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**STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE AUSTRALIAN
16 MARCH 2016**

In a story published in The Australian today, John Lyons makes a tenuous suggestion that the Australia Israel Labor Dialogue is funded by Israeli arms manufacturer, Elbit.

The AILD is not now, or has ever sought to be funded by Elbit or any other defence company, whether Israeli or Australian.

The Mission of the AILD is to build bridges between the Australian and Israeli Labor Parties across the spectrum of shared values such as workers rights, women's status, gay rights, multiculturalism and shared understanding of a 2 state solution to the Israel Palestine conflict.

As part of our activities we arrange tours to Israel and Palestine and provide subsidies to those who cannot afford to travel to the region. Our funding comes from private donations sought from the Australian Jewish and pro-Israel Non-Jewish community.

To suggest that because 1 of our supporters and activists is a consultant to a company that has a contract with Elbit, so all of AILD must be on this payroll is both absurd and extremely poor journalism. It smacks of an opinion in search of a story in order to smear AILD and it's democratic right to actively and openly champion a peaceful resolution of 2 nations for 2 peoples within the ALP.

There are those who seek to impose their own 1-sided view on Israel Palestine within the ALP, and ban subsidised trips to Israel and Palestine. The AILD will never subscribe to impose totalitarian controls on what any individual wishes to see or do in their quest for understanding in this and any place in the world.

END

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