

1958.

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

No. 2.

THURSDAY, 27TH FEBRUARY, 1958.

1. The House met, at fifteen minutes past eleven o'clock a.m., pursuant to adjournment.—Mr. Speaker (the Honorable J. McLeay) took the Chair, and read Prayers.
2. PETITION.—Mr. Luchetti presented a Petition from certain citizens and electors of the Division of Macquarie praying that the House will take such steps as are possible to solve the unemployment problem of Australia and especially of the Electorate of Macquarie.
Petition received and read.
3. MINISTERIAL ARRANGEMENTS.—Sir Arthur Fadden (Treasurer) informed the House that, during the absence abroad of Mr. Casey, Sir Philip McBride (Minister for Defence) would act as Minister for External Affairs and Mr. H. E. Holt (Minister for Labour and National Service) would act as Minister in charge of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization.
4. PAPERS.—The following Papers were presented, pursuant to Statute—
Public Service Act—Public Service Board—Thirty-third Report on the Public Service, for year 1956-57.
Ordered to be printed.
Customs Act and Commerce (Trade Descriptions) Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1958, Nos. 9, 11.
Lands Acquisition Act—Land acquired for postal purposes at Windorah, Queensland.
Northern Territory (Administration) Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1958, No. 12.
Papua and New Guinea Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1958, No. 10.
5. SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT.—Mr. H. E. Holt (Minister for Labour and National Service) moved, That the House, at its rising, adjourn until Tuesday, the 11th March, at half-past two o'clock p.m.
Question—put and passed.
6. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS—JOINT COMMITTEES.—Mr. H. E. Holt (Minister for Labour and National Service) moved, pursuant to notice, That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as would prevent motions being moved in connexion with the establishment of Joint Committees on (i) Foreign Affairs, (ii) Constitution Review and (iii) the Australian Capital Territory, the consideration of such motions, and the subsequent appointment of Members to serve on the Foreign Affairs Committee.
Question—put and passed.
7. CONSTITUTION REVIEW—PROPOSED JOINT COMMITTEE.—Mr. H. E. Holt (Minister for Labour and National Service) moved—
 - (1) That a Joint Committee be appointed to review such aspects of the working of the Constitution as the Committee considers it can most profitably consider, and to make recommendations for such amendments of the Constitution as the Committee thinks necessary in the light of experience.
 - (2) That the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Representatives be *ex officio* members of the Committee.
 - (3) That in addition, the following Members of the House of Representatives, namely, Mr. Calwell, Mr. Downer, Mr. Drummond, Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Joske, Mr. Pollard, Mr. Ward and Mr. Whitlam, be appointed to serve on the Committee.
 - (4) That the Senate be requested to appoint four Members of the Senate to serve on the Committee, and to appoint one of those Members to be the Chairman of the Committee.
 - (5) That the Chairman of the Committee may, from time to time, appoint another member of the Committee to be the Deputy Chairman of the Committee, and that the member so appointed act as Chairman of the Committee at any time when the Chairman is not present at a meeting of the Committee.

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- (6) That, in the absence of both the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman from a meeting of the Committee, the members present may appoint one of their number to act as Chairman.
- (7) That the Committee have power to appoint sub-committees consisting of four or more of its members, and to refer to any such sub-committee any matter which the Committee is empowered to examine.
- (8) That the Committee or any sub-committee have power to send for persons, papers and records, to adjourn from place to place and to sit during any recess or adjournment of the Parliament and during the sittings of either House of the Parliament.
- (9) That the Committee have power to consider the Minutes of Evidence and Records of the Joint Committee on Constitution Review appointed in the previous Session relating to any matter on which that Committee had not completed its inquiry.
- (10) That the Committee have leave to report from time to time, and that any member of the Committee have power to add a protest or dissent to any report.
- (11) That six members of the Committee constitute a quorum of the Committee and two members of a sub-committee constitute a quorum of the sub-committee.
- (12) That, in matters of procedure, the Chairman, or person acting as Chairman, of the Committee, have a deliberative vote and, in the event of an equality of voting, have a casting vote, and that, in other matters, the Chairman, or person acting as Chairman, of the Committee have a deliberative vote only.
- (13) That the foregoing provisions of this resolution, so far as they are inconsistent with the Standing Orders, have effect notwithstanding anything contained in the Standing Orders.
- (14) That a Message be sent to the Senate acquainting it of this resolution and requesting that it concur and take action accordingly.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

8. FOREIGN AFFAIRS—PROPOSED JOINT COMMITTEE.—Sir Philip McBride (Minister for Defence) moved—

- (1) That a Joint Committee be appointed to consider foreign affairs generally and, in particular, to inquire into matters referred to it by the Minister for External Affairs.
- (2) That thirteen Members of the House of Representatives be appointed to serve on such Committee.
- (3) That the Minister for External Affairs shall make available to the Committee information within such categories or on such conditions as he may consider desirable.
- (4) That, notwithstanding anything contained in the Standing Orders—
 - (a) the persons appointed for the time being to serve on the Committee shall constitute the Committee notwithstanding any failure by the Senate or the House of Representatives to appoint the full number of Senators or Members referred to in these resolutions;
 - (b) the Committee shall have power to appoint sub-committees consisting of four or more of its members; and to refer to any such sub-committees any of the matters which the Committee is empowered to examine;
 - (c) the Committee or any sub-committee have power to sit during any adjournment of the Parliament and during the sittings of either House of the Parliament;
 - (d) the Committee and its sub-committees will sit *in camera* and their proceedings shall be secret unless the Minister at the request of the Committee otherwise directs;
 - (e) (i) one-third of the number of members appointed to the Committee for the time being constitute a quorum of the Committee, save that where the number of members is not divisible by three without remainder the quorum shall be the number next higher than one-third of the number of members for the time being;
 - (ii) three members of a sub-committee constitute a quorum of that sub-committee;
 - (f) the Committee shall, for considerations of national security, in all cases forward its reports to the Minister for External Affairs, but on every occasion when the Committee forwards a report to the Minister it shall inform the Parliament that it has so reported; except that in the case of matters not referred to it by the Minister for External Affairs, the Committee shall not submit a report to the Minister nor inform the Parliament accordingly without the Minister's consent. Provided the Opposition is represented on the Committee, copies of the Committee's reports to the Minister for External Affairs shall be forwarded to the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Representatives for his confidential information;
 - (g) subject to the Minister for External Affairs being informed, the Committee shall have power to invite persons to give evidence before it;
 - (h) subject to the consent of the Minister for External Affairs, the Committee shall have power to call for official papers or records;
 - (i) subject to paragraph 4 (d), all evidence submitted to the Committee, both written and oral, shall be regarded as confidential to the Committee;
 - (j) the Senate be asked to appoint seven of its Members to serve on such Committee.
- (5) That the Committee have power to consider the Minutes of Evidence and Records of the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs appointed in the previous Session relating to any matter on which that Committee had not completed its inquiry.
- (6) That a Message be sent to the Senate requesting its concurrence.

Debate ensued.

Several Members rising to address the House—

Closure.—Mr. Opperman moved, That the question be now put.

Question—That the question be now put—put and passed.

And the question—That the motion be agreed to—was put accordingly, and passed.

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9. AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY—PROPOSED JOINT COMMITTEE.—Mr. D. A. Cameron (Minister for Health) moved—

- (1) That a Joint Committee be appointed to—
 - (a) examine and report on all proposals for modifications or variations of the plan of lay-out of the City of Canberra and its environs published in the *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette* on the nineteenth day of November, 1925, as previously modified or varied, which are referred to the Committee by the Minister for the Interior; and
 - (b) examine and report on such other matters relating to the Australian Capital Territory as may be referred to the Committee by the Minister for the Interior.
- (2) That the Committee consist of two Members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Prime Minister, two Members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Representatives, three Senators appointed by the Leader of the Government in the Senate and two Senators appointed by the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate.
- (3) That every appointment of a member of the Committee be forthwith notified in writing to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.
- (4) That the Committee elect as Chairman of the Committee one of the members appointed by the Leader of the Government in the Senate.
- (5) That the Chairman of the Committee may, from time to time, appoint another member of the Committee to be the Deputy Chairman of the Committee, and that the member so appointed act as Chairman of the Committee at any time when the Chairman is not present at a meeting of the Committee.
- (6) That the Committee have power to appoint sub-committees consisting of three or more of its members and to refer to such a sub-committee any matter which the committee is empowered to examine.
- (7) That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers and records and to sit during any adjournment of the Parliament and during the sittings of either House of the Parliament.
- (8) That the Committee have power to consider the Minutes of Evidence and Records of the Joint Committee on the Australian Capital Territory appointed in the previous Session relating to any matter on which that Committee had not completed its inquiry.
- (9) That the Committee have leave to report from time to time and that any member of the Committee have power to add a protest or dissent to any report.
- (10) That five members of the Committee, including the Chairman or Deputy Chairman, constitute a quorum of the Committee, and two members of a sub-committee constitute a quorum of the sub-committee.
- (11) That in matters of procedure the Chairman or Deputy Chairman presiding at the meeting have a deliberative vote and, in the event of an equality of voting, have a casting vote, and that, in other matters, the Chairman or Deputy Chairman have a deliberative vote only.
- (12) That the foregoing provisions of this resolution, so far as they are inconsistent with the Standing Orders, have effect notwithstanding anything contained in the Standing Orders.
- (13) That a Message be sent to the Senate acquainting it of this resolution and requesting that it concur and take action accordingly.

Question—put and passed.

10. ADDRESS IN REPLY TO THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S SPEECH.—The Order of the Day having been read for the resumption of the debate on the question—That the following Address in Reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor-General be agreed to:—

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—

Debate resumed.

Suspension of Standing Orders.—Sir Philip McBride (Minister for Defence) moved, by leave, That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as would prevent Mr. Evatt (Leader of the Opposition) speaking for a period not exceeding 45 minutes.

Question—put and passed.

Debate continued by Mr. Evatt who moved, as an amendment, That the following words be added to the Address:—"But we desire to inform Your Excellency that Your advisers have failed to realize the urgent necessity of putting into effect positive policies and measures aimed at—

- (a) the prevention of unemployment and the securing of full employment;
- (b) the building of sufficient homes;
- (c) an immediate and substantial reduction in the migrant intake until the serious deficiencies present in the existing programme are removed;
- (d) the provision by the Commonwealth to State Governments and local governing authorities of funds necessary for the building of public works and housing, roads, schools, hospitals and services essential to public health, and
- (e) effective defence administration and organization".

Debate continued.

Debate adjourned (Mr. Hulme), and the resumption of the debate made an Order of the Day for the next sitting.

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11. ADJOURNMENT.—Mr. Robertson (Minister for Social Services) moved, That the House do now adjourn.
Question—put and passed.

And then the House, at twenty-three minutes past ten o'clock p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, the 11th March, at half-past two o'clock p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT.—All Members were present (at some time during the sitting) except Mr. Bird, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Casey, Mr. Davis, Mr. Falkinder, Mr. Fox, Mr. Galvin, Mr. Harrison, Mr. Haylen, Mr. R. W. Holt, Mr. Howson, Mr. James, Mr. H. V. Johnson, Mr. Joske, Mr. Lindsay, Mr. McIvor, Mr. Pearce, Mr. Peters, Mr. Pollard, Mr. Stokes, Mr. Timson and Mr. Townley.

A. G. TURNER,
Acting Clerk of the House of Representatives.