



Calvary sale OK

I address the questions raised by Conor Bradley (Letters, November 2). While there are aspects within the sale arrangements [of Calvary Hospital] that concern me, there are two factors which I accept as beyond dispute: the legality of the proposal and the \$77 million.

I say this because both aspects would have been checked and rechecked by the parties, even to the extent of obtaining independent opinions. This proposed sale would never have surfaced publicly unless it had passed all relevant tests. The \$77 million is an integral part of the Government's offer and should be seen to be a fair figure.

Secondly, the ACT health authority in 1986 approached the Little Company of Mary to open a private hospital, to save the Government, ie taxpayer, money. The Government is doing the same here. The use of private hospital beds to be used by the "comparatively well-off" releases public beds for the use of those not so well-off. The Catholic Church has offered public hospital services in

Australia since the 19th century. Would this sale put at risk these services on an Australia-wide basis?

I suggest to Bradley he do what he likes with his own money, for it seems to me to be immoral to tell others what to do with theirs. The Little Company of Mary's contribution in its various activities in this country is beyond criticism.

In the proposed arrangement I query the validity of the Government's balance sheet consequence. Also I fear the consequence of the rejection of the offer. How will the Government react if the deal is ultimately rejected? Will Calvary's subsidy in future years be fair?

Gerald Garrity, Weetangera

Few Catholics could miss the irony of the Church hierarchy accusing others of "secret deals behind closed doors" ("Church attacks Calvary 'secrecy'", October 31, p1). The Vatican is the aficionado of the secret deal.

Donella Johnston, Ngunnawal