

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

No. 9

THURSDAY, 9 MARCH 1978

1 The House met, at 10.30 a.m., pursuant to adjournment. Mr Speaker (the Right Honourable Sir Billy Snedden) took the Chair, and read Prayers.

2 PETITIONS: The Clerk announced that the following Members had each lodged petitions for presentation, viz.:

Mr Baillieu—from certain citizens praying that further subdivision in the Ruthven Way-Vasey Concourse area in the Shires of Ringwood and Croydon, Vic., be halted and the area be preserved as part of the National Estate.

Mr Dawkins—from certain citizens praying that diplomatic action be taken concerning the death, while in detention in South Africa, of Mr Steve Biko, President of the Black Peoples Convention.

Mr Willis—from certain citizens praying for the establishment of a fund whereby loans can be made to means tested pensioners for the necessary maintenance of their homes.

Petitions received.

3 SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS—COMPUTING EQUIPMENT PURCHASES: Mr Baillieu having given a notice of a motion relating to purchases of computing equipment during the term as Minister for Social Security of the present Leader of the Opposition—

Mr Hayden (Leader of the Opposition) moved—That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the matter being debated forthwith.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed, with the concurrence of an absolute majority.

4 COMPUTING EQUIPMENT PURCHASES: Mr Baillieu moved—That this House—

(1) notes with grave concern that during the term the present Leader of the Opposition served as Minister for Social Security:

(a) purchases were made from the international computer firm I.B.M. for between \$10 million and \$15 million worth of computer equipment without public tenders having been called;

(b) the action taken was subsequently endorsed by the previous Government;

(c) representatives of the firm I.B.M. accompanied officers of his Department on an overseas trip prior to the equipment being ordered, and

(d) the explanation given to Parliament at the time by the present Leader of the Opposition of this irregular purchase was plainly deficient, and the whole affair was not only less than an acceptable level of public administration, but a blatant misuse of public funds, and

(2) therefore calls on the Leader of the Opposition to table without undue delay all documents in his possession relating to this lapse of ministerial responsibility, and misuse of taxpayers' money.

Debate ensued.

Distinguished visitors: Mr Speaker informed the House that a delegation of 6 Members of the National Parliament of Papua New Guinea, led by Mr Angmai Bilas, was present in the gallery. Mr Speaker added that this was the first official visit to Australia of a delegation of Members of the National Parliament of Papua New Guinea and, on behalf of the House, extended to the visitors a very warm welcome.

Mr Bowen moved, as an amendment—That all words after “That” be omitted with a view to substituting the following words: “this House notes with grave concern the Prime Minister’s personal intervention to assist the I.B.M. Company in the acceptance of a tender for computer equipment for the Bureau of Statistics and his failure to disclose to the House all relevant papers and documents including a personal letter to him from I.B.M. dated 2 December 1977”.

Debate continued.

Mr Holding addressing the House—

Closure: Mr Bourchier moved—That the question be now put.

Question—That the question be now put—put.

The House divided (the Speaker, Sir Billy Snedden, in the Chair)—

AYES, 76

Mr Adermann	Mr Dobie	Mr P. F. Johnson	Mr E. L. Robinson
Mr Aldred	Mr Drummond	Mr Johnston	Mr I. L. Robinson
Mr Anthony	Dr Edwards	Mr Jull	Mr Ruddock
Mr Baillieu	Mr Ellicott	Mr Katter	Mr Sainsbury
Mr Baume	Mr Falconer	Mr Killen	Mr Shack
Mr Bourchier	Mr Fife	Mr Lloyd	Mr Shipton
Mr Bradfield	Mr Fisher	Mr Lusher	Mr Short
Mr Braithwaite	Mr Fraser	Mr MacKellar	Mr Simon
Mr N. A. Brown	Mr Giles	Mr MacKenzie	Mr Sinclair
Mr Bungey	Mr Gillard	Mr McLeay	Mr Staley
Mr Burns	Mr Goodluck	Sir William McMahan	Mr Thomson
Mr Burr	Mr Graham	Mr McVeigh	Mr Viner
Mr Cadman	Mr Groom	Mr Macphee	Mr Wilson
Mr Cairns	Mr Haslem	Mr Martyr	Mr Yates
Mr Calder	Mr Hodges	Mr Moore	
Mr E. C. Cameron	Mr Hodgman	Mr Neil	
Mr Carlton	Mr Howard	Mr Newman	
Mr Chapman	Mr Hunt	Mr Nixon	<i>Tellers:</i>
Mr Cotter	Mr Hyde	Mr O’Keefe	Mr D. M. Cameron
Mr Dean	Mr Jarman	Mr Porter	Mr Corbett

NOES, 34

Mr Armitage	Dr Everingham	Mr Jenkins	Mr Stewart
Dr Blewett	Mr FitzPatrick	Mr B. O. Jones	Mr Uren
Mr Bowen	Mr Hayden	Mr C. K. Jones	Mr Wallis
Mr J. J. Brown	Mr Holding	Mr Keating	Mr West
Mr Bryant	Mr Howe	Dr Klugman	Mr Willis
Mr C. R. Cameron	Mr Humphreys	Mr J. L. McMahan	
Dr Cass	Mr Hurford	Mr Martin	<i>Tellers:</i>
Mr Cohen	Mr Innes	Mr Morris	Mr L. K. Johnson
Mr Dawkins	Mr James	Mr Scholes	Mr L. R. Johnson

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

And the question—That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the question—being accordingly put—

The House divided (the Speaker, Sir Billy Snedden, in the Chair)—

AYES, 77

Mr Adermann	Mr Dobie	Mr P. F. Johnson	Mr Porter
Mr Aldred	Mr Drummond	Mr Johnston	Mr E. L. Robinson
Mr Anthony	Dr Edwards	Mr Jull	Mr I. L. Robinson
Mr Baillieu	Mr Ellicott	Mr Katter	Mr Ruddock
Mr Baume	Mr Falconer	Mr Killen	Mr Sainsbury
Mr Bouchier	Mr Fife	Mr Lloyd	Mr Shack
Mr Bradfield	Mr Fisher	Mr Lucock	Mr Shipton
Mr Braithwaite	Mr Fraser	Mr Lusher	Mr Short
Mr N. A. Brown	Mr Giles	Mr MacKellar	Mr Simon
Mr Bungey	Mr Gillard	Mr MacKenzie	Mr Sinclair
Mr Burns	Mr Goodluck	Mr McLeay	Mr Staley
Mr Burr	Mr Graham	Sir William McMahan	Mr Thomson
Mr Cadman	Mr Groom	Mr McVeigh	Mr Viner
Mr Cairns	Mr Haslem	Mr Macphee	Mr Wilson
Mr Calder	Mr Hodges	Mr Martyr	Mr Yates
Mr E. C. Cameron	Mr Hodgman	Mr Moore	
Mr Carlton	Mr Howard	Mr Neil	
Mr Chapman	Mr Hunt	Mr Newman	<i>Tellers:</i>
Mr Cotter	Mr Hyde	Mr Nixon	Mr D. M. Cameron
Mr Dean	Mr Jarman	Mr O'Keefe	Mr Corbett

NOES, 34

Mr Armitage	Dr Everingham	Dr Jenkins	Mr Stewart
Dr Blewett	Mr FitzPatrick	Mr B. O. Jones	Mr Uren
Mr Bowen	Mr Hayden	Mr C. K. Jones	Mr Wallis
Mr J. J. Brown	Mr Holding	Mr Keating	Mr West
Mr Bryant	Mr Howe	Dr Klugman	Mr Willis
Mr C. R. Cameron	Mr Humphreys	Mr J. L. McMahan	
Dr Cass	Mr Hurford	Mr Martin	<i>Tellers:</i>
Mr Cohen	Mr Innes	Mr Morris	Mr L. K. Johnson
Mr Dawkins	Mr James	Mr Scholes	Mr L. R. Johnson

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the motion be agreed to (Mr Baillieu's motion)—put.

The House divided (the Speaker, Sir Billy Snedden, in the Chair)—

AYES, 77

Mr Adermann	Mr Dobie	Mr P. F. Johnson	Mr Porter
Mr Aldred	Mr Drummond	Mr Johnston	Mr E. L. Robinson
Mr Anthony	Dr Edwards	Mr Jull	Mr I. L. Robinson
Mr Baillieu	Mr Ellicott	Mr Katter	Mr Ruddock
Mr Baume	Mr Falconer	Mr Killen	Mr Sainsbury
Mr Bouchier	Mr Fife	Mr Lloyd	Mr Shack
Mr Bradfield	Mr Fisher	Mr Lucock	Mr Shipton
Mr Braithwaite	Mr Fraser	Mr Lusher	Mr Short
Mr N. A. Brown	Mr Giles	Mr MacKellar	Mr Simon
Mr Bungey	Mr Gillard	Mr MacKenzie	Mr Sinclair
Mr Burns	Mr Goodluck	Mr McLeay	Mr Staley
Mr Burr	Mr Graham	Sir William McMahan	Mr Thomson
Mr Cadman	Mr Groom	Mr McVeigh	Mr Viner
Mr Cairns	Mr Haslem	Mr Macphee	Mr Wilson
Mr Calder	Mr Hodges	Mr Martyr	Mr Yates
Mr E. C. Cameron	Mr Hodgman	Mr Moore	
Mr Carlton	Mr Howard	Mr Neil	
Mr Chapman	Mr Hunt	Mr Newman	<i>Tellers:</i>
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Mr Armitage	Dr Everingham	Dr Jenkins	Mr Stewart
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Mr J. J. Brown	Mr Holding	Mr Keating	Mr West
Mr Bryant	Mr Howe	Dr Klugman	Mr Willis
Mr C. R. Cameron	Mr Humphreys	Mr J. L. McMahan	
Dr Cass	Mr Hurford	Mr Martin	<i>Tellers:</i>
Mr Cohen	Mr Innes	Mr Morris	Mr L. K. Johnson
Mr Dawkins	Mr James	Mr Scholes	Mr L. R. Johnson

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

- 5 PAPERS: The following papers were presented, pursuant to statute:
Airlines Agreements Act—Ansett Transport Industries Limited—Airline activities—
Financial statements for year 1976–77.
Transport—Department of Transport—Report for year 1976–77, including the
report by the Minister pursuant to the Air Navigation Act.
- 6 MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE: A message from the Senate was reported returning the
following Bill without amendment:
8 March 1978—Message No. 11—Industries Assistance Commission Amendment
1978.
- 7 PROPOSED DISCUSSION OF MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE—ENERGY POLICY: Mr Deputy
Speaker informed the House that Mr Keating had proposed that a definite matter of
public importance be submitted to the House for discussion, namely, “The Govern-
ment’s failure in energy policy and its indifference to alternate energy research and
energy conservation”.
- The proposed discussion having received the necessary support—
Mr Keating rising to address the House—
Mr Sinclair (Leader of the House) moved—That the business of the day be called on.
Question—put and passed.
- 8 SOFTWOOD FORESTRY AGREEMENTS BILL 1978: Mr Sinclair (Minister for Primary
Industry), pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act relating to agreements
between the Commonwealth and the States in connexion with softwood forestry.
Bill read a first time.
Mr Sinclair moved—That the Bill be now read a second time.
Debate adjourned (Mr Cohen), and the resumption of the debate made an order of the
day for the next sitting.
- 9 POSTPONEMENT OF NOTICE: Ordered—That notice No. 2, government business, be
postponed until the next sitting.
- 10 SUPERANNUATION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL 1978: Mr E. L. Robinson (Minister for
Finance), pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act to amend the *Superannuation
Act 1922*, the *Superannuation Act 1976* and the *Superannuation Amendment Act 1976*,
and for related purposes.
Bill read a first time.
Mr E. L. Robinson moved—That the Bill be now read a second time.
Debate adjourned (Mr Willis), and the resumption of the debate made an order of the
day for the next sitting.
- 11 BOUNTY (DRILLING MACHINES) BILL 1978: Mr Fife (Minister for Business and Consumer
Affairs), pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act to provide for the payment
of a bounty on the production of certain drilling machines.
Bill read a first time.
Mr Fife moved—That the Bill be now read a second time.
Debate adjourned (Mr Willis), and the resumption of the debate made an order of the
day for the next sitting.
- 12 CUSTOMS TARIFF PROPOSALS No. 10 (1978): Mr Fife (Minister for Business and Consumer
Affairs) moved Customs Tariff Proposals No. 10 (1978).
Debate adjourned (Mr Willis), and the resumption of the debate made an order of the
day for the next sitting.

- 13 MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE—CRIMES (FOREIGN INCURSIONS AND RECRUITMENT) BILL 1978: Message No. 10, dated 8 March 1978, from the Senate was reported transmitting for the concurrence of the House a Bill for “*An Act relating to Incursions into Foreign Countries and Recruitment for Service in Armed Forces in Foreign Countries*”.

Bill read a first time.

Mr Viner (Minister representing the Attorney-General) moved—That the Bill be now read a second time.

Debate adjourned (Mr Bowen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition), and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

- 14 AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY SUPREME COURT AMENDMENT BILL 1978: The order of the day having been read for the resumption of the debate on the question—That the Bill be now read a second time—

Debate resumed.

Question—put and passed—Bill read a second time.

Leave granted for third reading to be moved forthwith.

On the motion of Mr Viner (Minister representing the Attorney-General), the Bill was read a third time.

- 15 NORTHERN TERRITORY SUPREME COURT AMENDMENT BILL 1978: The order of the day having been read for the resumption of the debate on the question—That the Bill be now read a second time—

Question—put and passed—Bill read a second time.

Leave granted for third reading to be moved forthwith.

On the motion of Mr Viner (Minister representing the Attorney-General), the Bill was read a third time.

- 16 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 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.

Mr Willis moved, as an amendment—That the following words be added to the Address:

“, but note that the Government's legislative program as outlined in the speech—

(1) fails to deal adequately with record levels of unemployment;

(2) fails to stimulate productive output;

(3) leaves serious uncertainty about the progress of the Australian economy;

(4) ignores the serious recession in the international economy;

(5) fails to provide immediate and long-term guidelines for industry, and

(6) neglects to provide firm guarantees for the protection of civil liberties by legislative enactment within the powers of the Australian Government”.

Debate continued.

Debate adjourned (Mr Macphee—Minister for Productivity), and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

- 17 MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE: A message from the Senate was reported returning the following Bill without amendment:

9 March 1978—Message No. 12—Customs Tariff Amendment 1978.

18 ADJOURNMENT: Mr Macphee (Minister for Productivity) moved—That the House do now adjourn.

Debate ensued.

The House continuing to sit until 11 p.m.—Mr Deputy Speaker adjourned the House until Tuesday next at 2.15 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: All members were present (at some time during the sitting) except Mr Birney, Mr Garland, Mr McLean, Mr Peacock and Mr Young.

J. A. PETTIFER,
Clerk of the House of Representatives