

1953.

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

No. 1.

SECOND SESSION OF THE TWENTIETH PARLIAMENT.

TUESDAY, 10TH NOVEMBER, 1953.

1. The House of Representatives met pursuant to the Proclamation of His Excellency the Governor-General, dated the thirtieth day of October, 1953, which Proclamation was read at the Table by the Clerk, as follows :—

PROCLAMATION

Commonwealth of
Australia to wit.
W. J. SLIM
Governor-General.

By His Excellency the Governor-General in and over the Commonwealth
of Australia.

WHEREAS by the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia it is amongst other things provided that the Governor-General may appoint such times for holding the Sessions of the Parliament as he thinks fit, and may also, from time to time, by Proclamation or otherwise, prorogue the Parliament :

Now therefore, I, Sir William Joseph Slim, the Governor-General aforesaid, in exercise of the power conferred by the said Constitution, do by this my Proclamation prorogue the Parliament until Tuesday, the Tenth day of November, One Thousand Nine Hundred and Fifty-three, or (in the event of circumstances arising, at present unforeseen, which render it expedient that the Parliament should be summoned to assemble at a date earlier than the said Tuesday, the Tenth day of November, One Thousand Nine Hundred and Fifty-three) to such earlier date as fixed by a Proclamation summoning the Parliament to assemble and be holden for the despatch of business :

Furthermore I do appoint the said Tuesday, the Tenth day of November, One Thousand Nine Hundred and Fifty-three, or such earlier date (if any) as is fixed by Proclamation, as the day for the Parliament to assemble and be holden for the despatch of business. And all Senators and Members of the House of Representatives are hereby required to give their attendance accordingly in the building known as Parliament House, Canberra, at the hour of three o'clock in the afternoon, on the said Tuesday, the Tenth day of November, One Thousand Nine Hundred and Fifty-three, or, in the event of an earlier date being fixed by Proclamation, at three o'clock in the afternoon on the date so fixed.

(L.S.) Given under My Hand and the Seal of the Commonwealth of Australia at Canberra, this thirtieth day of October, in the year of our Lord, One Thousand Nine Hundred and Fifty-three and in the Second year of Her Majesty's reign.

By His Excellency's Command,
ROBERT G. MENZIES,
Prime Minister.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN !

2. Mr. Speaker (the Honorable A. G. Cameron) took the Chair, and read Prayers.
3. MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL BY THE USHER OF THE BLACK ROD.—The following Message was delivered by the Usher of the Black Rod :—
- Mr. Speaker,
His Excellency the Governor-General desires the attendance of this honorable House in the Senate Chamber forthwith.
Accordingly Mr. Speaker with the Members of the House went to attend His Excellency :—And having returned—
4. ACTS INTERPRETATION BILL 1953.—Mr. Menzies (Prime Minister) moved, That he have leave to bring in a Bill for an Act to amend the *Acts Interpretation Act 1901-1950*.
Question—put and passed.
Mr. Menzies then brought up the Bill accordingly, and moved, That it be now read a first time.
Question—put and passed.—Bill read a first time.
Ordered—That the second reading be made an Order of the Day for the next sitting.

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5. HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S SPEECH.—Mr. Speaker reported that the House had that day attended His Excellency the Governor-General in the Senate Chamber, when His Excellency was pleased to make a Speech to both Houses of the Parliament, of which Mr. Speaker said he had received a copy, which read as follows :—

MEMBERS OF THE SENATE AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES :

You have been called together to deliberate on matters of importance to the well-being of the Commonwealth.

The session now to begin will not be a long one, for we all have it in mind that early in the New Year Australia is to be honoured by a visit from Her Majesty the Queen accompanied by her husband, His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh. The devotion of Australians to the Throne is both deep and warm. It has been shown by word and deed in both peace and war. It is not the special prerogative of any political party, or of any creed, or of any section of the Australian people. We all know that from the time Her Majesty arrives among us until the time she departs, she will not only encourage us by giving us a rare opportunity to express to her our feelings of allegiance and of love, but she will also, as we believe, derive encouragement herself for the great responsibilities which it is her historic mission to sustain. As the Royal Style and Titles Act passed by this Parliament earlier this year records, Her Majesty is no stranger in any of her realms and territories, because she is the Queen of each and all of them.

Her Majesty has graciously consented to open in person the next Session of the Commonwealth Parliament. To that end, the Parliament will be prorogued at the end of the present sittings.

In Korea, the conclusion of an armistice after a struggle lasting for more than three years, a struggle which involved Australian forces of all arms and sad casualties, is of great importance. My advisers wish to pay high tribute to those who have fought under the banner of the United Nations to resist aggression, and who have made great sacrifices in the defence of freedom. It is indeed good that the Korean conflict has been confined to Korea and that a wider and more devastating disaster has been averted. My advisers will work with the other governments concerned for a negotiated and permanent settlement of the Korean problem, so that what is now an armistice may become a real peace.

In the long run, peace can be secured in a real sense only by honest and patient endeavours to remove the causes of misunderstanding and conflict. It is with this basic truth in mind that my Government, having taken the initiative in the Colombo Plan in 1950, has continued to support by money, technical assistance, materials, footstuffs, and Australian training for groups of persons from overseas, international efforts for the economic advancement of those nations which are at present under-developed. Human welfare and political stability upon a basis of individual freedom will, we all hope and believe, tend to restrict and ultimately to eliminate the causes of war. It is for this reason that my Government has continued the policy, which has been pursued by all Australian governments since the war, of supporting the United Nations and its specialized agencies, with particular emphasis upon that area of South-East Asia with which we have a close and growing contact.

Although I have the honour to address you to-day as Her Majesty's personal representative in the Commonwealth of Australia, Members of the Senate and Members of the House of Representatives will, I know, permit me to refer to the fact that much of my own previous service to the Crown has been rendered in Asian countries, the character and problems of whose people have engaged my own attention. These reflections render the expressions of co-operation which I have already made a matter of personal and particular interest and pleasure.

The major legislative proposal which my Government will submit to Parliament will take the form of a comprehensive Bill to clarify and consolidate the law relating to the provision of pharmaceutical, sickness and hospital benefits and of medical services. This will provide authority for the further development of registered hospital and medical benefit organizations. It will also provide for the operation of committees drawn from the medical and pharmaceutical professions to assist in the administration of these far-reaching health services. My advisers will continue to work in close association with the various professional associations and insurance organizations for the furthering of voluntary health insurance. They believe that the corporate finance resources so developed will protect the people to a substantial degree against the heavy financial burdens which so often result from medical and hospital treatment. The Bill will also provide a firm legal foundation for the provision of medical and pharmaceutical services to pensioners.

Discussions have taken place between representatives of my Government and the Governments of the States, and it has been agreed that it is desirable that the Commonwealth and States should take legislative action for the proper control of the standards of therapeutic substances. To this end, my Government will present a bill to provide standards for such substances and for other purposes connected with this matter.

During the twelve months ended 30th June, 1953, Australia's international reserves were increased from £362,000,000 to £548,000,000. With this improvement in the balance of international payments, there have been successive relaxations of the restrictions on imports. The larger volume of imports resulting from these relaxations will add to the productive capacity of Australian industry and will contribute to the satisfaction of consumer demand.

Early in the new year, Commonwealth Finance Ministers will meet in Sydney to review matters of mutual interest to the Commonwealth, including balance of payments prospects in 1954, progress of plans for moving towards a system of freer trade and payments, covering the widest possible area, and co-operation in development of the economic resources of the Commonwealth.

It is my Government's view that much is to be gained by holding important Commonwealth Conferences of this kind not only in the United Kingdom but in other Commonwealth countries as well. It is therefore gratifying that the proposal to hold the next Finance Ministers' meeting in

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Australia has proved acceptable to other Commonwealth countries and a warm welcome is assured for Commonwealth representatives who will attend the meeting. My advisers are confident that the Conference will contribute to the economic advancement of the Commonwealth countries.

My Government, believing that Australian development can be materially assisted by the investment of overseas capital in suitable industries in Australia, has examined the means by which taxation obstacles to the investment of such capital can be removed. An agreement designed to eliminate deterrents to investment was concluded by Australia and the United Kingdom in 1946. My Government earlier this year signed with the United States of America a convention of a comparable nature. In addition, conventions to avoid a double imposition by Australia and the United States of estate duty and gift duty have been signed. My advisers will introduce legislation to give the force of law in Australia to these conventions.

My Government has continued membership of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. But it has made it known that it regards this instrument as being unsatisfactory in some respects and therefore in need of revision. At the recent session of the contracting parties, it was agreed that they should commence a general review of the Agreement in 1954.

The majority of the contracting parties recently decided to allow Japan to participate in the work of the Agreement and formulated a declaration whereby those of its members who wish to do so might regulate their trading arrangements with Japan, in accordance with the principles of the Agreement. My Government has abstained from any association with this decision.

Within the limits of its present policy of non-discrimination in import licensing matters, my Government has continued the practice of negotiating bilateral trade arrangements designed to promote friendly commercial relations and to expand our export trade with various countries.

In according reasonable and adequate protection to efficiently conducted Australian industries, either by way of tariffs or by other methods, my Government will rely upon the Tariff Board for advice.

The Tariff Board Act provides for public inquiry into matters referred to it and this provision ensures that the interests of all sections of the community are considered by the Government.

The need for a more expeditious procedure for determining Tariff Board inquiries is receiving consideration and my Government will, during the course of the present Session, ask the Parliament to approve legislation designed to achieve that objective.

My Government intends to refund to wheat-growers the amount now held in the Wheat Industry Stabilization Fund from the tax on wheat exported from the 1950-51 crop in No. 14 Pool.

The amount of tax is just over £11,000,000 and interest from the investment of the Fund will be added. The refund is to be made because the amount is no longer required for its original purpose, and it has consistently been the policy of my Government not to hold funds contributed by the growers in excess of the amount legitimately required for the purposes of the Wheat Stabilization plan.

A balance of £9,000,000 is being held in the Fund pending the results of ballots to be conducted by the States as to an extension of the Wheat Stabilization plan, and should the growers vote for an extended plan the amount will be retained as the nucleus of a fund for that plan. My Government has made it clear at all times that the consent of the growers is a first requisite in any plan for wheat stabilization.

The position regarding the supply of agricultural machinery, tractors, chemicals and fertilizers, such as superphosphate and sulphate of ammonia, has improved appreciably during the last twelve months and has considerably aided my Government's drive to increase food production. Improvements in supplies have been obtained from both local sources and imports from either sterling or dollar areas. In addition to the aid mentioned above, which is of direct concern to the farmer and grazier, my Government has also helped the Departments of Agriculture in all States through grants to supplement the extension and research services of the various organizations. Grants totalling approximately half a million pounds a year have been made available and approval given to continue the grant for the next five years. Such grants cover the extension services in general and the dairy and tobacco industries in particular.

My Government's defence policy has been directed to building up and maintaining the strength of the Forces in order to sustain our part in the collective defence of the free world. In the course of what has been called the "cold war" Australia has played its part in the resistance to Communist aggression in Korea, in the combating of Communist terrorists in Malaya, and in contributing to the security of the Middle East. Communist tactics have imposed on the democracies a heavy burden of re-armament but we must accept this burden as the price of peace. Accordingly, my advisers are sustaining the permanent Forces at their present strengths, while National Service, which is making a notable contribution to the physique and trained capacity of Australian youth, is building up the citizen forces and reserves. On the scientific side of defence, the joint United Kingdom-Australia long-range weapons project is proceeding very satisfactorily. The United Kingdom Minister of Supply recently visited the long-range weapons establishment at Salisbury and at Woomera and expressed warm satisfaction with the progress that has been made. During his visit a new finance agreement was negotiated to cover the project, designed to ensure a more satisfactory basis for sharing costs in view of the increasing amount of scientific and industrial work now being done in Australia.

During October, the first atomic tests ever to take place on the Australian mainland were made at a proving ground north-west of Woomera. The tests were highly successful and were carried out in a spirit of close partnership between the two governments. The United Kingdom scientists had the responsibility for the scientific work associated with the trials, while the site was prepared by Australian service personnel, and the Australian Department of Supply was responsible for all planning involved in the preparation of the site. To provide as far as possible against the contingencies of the future, plans for co-operation in British Commonwealth defence are being actively developed between the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand, while planning is also proceeding between the United States of America, Australia and New Zealand under the ANZUS Treaty.

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Meanwhile, it is gratifying to record that in the field of aircraft production much good work has been done, deliveries of Australian-built Canberra jet bomber aircraft having already commenced, while deliveries of the Australian-built Sabre fighter will commence early in 1954.

With the improvement in economic circumstances in Australia, my advisers have been able to increase the level of the migrant intake following the reduction which they had reluctantly found necessary to apply during 1952.

In the present programme, British immigration will continue to receive first priority, and, in both British and foreign schemes, the emphasis will be placed upon the migration of families. Special arrangements have been made to provide opportunities for British people to settle in Australia, who, previously, had lacked sponsors for their nomination.

The intake of workers of the various nationalities will be closely related to employment opportunities, both as to numbers and occupations. Particular attention will continue to be placed on the introduction of experienced rural workers, to help remedy the shortage of suitable farm labour. The labour needs of the basic secondary industries and essential supporting and service industries have also been considered.

The task of developing the uranium resources of the Commonwealth is being vigorously pushed forward by the Atomic Energy Commission and the Bureau of Mineral Resources. Rapid progress is being made by the Commission's mining contractor, Territory Enterprises Limited, in the Rum Jungle area, where it is anticipated that the mine will be in production by the middle of 1954. In addition to this, large areas of the Northern Territory are being radiometrically surveyed from the air, with detailed geological and geophysical investigations on the ground in appropriate cases. As surveys of promising areas are completed those areas will be released for development by private enterprise. My advisers believe that this policy will not only provide a stimulus to our economy but will also ensure that deposits of ore are brought into production as quickly as possible.

When my predecessor last addressed you, he referred to the then grave and urgent problem of coal production.

In New South Wales, coal production is now adjusted to the demand. Production could be increased if the need should arise. In other States, the coal industry is substantially in the same condition. Demands are being met, stocks are in the main satisfactory and there is spare producing capacity which may be called upon at need. Stocks of coal at grass and in consumers' hands throughout Australia amount to about 3,250,000 tons.

In the immediate future, steaming coal should continue to be readily available as required. Supplies of coking coal should be adequate. Only gas coal of best quality is likely to be in short supply and the use of some substitute coal in gas-works will probably continue. The quality of some coals in New South Wales will be improved by cleaning plants which are being, or are shortly to be, installed.

There will be submitted to Parliament a proposal for the amendment of the Navigation Act to incorporate new safety measures agreed upon at an International Conference for the Safety of Life at Sea, in 1948, and the Commonwealth will then be in a position to ratify this important Convention.

The development of the Territories of the Commonwealth and the welfare of the indigenous inhabitants remains a prime concern of my advisers. Health and education services have been expanded with special attention to the needs of the native populations. Plans for further expansion will be pursued.

In Papua and New Guinea, a measure of local government has been introduced by the establishment of a Legislative Council and the establishment of Local Government and Village Councils among the native villages. A Local Government Council for Nauruans has also been established.

There has been marked activity in the survey and development of natural resources and in the general economic advancement of the Territories.

Accordingly, my Government sought and was granted at the recent Session of the Contracting Parties of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade a waiver of certain provisions relating to Territory products. As a result, my Government will be able, in appropriate cases, to accord its special assistance to products of the Territory when imported into Australia.

In addition to the major items of legislation to which I have already referred, my advisers will submit to Parliament other legislative proposals the most important of which relates to grants to the States for the purposes of the Universities.

In the earnest hope that Divine Providence may guide your deliberations and further the welfare of the people of the Commonwealth, I now leave you to the discharge of your high and important duties.

6. ADDRESS IN REPLY TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S SPEECH.—Mr. Menzies (Prime Minister) moved, That a Committee, consisting of Mr. Downer, Mr. Turnbull and the Mover, be appointed to prepare an Address in Reply to the Speech delivered by His Excellency the Governor-General to both Houses of the Parliament, and that the Committee do report this day.
Question—put and passed.

Suspension of Sitting.—At twenty-three minutes to four o'clock p.m., Mr. Speaker left the Chair.
Resumption of Sitting.—At eight o'clock p.m., Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair.

7. PAPERS.—The following Papers were presented, pursuant to Statute—
Australian National University Act—Statutes—
No. 10—Convocation Amendment No. 1.
No. 11—Constitution of the Council (Period of Office) Amendment No. 1.
No. 12—Vice-Chancellorship.

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- Income Tax and Social Services Contribution Assessment Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1953, No. 88.
- Lands Acquisition Act—Land acquired for railway purposes—Port Augusta, South Australia (substitute copy).
- Northern Territory (Administration) Act—
 Crown Lands Ordinance—List and plans of the Hundreds of Gregory and Playford.
 Ordinances—1953—
 No. 11—Darwin Town Management.
 No. 12—Supreme Court.
 No. 13—Oaths.
 No. 15—Health.
 No. 17—Darwin Administration.
 No. 18—Alice Springs Administration.
 Regulations—1953—
 No. 3 (Traffic Ordinance).
 Nos. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 (Motor Vehicles Ordinance).
- Patents, Trade Marks, Designs and Copyright Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1953, No. 89.
- Public Service Act—Appointments—Department—
 Civil Aviation—D. A. Gibson, C. W. S. Tilly.
 Defence Production—B. C. White.
 Health—R. R. A. Brock, T. A. Nowell.
 Works—W. G. Barnes, H. J. Bell, K. Bunting, H. P. Findeisen, L. J. T. Gamble, C. G. Jose, J. J. Meyer.
- Repatriation Act—War Pensions Entitlement Appeal Tribunals Nos. 1 and 2—Reports for year 1952-53.
- Seat of Government Acceptance Act and Seat of Government (Administration) Act—
 Ordinance—1953—No. 13—Scaffolding and Lifts.
 Regulations—1953—No. 13 (Public Health Ordinance).

8. ADDRESS IN REPLY TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S SPEECH.—Mr. Downer brought up the Address in Reply to His Excellency's Speech, prepared by the Committee appointed this day, and the same was read by the Clerk, as follows:—

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY—

We, the House of Representatives of the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, in Parliament assembled, desire to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech which you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

Mr. Downer moved, That the Address be agreed to.

Mr. Turnbull seconded the motion.

Debate ensued.

Mr. Leslie moved, That the debate be now adjourned.

Question—That the debate be now adjourned—put and passed.

Ordered—That the resumption of the debate be made an Order of the Day for the next sitting.

9. ADJOURNMENT.—Sir Philip McBride (Minister for Defence) moved, That the House do now adjourn.
 Question—put and passed.

And then the House, at two minutes to eleven o'clock p.m., adjourned until to-morrow at half-past two o'clock p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT.—All Members were present (at some time during the sitting) except Mr. Crean, Mr. James, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Nelson, Mr. Timson, Mr. Treloar and Mr. Wight.

F. C. GREEN,
 Clerk of the House of Representatives.