening - seem to have an absolutely sordid fascination with travel expenditure that has been expended by this Government in attending quite legitimate and worthwhile conferences and meetings in various parts of Australia and, in the case of Mr Collaery and me, in New Zealand. As was explained to the committee by me, and I am sure by the other Ministers, it represented the first time the ACT Government had been asked to participate fully in its own right at a conference of any kind. In other words, it was the time when the ACT Government, as such, was to be admitted to various consultative forums as a full member, and I think it is most appropriate that Ministers should attend.

Much has been made of the comparison between the expenditure of \$7,000 by the previous Government and - there is no doubt about it - the greater expenditure on travel which Ministers have expended in relation to our

20 November 1990

portfolio responsibilities - in particular, Mr Collaery and I. I again point out, as was pointed out to the committee, that the Labor Government was in power basically for less than seven months. It expended approximately \$7,000 in seven months. It was a minority government and, more to the point, there was a pilots dispute for, I believe, 4 or five months of those seven months. It made a lot of difference to the amount of travel that was available from and to Canberra.

Mr Berry: I did not ever ask for a flight that I did not get.

MR DUBY: Many flights out of Canberra were unavailable; but, more to the point, many conferences which had been scheduled to occur during that period were cancelled and held over until the end of the dispute, which, I might add, virtually coincided with government being taken by us.

However, as Mr Berry said, he had no difficulty in getting flights; nor, it would appear, would have, for example, the former Chief Minister. Figures were tabled before this year's Estimates Committee which, as has been pointed out on a number of occasions, had a Government majority. It was supposedly stacked in our favour. The committee, however, chose to overlook, for example, that in August 1990 the then Chief Minister was able to obtain a flight to Melbourne for herself and her media adviser "to do radio interviews".

Mr Wood: August 1990; that is interesting.

MR DUBY: It was in August 1989, I am sorry. It was to do radio interviews, at a cost of \$1,200-odd to the ACT taxpayer. The previous Chief Minister saw fit to travel to Melbourne to do radio interviews. Given that fact, I personally find it rather offensive that Mr Collaery and I should be told that we are junketeering when we are attending conferences on behalf of the ACT, for the first time. They are conferences at which it is most essential that the ACT should be represented. I reject that suggestion entirely.

Mr Connolly: They do not believe it out there, Craig.

MR DUBY: Of course not. They do not believe it out there, because people like you go out and say things that you know perfectly well are simply untrue. Today, for example, in question time we had that person opposite Mr Moore holding up copies of the Brisbane *Courier-Mail* and asking whether the Chief Minister is aware that a Minister in the previous Government in Queensland had been gaoled on fraud charges, I think it was, and proceeding to ask a question about Mr Collaery's travel expenses.

The clear imputation in that questioning was that Mr Collaery had been engaged in some fraudulent activity and that a former Minister in Queensland had been engaged in

similar sorts of activities and had been sent to gaol for them. You know that as well as I do, Mr Moore. We heard tonight about the scam that you have put on the ACT taxpayer to the tune of some \$15,000-odd worth of travel.

It should be noted that the only time Mr Moore had a copy of the Brisbane *Courier-Mail* was when he was prancing around the brothels of Brisbane, at the taxpayers' expense, investigating some things on behalf of an inquiry that he undoubtedly deems to be essential. This is the sort of thing that we have to put up with from Mr Moore. I think it is absolutely outrageous. He has been caught out tonight, particularly when those papers indicate that, for example, his little jaunt to Manchester and The Hague cost the ACT taxpayer in the order of \$7,500. What did we achieve from it? Absolutely nothing.

Whilst the recommendations of this committee are good, a lot of them simply refer to what the committee was advised during the hearings. It recommends, for example, that a cost attribution system for rent be developed as a priority and be in place for the 1991-92 budget. I know that it was told during the hearings that that was in place.

Mr Moore: It was a response to a question, "Why was it not done last year?". Your ministry was supposed to have had it done this year.

MR DUBY: Will you shut up, fungus face? It recommended that the cost attribution system be developed.

Mr Berry: On a point of order: "Shut up, fungus face" is hardly parliamentary, and I ask that the Minister be asked to withdraw that.

Dr Kinloch: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I refer you to standing order 61.

MR SPEAKER: One point of order at a time, thank you. Mr Berry?

Mr Berry: Is that parliamentary? I do not mind, as long as I can use it, too.

MR SPEAKER: I do not believe it is that offensive, Mr Berry. Please proceed, Mr Duby.

MR DUBY: As I said, the committee was firmly advised that those steps are in place and will be in place for next year. In addition, there are areas of recommendations which the response that the Chief Minister lodged today on behalf of the Government clearly indicates simply cannot be complied with.

The committee this year cannot instruct or recommend to a future committee how it should behave. All in all, I endorse the report. I think the Government's response answers all recommendations competently.

20 November 1990

MS FOLLETT (Leader of the Opposition) (9.58): Mr Speaker, this is the most farcical debate that I have heard in this Assembly, which is infamous for the farcical nature of many of its debates. I am ashamed to be part of it. I take the point of view that you have to have these debates.

The Estimates Committee has made some 19 recommendations in its report, and I take them seriously. I think it is a matter of extreme concern that not one of the Ministers who have spoken so far has addressed any of those recommendations.

Mr Collaery: We have given the Government's response.

MS FOLLETT: Mr Speaker, I note that Mr Kaine has tabled the Government's response, but in doing so he has not done this Assembly the courtesy of giving members an opportunity to study that response before they respond to the Government's answer. So, I take both the nature of this debate and the nature of the Government's response and its lack of courtesy as a gross insult, not just to the Assembly but also to the Estimates Committee.

Mr Speaker, I believe that the Estimates Committee does perform an extremely valuable function in any Westminster system, not least in this Assembly. Because, as I said, Mr Kaine has not given us an opportunity to study the Government's response, we are forced to speak this evening in the broadest terms. In broad terms the function of an estimates committee is one of accountability for the money that the Government has spent and is proposing to spend.

I believe that both the recommendations of the Estimates Committee and the body of the report indicate that that accountability has fallen down quite seriously in a number of different areas. Some of those areas have been touched on by other speakers this evening, and they include matters like the provision of adequate and timely information.

There is no question of members of this Assembly or the public being able to assure themselves of accountability if they do not have the information. It has to be said that on many occasions during this estimates committee process we did not have that information. In some instances it was not made available until the report was in the very late stages of drafting. That is a clearly inadequate response from the Government to the role of the Estimates Committee.

I also note formally that the Estimates Committee this year did not have the benefit of implementation of the recommendations of last year's Estimates Committee. How did that come about? Where did the system break down? Why was the Estimates Committee this year not provided with the additional supporting information that was requested by last year's Estimates Committee? We have had lame excuses about not knowing what format or what supplementary information might have been required. The Government has

known it for over a year. It was in last year's Estimates Committee report that was accepted by this Assembly. There is no excuse for that. It denies full accountability.

I would also like to comment on some of the areas in relation to which I believe this year's Estimates Committee was not given full information. Again, the main point in commenting on that is that it tends to stifle accountability. It obfuscates the facts so that either members have to search high and low to find the facts or the facts never come to light. That was definitely the case in relation to the information on planning and school closures, the provision of staffing at Jindalee Nursing Home, and this Government's failure to spend money on new policy proposals which were approved in the budget last year.

In all of those cases we had initial attempts to mislead the Estimates Committee on those matters. It was only by the endless cross-examination by members of the Estimates Committee that the facts in those cases came to light. What do we have? We have Mr Collaery complaining about the time that it took to get those facts. Mr Speaker, given that the role of the Estimates Committee is to examine such matters, I think Mr Collaery's response is totally inappropriate.

I believe also that Mr Collaery has cast himself well and truly in the Bjelke-Petersen mould by his constant threatening of court actions against members who ask him to supply the information. That is an outrageous way to behave. It was made an art form by Mr Bjelke-Petersen. Whenever anybody seemed to be getting some unpalatable information on him and his Ministers he threatened court action. That is what Mr Collaery is doing.

Mr Collaery: Have I issued one writ, Ms Follett?

MS FOLLETT: My comments relate to threats, Mr Speaker, by this Attorney-General to sue people who wish to ask him to explain himself on important matters of public expenditure. It is a Bjelke-Petersen mode of operation.

Mr Collaery: Name a letter or a writ, Ms Follett. That is the challenge. Let the record show it.

MS FOLLETT: Mr Speaker, I say again that my comments relate to threats, in which Mr Collaery specialises. In my regrettably very quick look at the Government's response on this matter a couple of areas concern me.

The first is in relation to recommendation (1) of the Estimates Committee, which relates to the provision of financial information at the subprogram level. It was clear to anybody who took part in the Estimates Committee process that that is the level of information that is required. It was the first recommendation of this Estimates Committee, just as it was of last year's

20 November 1990

Estimates Committee. From this Government we have a very qualified response - it may or may not, depending on how easy it is. That is not good enough. If we are to have accountability, it is essential that that information is made available in a timely fashion to all members and the public.

In relation to recommendation (2) of the Estimates Committee, namely, that the papers be made more user friendly and that a questionnaire be included in the budget papers, and further recommendations concerning the provision of a special committee of this Assembly to look at those matters, again the Government's response is fudged. It has not agreed to those recommendations. I think that must be of concern to the chairman of the Estimates Committee and all members of this Assembly. It has fudged its response.

On another important matter on which the Estimates Committee made a recommendation, concerning the use of consultants, Mr Speaker, I have taken note of Mr Kaine's undertaking to have a joint review of the consultancy arrangements to ensure that the best value for money is obtained by the use of consultants; but I do not agree with the response that we are simply to have yet another set of guidelines. We have had draft guidelines for heaven knows how long, but the problem has always been that they have not been used.

Mr Kaine knows, as well as anybody, that the hiring, selection and payment of consultants has always been done on an extremely ad hoc basis which denies accountability. So it is not the holding of yet another review and the drawing up of yet more guidelines that is the issue here; it is the implementation of them, the policing, if you like, of those arrangements which are estimated to cost some \$10m. I raise that as another area of concern to which I do not believe that the Government has responded adequately.

Mr Speaker, I would like to make one further comment, and that is in relation to the very many and very inaccurate statements made about travel in the course of this totally farcical debate. Both Mr DUBY and Mr COLLAERY have made quite wrong statements, in my view. An analysis of the information on travel which was tabled reveals that the facts could be somewhat embarrassing to the Government. If we have a look at the figures that have been tabled by Mr COLLAERY, I think, we can see that the Alliance members have spent, on Assembly business, a total of \$36,908, and Mrs NOLAN leads the charge with over \$9,000 spent on Assembly travel.

Mrs Nolan: I sit on the greatest number of committees.

MS FOLLETT: Assembly business includes committee business, Mrs Nolan. (*Extension of time granted*) Mr Speaker, I ask you to compare that \$36,000, or nearly \$37,000, spent by Alliance members with the \$12,014 spent by the Labor members.

Mr Kaine: There are only five of you.

MS FOLLETT: Mr Speaker, as Mr Kaine, the Treasurer, the numbers man, points out, there are five Labor members. There are also five Liberal members, but they have spent \$24,011.

Mr Jensen: What about Rosemary's committee travel?

MS FOLLETT: Mr Speaker, Mr Jensen asks me to comment on my committee travel. I have spent \$2,000.

Mr Connolly: How much has Norm spent?

MS FOLLETT: Mr Jensen has spent \$4,201. I am quite happy to table this document, Mr Speaker. It is a very interesting analysis. It proves what a bunch of craven hypocrites we have opposite.

Mr Kaine: Mr Speaker, we were told earlier today that that was a word that we are not allowed to use. I would like it withdrawn.

MR SPEAKER: Order! I think I allowed it earlier today.

MS FOLLETT: You did, indeed.

MR SPEAKER: Please proceed, Ms Follett.

MS FOLLETT: Consistency is everything. They are a bunch of craven hypocrites. They have outspent us by 3:1. It hardly requires any further comment. The figures speak for themselves. If there is a junket on, they will be in it, and they have been.

Mr Speaker, in order to save you the trouble of having to rule on whether I can make a personal explanation or not, I would also like to comment on the remarks made by Mr DUBY and Mr COLLAERY in relation to my travel while I was in government. They referred to a visit that I made to Melbourne. It has been variously described as a visit to meet Carmen Lawrence or a visit to do radio interviews.

I would like to place it on the record that the one and only meeting that I have had with Dr Lawrence took place in the Hyatt Hotel in Canberra, at no cost to anyone. That visit that I made to Melbourne was to take part in a variety of media interviews. The reason I went to Melbourne rather than do them from here was that one of them was a live television interview on the Bert Newton show, from memory, in order to promote the ACT as a tourist venue. Mr Speaker, Mr Kaine commented as such on that trip at the time. He has a very short, convenient memory, I am afraid, on this matter. So that is the fact about that travel expenditure.

20 November 1990

In relation to ministerial travel we ought also to have a look at paragraph 5.74 of the Estimates Committee report in relation to which, again, no-one in the Government commented. The final sentence of that paragraph states:

The Committee was surprised to learn that, although the Chief Minister administers the Program for Ministerial travel, he does not consider himself accountable for decisions by Ministers to travel.

I find that an extraordinary comment to be made in an Estimates Committee report. Even more extraordinary, Mr Speaker, is the fact that not one of these Ministers, this bunch of hypocrites, has seen fit to comment upon that. I find the fact that the Ministers outspent the Labor Government on travel by an enormous amount and that the Chief Minister, their Treasurer, does not consider himself accountable for that, an absolutely parlous state of affairs. Of course, they have been too embarrassed to comment upon it. The Chief Minister is most unwilling to take responsibility for a bunch of Ministers that he can neither control nor direct nor in any way bring to order. That has been the shape of this debate tonight. It has been a farce from start to finish. In no way has the Government addressed the issues raised by its Estimates Committee.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

MR SPEAKER: Mr Moore, do you wish to make a personal explanation?

MR MOORE: I do. Mr Speaker, I would like to clarify some of the things that the Chief Minister said. The first point is that, whilst I have asked many questions on travel, at no stage have I accused anybody of junketeering; nor have I made any of those claims. On the contrary, I have made quite positive comments about that.

That aside, the comments that I made were primarily about the inappropriate way in which travel was acquitted. Again, this evening, I mentioned the \$180 that Mr Collaery still has outstanding, which could easily be acquitted and appropriately taken care of.

The Chief Minister, Mr DUBY and Mr Collaery have suggested that I have taken trips for personal gratification. Let me tell you, first of all, that I enjoy very much being with my family and that at no stage have I taken a trip for personal gratification. That should be further emphasised by the fact that any trip that I have taken on behalf of this Assembly was approved and recommended first of all by the committee and then by the Standing Committee on

Administration and Procedures. That being the case, Mr Speaker, I would suggest that three Ministers have questioned the role that this Assembly plays and the role that you play in approving these trips. I would suggest that they are indicating a lack of confidence in you. They are getting carried away. Whilst Ms Follett withdrew her comment about their being drunk - - -

Ms Follett: I was being kind, I thought.

MR MOORE: She was being kind. Whilst they might not be drunk, they have certainly been acting as though they are.

Mr Kaine: Was that a personal explanation or another attack?

MR MOORE: I withdraw it, Mr Speaker. There is one other point that I wish to make. On a number of occasions this evening I mentioned that it was a report without dissent and I still hold that view. Looking through the minutes, you will see that there was a vote by Mr Jensen on a number of occasions - I do not remember them specifically - as, indeed, there were votes by other members who did not agree on particular issues.

MR HUMPHRIES (Minister for Health, Education and the Arts): Mr Speaker, I want to make a personal explanation.

MR SPEAKER: Please proceed.

MR HUMPHRIES: Ms Follett, in the course of her remarks - she has left - said that none of the Ministers had commented on any of the recommendations in the Estimates Committee report. I cannot speak for other Ministers, but I can certainly draw her attention to remarks that I made in my comments to which apparently she was not attentive.

Mr Doby: She was not here for them.

MR HUMPHRIES: She probably was not here for them, so I wonder how her comments could be made in the first place. I commented favourably on the recommendation in paragraph 3.61, namely, that there be a standard form for supplementary information. I also commented favourably on recommendation 4.10, on the earlier establishment of an Estimates committee in each parliamentary year.

MR COLLAERY (Attorney-General): I also seek leave to make a personal explanation.

MR SPEAKER: Please proceed.

MR COLLAERY: I will make it brief. In question time today and again tonight Mr Moore has imputed that there is a sum of \$180 that I have somehow improperly retained or obtained. It is not clear what his allegation is, and I note that it has not been made outside the house. I remind the house that Mr Moore, through his membership of the

20 November 1990

Estimates Committee, has the answer that he seeks. It is in a legal opinion provided by the deputy law officer, dated 26 October 1990. It makes very clear that the ACT Executive can make provision within the legislation for Ministers to carry out their duties at official expense, and it makes clear that Mr Moore's imputations and assertions are legally incorrect, like all of his assertions on this topic.

He is once again pursuing a line which, we once heard in this house, he said he would never follow. That was when he was recanting over the fish farm allegations which he, not any other member of the Rally, made in this Assembly. I think it has become evident today who really is the person who likes to muckrake.

MR MOORE: Mr Speaker, I wish to make a further personal explanation.

MR SPEAKER: Please proceed.

MR MOORE: Mr Duby said to me before, "Shut up, fungus face". I want to point out that the beard that I wear, which I presume he is not quite capable of doing - I think I might get some bipartisan agreement from Mr Humphries - is not fungus, although perhaps it occasionally contains it.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Assembly adjourned at 10.19 pm

**CHIEF MINISTER FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY QUESTION**

Priorities Review Board - Recommendations

QUESTION NO. 209

MS FOLLETT - Asked the Chief Minister upon notice on 7 August 1990:

- (1) Of the 110 recommendations contained in the Priorities Review Board Report, which ones has the Government formally (a) accepted; and (b) rejected.
- (2) For each of the recommendations included at (1)(a) and (b) above (a) has the Government's decision been publicly announced, and if so, on what date and by what means; and (b) what were the reasons for accepting or rejecting the recommendation.
- (3) For each of the recommendations not included at (1) (a) above (a) why has the Government not yet decided to accept or reject the recommendation; and (b) when will the Government make a decision on the recommendation.

MR KAINÉ - The answer to the member's question is as follows:

I announced on 29 May 1990 the Government's position about the way in which the recommendations of the Priorities Review Board were to be treated. In summary, they are one of several pieces of advice the Government has taken into account in framing decisions about micro-economic reform, and have no greater status than that. While some Government decisions reflect the recommendations of the Priorities Review Board, others reflect the recommendations of other reports or of agencies themselves.

4323

20 November 1990

Additionally any micro economic reform measure must be tested in the consultative mechanisms I agreed with the Trades and Labour Council namely:

1. agreements ratified by the Industrial Relations Commission as a result of the Structural Efficiency Principles announced by the Commission in its August 1989 National Wage Decision;
2. formal consultative mechanisms in place or those to be jointly developed with agencies, ie. management/union consultative committees;
3. the formal process of the Industrial Relations Advisory Council; and
4. direct consultation between the Government and the ACT Trades and Labour Council to be initiated by either party and conducted openly.

I am, however happy to summarise for the Leader of the Opposition the decisions of the Government about micro-economic reform that closely follow the recommendations of the Priorities Review Board. These are listed on the attached schedule.

4324

PRB Recommendation	Public Announcement Details	Reasons for Decision
Accepted		
1.1 Arrangements for paying gaming machine taxation into the Community Development Fund be discontinued and payed directly into the Consolidated Fund	Budget Speech 11/9/90; CDF closed from 1 January 1991, with grants from that date being paid from the Consolidated Fund	Government believes that hypothication of gambling revenues is no longer required or appropriate. Safeguards have also been provided for organisations funded through the CDF. The Government guarantees that total community grants will be maintained in real terms for two years. Procedures for application and approval of grants will remain the same.
2.1 A separate ACT Public Service not be formed at this stage	Chief Minister's Statement to Legislative Assembly on PRB Report; 29/5/90	Existing arrangements satisfactory for ACTGS requirements
2.4 Establishment of Public Sector Management Board	Chief Minister's Statement to Legislative Assembly on PRB Report; 29/590	To provide an on-going focus and source of advice for the Government's public sector reform program

<p>3.9 <u>NSW State Owned Corporations Act 1988</u> be considered for replication in the ACT, to establish Territory Owned Corporations (TOCs)</p>	<p>Budget Speech 11/9/90; p7 Corporatisation model for ACT Government business enterprises to be introduced</p>	<p>The ACT Government considered various corporatisation models. Introducing commercially based practices will encourage improvements in efficiency, better responsiveness to community needs, and the maximisation of returns to taxpayers on their investment, as well as ensuring improved accountability.</p>
<p>4.2 Establishment of a Government Services Office</p>	<p>Chief Minister's Media Statement - 4/7/90 ACT Administrative Arrangements</p>	<p>Centralised focus for key common service functions across ACTGS</p>
<p>4.7 ACT Government vehicle fleet be rationalised</p>	<p>Chief Minister's Statement to Legislative Assembly on PRB Report; 29/5/90</p>	<p>10% reduction in the car fleet (110 cars) would free up some \$1.4m in capital and achieve significant on-going maintenance and running cost savings.</p>

<p>5.1 ACTEW be incorporated as a TOC</p>	<p>Budget Speech 11/9/90; p7 ACTEW will be corporatised</p>	<p>In line with general Government decision to corporatise Government business enterprises To establish a framework for pricing which ensures that efficiency gains are passed on to customers.</p>
<p>5.5 Newly coporatised ACTEW to declare annual dividend within parameters of 3-5% net assets/4% turnover</p>	<p>Budget speech 11/9/90; p28 Annual dividend from ACTEW has been increased from \$5m in 1989-90 to \$8m this year.</p>	<p>Provides for an appropriate return to the ACT Community from its investment in ACTEW operations</p>
<p>5.6 That ACTEW analyse its level of current assets against need and declare a one-off dividend to the Government for any surplus.</p>	<p>Budget Speech 11/9/90; p24 One-off dividend from ACTEW \$4m.</p>	<p>Based on an assessment of ACTEWs liquid/semi liquid assets and future capital needs a one-off dividend of \$4m was identified</p>
<p>5.7 That the increasing block price system recently adopted by NSW be adopted to provide consumers and ACTEW with market signals that will lead to a drop in demand for water; should involve reducing the current annual water allowance from 455kL to 250kL</p>	<p>ACTEW Media Release 29/6/90; Annual water allowance reduced from 455kL to 350kL from 1 July 1991</p>	<p>Conservation of a limited natural resource</p>

5.21 Future of Kingston bus depot be determined early; prima facie case for closure	Budget speech 11/9/90; p16 Kingston bus depot to close. Relocation of resources to other depots, principally Tuggeranong	Current site no longer required or appropriate following opening of Tuggeranong depot
5.32 GALA to be re-established as a TOC	Budget Speech 11/9/90; p7 TAB operations of GALA to be corporatised	In line with general Government decision to corporatise Government business enterprises To allow the TAB operations to be conducted on an efficient commercial basis, and seperating off the other licencing and regulatory functions
5.34 Trade waste operations to be sold	Budget Speech 11/9/90; p16 Trade waste operation will be offered for sale both as a going concern and for the assets value	Current operation does not cover costs and alternative commercial services are available
6.3 Proceed with School consolidation program through closure of some schools	Minister for Health, Education and Arts announcement; 31/7/90	Achieve real reductions in education expenditure while maintaining high quality education services.

<p>6.16 Disbandment of Employment, Education and Training Branch, Office of Industry and Development</p>	<p>Chief Minister's Media Statement - 4/7/90 ACT Administrative Arrangements</p>	<p>Transfer of employment and training function (other than higher education) to Chief Minister's Department reinforces the functional links between economic development and employment/training strategies</p>
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Rejected		
2.3 The Government adopt a five departmental structure	Chief Minister's Media Statement - 4/7/90 ACT Administrative Arrangements	The ACT Government's changes announced on 4/7/90 will achieve the intention of this recommendation. See speech for details.
5.27 Purpose clauses in Crown leases be abolished and be substituted by permitted uses under a zoning system	Land (Leases and Management) Bill 1990 Tabling Statement - 7 June 1990. p7 The Bill provides that the lease document will remain the sole document for specifying the purpose for which a parcel of land can be used.	Purpose clauses are an important aspect of the leasing system reflecting development rights purchased by lessees. Zonings reflect a planning control for particular areas and measure a permissible limit on lease purchase clauses. The Government does not intend to remove purpose clauses from the leasing system because it would lead to a significant loss of control in both planning and betterment terms
6.2 Existing voluntary pre-school fee to be made compulsory	Chief Minister's Statement to Legislative Assembly on PRB Report; 29/5/90	Alliance Government considers this proposal inappropriate and had previously rejected it

<p>6.13 Department of Education and TAFE be co-located in one ministerial portfolio</p>	<p>Chief Minister's Media Statement - 4/7/90 ACT Administrative Arrangements</p>	<p>TAFE retained in Chief Minister's portfolio to reinforce functional links between economic development, employment and training strategies and TAFE services</p>
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20 November 1990

MINISTER FOR HEALTH, EDUCATION AND THE ARTS

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY QUESTION

Belconnen Community Health Centre

QUESTION NO 239

MR BERRY - asked the Minister for Health, Education and the Arts upon notice on 16 August 1990:

- (1) Does the Government plan to close the Belconnen Community Health Centre.
- (2) Has the Government considered the redevelopment of the Belconnen Community Health Centre site; and if so, for what purpose.
- (3) Has the Government received any approaches from developers expressing interest in redevelopment of the Belconnen Community Health Centre site: and if so, who made the approaches and what redevelopment was proposed.

MR HUMPHRIES - the answer to the members question is:

- (1) Since the introduction of the community health program in 1973, demographic needs in the ACT have changed. It is therefore necessary to reexamine service delivery to meet those needs.

The Government has instructed the ACT Community and Health Service to report on the future development of the community health centre system in the ACT by the end of the year.

We will be maximising our use of health professionals to increase the effectiveness of service delivery.

The Government has no plans at this stage to close Belconnen Community Health Centre.

- (2) The Government has not considered the redevelopment of the Belconnen Community Health Centre site.
- (3) The Government has not received any approaches from developers expressing interest in redevelopment of the Belconnen Community Health Centre site.

4332

MINISTER FOR HEALTH, EDUCATION AND THE ARTS

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY QUESTION

City Health Centre

QUESTION NO 240

MR BERRY - asked the Minister for Health, Education and the Arts upon notice on 16 August 1990:

- (1) Does the Government plan to close the City Health Centre.
- (2) Has the Government considered the redevelopment of the Health Authority site; and if so, for what purpose.
- (3) Has the Government received any approaches from developers expressing interest in redevelopment of the Health Authority site; and if so, who made the approaches and what redevelopment was proposed.

MR HUMPHRIES - the answer to the members question is

- (1) Since the introduction of the community health program in 1973, demographic needs in the ACT have changed. It is therefore necessary to reexamine service delivery to meet those needs.

The Government has instructed the ACT Community and Health Service to report on the future development of the community health centre system in the ACT by the end of the year.

We will be maximising our use of health professionals to increase the effectiveness of service delivery.

The Government has no plans at this stage to close the City Health Centre.

- (2) The Government has not considered the redevelopment of the Health Authority site.
- (3) The Government has not received any approaches from developers expressing interest in redevelopment of the Health Authority site.

4333

20 November 1990

MINISTER FOR HEALTH, EDUCATION AND THE ARTS

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY QUESTION

Dickson Community Health Centre

QUESTION NO 241

MR BERRY - asked the Minister for Health, Education and the Arts upon notice on 16 August 1990:

- (1) Does the Government plan to close the Dickson Community Health Centre.
- (2) Has the Government considered the redevelopment of the Dickson Community Health Centre site; and if so, for what purpose.
- (3) Has the Government received any approaches from developers expressing interest in redevelopment of the Dickson Community Health Centre site; and if so, who made the approaches and what redevelopment was proposed.

MR HUMPHRIES - the answer to the members question is

- (1) Since the introduction of the community health program in 1973, demographic needs in the ACT have changed. It is therefore necessary to reexamine service delivery to meet those needs.

The Government has instructed the ACT Community and Health Service to report on the future development of the community health centre system in the ACT by the end of the year.

We will be maximising our use of health professionals to increase the effectiveness of service delivery.

The Government has no plans at this stage to close the Dickson Community Health Centre.

- (2) The Government has not considered the redevelopment of the Dickson Community Health Centre site.
- (3) The Government has not received any approaches from developers expressing interest in redevelopment of the Dickson Community Heaton Centre site.

4334

MINISTER FOR HEALTH, EDUCATION AND THE ARTS

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY QUESTION

Kambah Community Health Centre

QUESTION NO 242

MR BERRY - asked the Minister for Health, Education and the Arts upon notice on 16 August 1990:

- (1) Does the Government plan to close the Kambah Community Health Centre.
- (2) Has the Government considered the redevelopment of the Kambah Community Health Centre site; and if so, for what purpose.
- (3) Has the Government received any approaches from developers expressing interest in redevelopment of the Kambah Community Health Centre site; and if so, who made the approaches and what redevelopment was proposed.

MR HUMPHRIES - the answer to the members question is:

- (1) Since the introduction of the community health program in 1973, demographic needs in the ACT have changed. It is therefore necessary to reexamine service delivery to meet those needs.

The Government has instructed the ACT Community and Health Service to report on the future development of the community health centre system in the ACT by the end of the year.

We will be maximising our use of health professionals to increase the effectiveness of service delivery.

The Government has no plans at this stage to close the Kambah Community Health Centre.

- (2) The Government has not considered the redevelopment of the Kambah Community Health Centre site.
- (3) The Government has not received any approaches from developers expressing interest in redevelopment of the Kambah Community Health Centre site.

4335

20 November 1990

MINISTER FOR HEALTH, EDUCATION AND THE ARTS

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY QUESTION

Kippax Community Health Centre

QUESTION NO 243

MR BERRY - asked the Minister for Health, Education and the Arts upon notice on 16 August 1990:

- (1) Does the Government plan to close the Kippax Community Health Centre.
- (2) Has the Government considered the redevelopment of the Kippax Community Health Centre site; and if so, for what purpose.
- (3) Has the Government received any approaches from developers expressing interest in redevelopment of the Kippax Community Health Centre site and if so, who made the approaches and what redevelopment was proposed.

MR HUMPHRIES - the answer to the members question is:

- (1) Since the introduction of the community health program in 1973, demographic needs in the ACT have changed. It is therefore necessary to reexamine service delivery to meet those needs.

The Government has instructed the ACT Community and Health Service to report on the future development of the community health centre system in the ACT by the end of the year.

We will be maximising our use of health professionals to increase the effectiveness of service delivery.

The Government has no plans at this stage to close the Kippax Community Health Centre.

- (2) The Government has not considered the redevelopment of the Kippax Community Health Centre site.
- (3) The Government has been informally approached by the private practitioners who are currently renting space from the ACT Community and Health Service in the Kippax Community Health Centre with a view to possibly acquiring the building for development as a private medical and allied health services facility.

4336

MINISTER FOR HEALTH, EDUCATION AND THE ARTS

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY QUESTION

Melba Community Health Centre

QUESTION NO 244

MR BERRY - asked the Minister for Health, Education and the Arts upon notice on 16 August 1990:

- (1) Does the Government plan to close the Melba Community Health Centre.
- (2) Has the Government considered the redevelopment of the Melba Community Health Centre site; and if so, for what purpose.
- (3) Has the Government received any approaches from developers expressing interest in redevelopment of the Melba Community Health Centre site; and if so, who made the approaches and what redevelopment was proposed.

MR HUMPERIES - the answer to the members question is:

- (1) Since the introduction of the community health program in 1973, demographic needs in the ACT have changed. It is therefore necessary to reexamine service delivery to meet those needs.

The Government has instructed the ACT Community and Health Service to report on the future development of the community health centre system in the ACT by the end of the year.

We will be maximising our use of health professionals to increase the effectiveness of service delivery.

The Government has no plans at this stage to close the Melba Community Health Centre.

- (2) The Government has not considered the redevelopment of the Melba Community Health Centre site.
- (3) The Government has not received any approaches from developers expressing interest in redevelopment of the Melba Community Health Centre site.

4337

20 November 1990

MINISTER FOR HEALTH, EDUCATION AND THE ARTS

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY QUESTION

Narrabundah Community Health Centre

QUESTION NO 245

MR BERRY - asked the Minister for Health, Education and the Arts upon notice on 16 August 1990:

- (1) Does the Government plan to close the Narrabundah Community Health Centre.
- (2) Has the Government considered the redevelopment of the Narrabundah Community Health Centre site; and if so, for what purpose.
- (3) Has the Government received any approaches from developers expressing interest in redevelopment of the Narrabundah Community Health Centre site; and if so, who made the approaches and what redevelopment was proposed.

MR HUMPHRIES - the answer to the members question is:

- (1) Since the introduction of the community health program in 1973, demographic needs in the ACT have changed. It is therefore necessary to reexamine service delivery to meet those needs.

The Government has instructed the ACT Community and Health Service to report on the future development of the community health centre system in the ACT by the end of the year.

We will be maximising our use of health professionals to increase the effectiveness of service delivery.

The Government has no plans at this stage to close the Narrabundah Community Health Centre.

- (2) The Government has not considered the redevelopment of the Narrabundah Community Health Centre site.
- (3) The Government has not received any approaches from developers expressing interest in redevelopment of the Narrabundah Community Health Centre site.

4338

MINISTER FOR HEALTH., EDUCATION AND THE ARTS

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY QUESTION

Phillip Community Health Centre

QUESTION NO 246

MR BERRY - asked the Minister for Health, Education and the Arts upon notice on 16 August 1990:

- (1) Does the Government plan to close the Phillip Community Health Centre.
- (2) Has the Government considered the redevelopment of the Phillip Community Health Centre site; and if so, for what purpose.
- (3) Has the Government received any approaches from developers expressing interest in redevelopment of the Phillip Community Health Centre site; and if so, who made the approaches and what redevelopment was proposed.

MR HUMPHIRTES - the answer to the members question is:

- (1) Since the introduction of the community health program in 1973, demographic needs in the ACT have changed. It is therefore necessary to reexamine service delivery to meet those needs.

The Government has instructed the ACT Community and Health Service to report on the future development of the community health centre system in the ACT by the end of the year.

We will be maximising our use of health professionals to increase the effectiveness of service delivery.

The Government has no plans at this stage to close the Phillip Community Health Centre.

- (2) The Government has not considered the redevelopment of the Phillip Community Health Centre site.
- (3) The Government has not received any approaches from developers expressing interest in redevelopment of the Phillip Community. Health Centre site.

4339

20 November 1990

MINISTER FOR HEALTH, EDUCATION AND THE ARTS

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY QUESTION

Scullin Community Health Centre

QUESTION NO 247

MR BERRY - asked the Minister for Health, Education and the Arts upon notice on 16 August 1990:

- (1) Does the Government plan to close the Scullin Community Health Centre.
- (2) Has the Government considered the redevelopment of the Scullin Community Health Centre site; and if so, for what purpose.
- (3) Has the Government received any approaches from developers expressing interest in redevelopment of the Scullin Community Health Centre site; and if so, who made the approaches and what redevelopment was proposed.

MR HUMPHRIES - the answer to the members question is

- (1) Since the introduction of the community health program in 1973, demographic needs in the ACT have changed. It is therefore necessary to reexamine service delivery to meet those needs.

The Government has instructed the ACT Community and Health Service to report on the future development of the community health centre system in the ACT by the end of the year.

We will be maximising our use of health professionals to increase the effectiveness of service delivery.

The Government has no plans at this stage to close the Scullin Community Health Centre.

- (2) The Government has not considered the redevelopment of the Scullin Community Health Centre site.
- (3) The Government has not received any approaches from developers expressing interest in redevelopment of the Scullin Community Health Centre site.

4340

MINISTER FOR HEALTH, EDUCATION AND THE ARTS

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY QUESTION

Weston Creek Community Health Centre

QUESTION NO 248

MR BERRY - asked the Minister for Health, Education and the Arts upon notice on 16 August 1990:

- (1) Does the Government plan to close the Weston Creek Community Health Centre.
- (2) Has the Government considered the redevelopment of the Weston Creek Community Health Centre site; and if so, for what purpose.
- (3) Has the Government received any approaches from developers expressing interest in redevelopment of the Weston Creek Community Health Centre site; and if so, who made the approaches and what redevelopment was proposed.

MR HUMPHRIES - the answer to the members question is:

- (1) Since the introduction of the community health program in 1973, demographic needs in the ACT have changed. It is therefore necessary to reexamine service delivery to meet those needs.

The Government has instructed the ACT Community and Health Service to report on the future development of the community health centre system in the ACT by the end of the year.

We will be maximising our use of health professionals to increase the effectiveness of service delivery.

The Government has no plans at this stage to close the Weston Creek Community Health Centre.

- (2) The Government has not considered the redevelopment of the Weston Creek Community Health Centre site.
- (3) The Government has not received any approaches from developers expressing interest in redevelopment of the Weston Creek Community Health Centre site.

4341

20 November 1990

**CHIEF MINISTER FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY QUESTION**

TAPE Funding Sources

Question No 260

MR WOOD - Asked the Chief Minister upon notice on 12 September 1990:

In each of the years 1984-1990 what has been the percentage of TAFE recurrent funds derived from
(a) ACT Parliamentary appropriation; (b) funds from Commonwealth Services; (c) industry support and fees for services; (d) entrepreneurial activities ; (e) interest and (f) other.

MR KAINE - The answer to the members question is as follows:

The ACT Institute of TAFE was formed on 4 January 1988 from the amalgamation of three separate TAFE Colleges. The Institute does not hold financial records for the period prior to its formation and, therefore, is unable to provide data for the years 1984 to 1987 inclusive.

For the years 1988/89 and 1989/90 the funding sources were as follows:

88/89 89/90

- a) ACT Govt Appropriation 85.0 79.9
- b) Funds From Cwealth Services 4.3 4.5
- c) Industry support & fees for service 0.6 0.4
- d) Entrepreneurial activities 0.4 1.2
- e) Interest 0.4 1.4
- f) Other 9.3 12.6
- 100.0 100.0

4342

**CHIEF MINISTER FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY QUESTION**

Teenage Employment

Question No. 274

MR WOOD - asked the Chief Minister on notice on 19 September 1990:

- (1) For each of the quarters since March 1986, what has been the rate of teenage unemployment in the ACT.
- (2) Is the Minister satisfied that these figures are an accurate reflection of the employment for teenagers in the ACT.
- (3) What programs operate to assist young people into employment, and at what cost..

MR KAINÉ - The answer to the members question is as follows:

- (1) Teenage unemployment in the ACT has fluctuated between 25.7% in March 1986 to 11.3% in June 1990. The unemployment rates for teenagers since March 1986 are listed below:

QUARTER UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

MARCH 1986 25.7
JUNE 1986 22.8
SEPTEMBER 1986 17.8
DECEMBER 1986 23.8
MARCH 1987 25.7
JUNE 1987 18.1
SEPTEMBER 1987 15.4
DECEMBER 1987 20.5
MARCH 1988 20.1
JUNE 1988 21.5
SEPTEMBER 1988 17.1
DECEMBER 1988 22.6
MARCH 1989 16.0
JUNE 1989 16.1
SEPTEMBER 1989 16.4
DECEMBER 1989 20.7
MARCH 1990 25.9
JUNE 1990 11.3

(Source: ABM The Labour Force, 6203).

4343

20 November 1990

The ACT teenage unemployment rate declined from 25.9% in March 1990 to 11.3 in June 1990, the lowest level for many years.

(2) These unemployment statistics are based on the Labour Force survey conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The statistics, which provide an indication on the levels of youth unemployment, are obtained by a sample survey of the Canberra population and are subject to sometimes high sample error, and therefore should be used cautiously.

The unemployment rate for 15 to 19 year olds includes persons looking for both full time and part time work. It includes those attending all educational institutions whether full or part time, and actively seeking either part time or full time work. For example, in March 1990, of those teenagers who were unemployed, half (50.7%) were also full time students, compared to about one third (38.5) nationally.

The ACT has a high school retention rate and a lower percentage of persons who do not attend educational institutions full time than elsewhere in Australia. The unemployment rate for this group in June 1990 was much lower than the national rate (7.1 % compared to 15.1 % for Australia).

4344

(3) There is a number of programs in the ACT which provide assistance to young people seeking employment. Within the portfolio of the Minister for Housing and Community Services the Youth Affairs Unit is receiving funding of \$138,000 in 1990/91 to develop a program called Streetlink; which is an integrated support package for young people utilising a streetwork model. Two teams of workers, one based North and one South, will access young people currently not using mainstream services. The workers will deal with the interrelated issues the young person is experiencing which could range from employment and income security to housing and health. While the program does not have a discrete employment focus, employment issues will necessarily be dealt with during the normal operation of the program.

In addition, the ACTs Youth Centre network provides support for unemployed young people. This ranges from one-to-one support, to groups and regular activities. Again, the centres do not have only an employment focus but deal with the associated issues in the context of their standard programs.

And, within my own portfolio there are the activities of several community-based organisations which are funded under the Employment and Training Grants Program of the Community Development Fund. Such organisations include: Work Resources Centre; Jobline; the Red Cross through their Involve program; and Caloola Farm. Grants approved for these organisations in 1990/91 total \$234,000.

4345

20 November 1990

MINISTER FOR HEALTH, EDUCATION AND THE ARTS

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY QUESTION

Non-Government Schools - Interest Subsidy Scheme

QUESTION NO 275

Non-government Schools Interest Subsidy Scheme

MR WOOD - asked the Minister for Health, Education and the Arts on 19 September 1990:

- (1) What are the current commitments for each approval under the non-government schools Interest Subsidy Scheme in the ACT.
- (2) What amounts are payable for each approval in 1990-1991
- (3) What further subsidies are available in 1990-1991 under this scheme.

MR HUMPHRIES - the answer to Mr Woods question is:

- (1) The current commitments for each approval under the non-government schools Interest Subsidy Scheme in the ACT are as listed in Column 3 of the attached schedule.
- (2) The amounts payable for each approval in 1990-91 are as listed in Column 4 of the attached schedule.
- (3) None

4346

ATTACHED SCHEDULE TO
PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION NUMBER 275 ON NOTICE

IS 1 Canberra Grammar 173.0 16.6
IS 2 St Edmunds 57.7 12.6
IS 3 St John the Apostle 38.0 8.3
IS 6 Canberra Grammar 130.9 21.9
IS 7 ACCESS 14.3 11.0
IS 8 St Edmunds 1.6 0.6
IS 9 Daramalan 6.0 3.6
IS10 St Clares 25.7 5.1
IS12 Trinity Christian 63.9 9.4
IS14 St Clares 138.4 21.7
IS15 St Francis Xavier 6.9 3.3
IS16 St Edmunds 41.9 9.6
IS17 Canberra Grammar 13.0 3.9
IS19 Radford 569.8 116-.7
IS20 ACCESS 255.9 53.1
IS21 St Edmunds 103.3 16.9
IS22 OConnor Christian 1.2 0.9
IS26 St Thomas the Apostle 24.3 5.0
IS27 Canberra Grammar 45.2 10.3
IS28 Radford 85.5 17.5
IS31 St Clares 144.9 29.0
IS33 Trinity Christian 46.4 8.5
IS34 Canberra Grammar 24.3 5.5
IS35 St Edmunds 39.2 8.5
IS36 St Edmunds 92.6 12.1
IS37 ACCESS 429.7 82.0
IS38 Catholic Education 16.2 11.3
IS40 Catholic Education 2.6 1.8
IS41 Canberra Grammar 208.3 37.9
IS42 Daramalan 15.7 6.0
IS43 Daramalan 13.1 4.6
IS44 Radford 525.0 97.5
IS45 Radford 1700.0 266.3
IS47 Holy Family 133.9 44.6
IS48 Trinity Christian 458.9 56.4
IS50 ACCESS 1074.0 162.7
IS51 Daramalan 125.1 34.4
IS52 Daramalan 198.9 38.9
IS53 St Edmunds 243.7 28.2
IS54 Marist 276.0 45.0
IS56 Radford 200.1 31.3
IS57 Marist 146.3 21.2
IS58 Canberra Grammar 2107.7 218.9
IS59 Trinity Christian 157.5 17.3
IS60 Holy Family 179.9 43.8
IS61 Holy Family 279.0 75.3
IS62 ST Francis of Assisi 456.6 110.3

20 November 1990

Attached Schedule to Parliamentary Question
Number 275 on Notice (Continued)

Column 1 Column 2 Column 3 Column 4

IS63	Trinity Christian	736.1	81.9
IS64	Trinity Christian	194.3	9.0
IS65	Radford	175.5	25.5
IS68	St Francis of Assisi	606.0	178.1
IS70	Marist	270.7	36.7
IS72	Orana	144.4	27.4
IS74	OConnor Christian	153.7	33.8
IS76	EGGS	1524.7	135.3

4348

**CHIEF MINISTER FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY QUESTION**

Disabled People - Employment Programs

Question No 276

MR WOOD - Asked the Chief Minister upon notice on
19 September 1990:

- (1) What programs exist in the ACT to assist disabled people to enter the workforce.
- (2) How many people have entered the workforce as a result of these programs.
- (3) What is the cost of those programs for the 1989-90 and 1990-91 financial years.

MR KAINÉ - The answer to the members question is as follows:

(1) Within the ACT assistance to disabled people wishing to participate in the workforce is provided in respect of both the public and private sectors. In the public sector there is the Intellectual Disabilities Access Program (DAP) which aims to place people with mild intellectual disabilities in the Public Service on merit - without the normal competitive entry process. ACT Government Departments are active in employing people under DAP, and also in providing supported contract employment for a number of Koomarri trainees formerly employed in the medical packaging sheltered workshop.

In the private sector assistance is provided in the form of grants to community-based organisations under the Employment and Training Grants Program of the Community Development Fund. Relevant organisations presently receiving funding are:

The Koomarri Association; operates a Supported Employment Service under the name of DOGWATCH. The DOGWATCH program

aims to place people with disabilities currently working within Koomarri sheltered workshops into integrated employment either by way of small group enclaves, exploded enclaves or individual supported jobs.

Advance Personnel; operates a Competitive Employment Training and Placement Service (CET) directed towards individual placement into regular jobs at award wages in the normal workforce. Normal employee conditions apply, the individual is on the payroll of the employer and the CET provides an intense but short period of one-to-one training

20 November 1990

on initial placement. Support is then gradually reduced but can be scaled up again if tasks change or problems arise.

Chartwell Crafts; operates a facility which employs talented, intellectually disabled young people who have developed skills in fibre crafts including wool tapestry and silk screening.

Also relevant is a proposal being developed by a working party of the Council of Social Welfare Ministers on a national framework for funding the operation of disability services. The proposal, if accepted, will see the Commonwealth assume responsibility for the approval, administration and evaluation of employment and vocational training services for the disabled. It is envisaged that States and Territories will assume responsibility for providing accommodation and other services for the disabled. The rationale for the Commonwealth to take on this major role relates to its responsibilities for employment services to the general community and its direct links with the income security system.

(2) Since July 1989 approximately 23 disabled people have entered the workforce as a result of these programs. It is expected that about a further 22 disabled people will enter the workforce during 1990/91.

(3) 1990/91 is the first financial year during which the ACT Government has contributed to these programs, with a proposed expenditure of \$152,250.

4350

**CHIEF MINISTER FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY QUESTION**

Public and Private Sector Employment

Question No. 277

MR WOOD- asked the Chief Minister on notice on 19 September 1990:

For each year since 1983, what has been the relative percentages of workers in the public and private sectors in the ACT.

MR KAINÉ- The answer to the members question is as follows:

In the period June 1983 to June 1989, the percentage of persons employed in the private sector in the ACT increased from 41.0 to 51.7. The latest available figures (March 1990) indicates that 51.8 of employment in the ACT is in the private sector.

The following table illustrates the relative percentage of private and public sector employment in the ACT:

PUBLIC SECTOR PRIVATE SECTOR

JUNE 1983	59.0	-	41.0
JUNE 1984	57.8		42.2
JUNE 1985	58.2		41.8
JUNE 1986	56.5		43.5
JUNE 1987	56.4		43.6
JUNE 1988	51.9		48.1
JUNE 1989	48.2		51.7

(Calculated from ABM Catalogues .6203 The Labour Force and 6248 Wage and Salary Earners)

4351