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Terry Mills **Leader of the Opposition**

Opposition plan to help in the bid to stop nightclub violence

7 April 2004



CLP Leader Terry Mills today outlined a new strategy to help deal with the problem of violence around licensed premises, such as the incidents seen recently in Darwin .

“It is clear that one of the key problems is the large number of patrons being emptied onto the street in the early hours of the morning and transport systems are simply unable to cope,” Mr Mills said.

“Large groups of people who have been consuming alcohol and are pushed onto the street with nowhere to go are a recipe for disaster. By allowing the bars and nightclubs to remain open for one hour after closing time, playing more relaxed music and selling only softdrink and water, there will be a more orderly process of patrons leaving the area.”

Mr Mills said the CLP's proposal will encourage late night venues such as clubs and hotels to stay open for an extra hour beyond their regular closing time, but without serving liquor. This will allow a more orderly exit of patrons from licensed premises and assist transport systems in coping with the large number of people.

“The problem of alcohol related violence, and fights around licensed premises is well documented.” Mr Mills said. “and unfortunately there seems to be no immediate end in sight.

“In some instances it may involve patrons leaving licensed premises and in others it may be gangs or youths who have not even been inside a hotel or club, but are attracted to the area because ‘that is where the action is’.

“It is not an easy problem to solve and really requires some lateral thinking.’

“We are committed to solving Labor's problem of increasing violent crime in the community and will tackle it with innovative measures such as announced today, and by equipping the police and courts with the legislative tools they need to do their jobs.

“The International Centre for Alcohol Policies draws a strong correlation between the type of music and the behaviour of patrons. ‘Aggressive music’ is cited as leading to aggressive behaviour, so we believe that bridging the gap

between the excitement of a nightclub and the reality of the street outside can help bring the night to a smooth end.

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