

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

No. 158

MONDAY, 23 MARCH 1987

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- 1 The House met, at 2 p.m., pursuant to adjournment. Madam Speaker (the Honourable Joan Child) took the Chair, and read Prayers.
 - 2 **PRIVILEGE—COMPLAINT OF BREACH:** Mr Braithwaite raised a matter of privilege based on an article in *The Age* of 21 March 1987 in which statements by Mr Bill Kelty, Secretary of the Australian Council of Trade Unions were reported and which Mr Braithwaite regarded as an attempt to intimidate him as a Member of the House.
Mr Braithwaite produced a copy of the article.
Madam Speaker stated that she would consider the matter and advise the House at the earliest opportunity.
 - 3 **DEATH OF FORMER MEMBER (MR A. N. FULLER):** Madam Speaker informed the House of the death, on 21 March 1987, of Mr Arthur Neiberding Fuller, a Member of this House for the Division of Hume from 1943 to 1949, 1951 to 1955 and 1961 to 1963.
As a mark of respect to the memory of the deceased all Members present stood, in silence.
 - 4 **MINISTERIAL ARRANGEMENTS:** Mr Hawke (Prime Minister) informed the House that, during the absence abroad of Mr Dawkins (Minister for Trade), Mr Kerin (Minister for Primary Industry) was acting as Minister for Trade.
 - 5 **QUESTIONS:** Questions without notice were asked.
 - 6 **PAPERS:** The following papers were presented:
Australian Environment Council—Summary record of proceedings—18th meeting, Adelaide, 25 June 1986.
Australian War Memorial Act—Australian War Memorial—Report and financial statements, together with the Auditor-General's Report, for 1985-86.
Nature Conservation Ministers—Council—Summary record of proceedings—15th meeting, Adelaide, 26 June 1986.
 - 7 **PAPER:** The following paper was presented:
Compensation (Commonwealth Government Employees) Act—Commissioner for Employees' Compensation—Report for 1985-86.
 - 8 **PETITIONS:** The Clerk announced that the following Members had each lodged petitions for presentation, viz.:
Mr Fife, Mr P. S. Fisher, Mr Nehl, Mr Robinson and Mr Ruddock—from certain citizens praying that the Department of Veterans' Affairs remain a separate department.
Mr E. C. Cameron, Mr P. S. Fisher and Mr Staples—from certain citizens praying that the Flags Amendment Bill receive a speedy passage.

- Dr H. R. Edwards and Mr Hawker—from certain citizens praying that deletion of the 45 commonly prescribed drugs from the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme be reconsidered.
- Dr H. R. Edwards and Mr Hawker—from certain citizens praying that the closure of post office agencies be prevented and their services be extended.
- Mr Hawker and Mr Shipton—from certain citizens praying that the national flag not be changed except by a referendum.
- Mr Kent and Mr Scott—from certain citizens praying that importation of cobalt 60 and other radioactive substances be banned and regulations permitting irradiation of food in Australia be disallowed.
- Mr Blunt—from certain residents of the Division of Richmond praying that the proposal for an identification card be rejected.
- Mr Braithwaite—from certain residents of the Division of Dawson praying that transmission anomalies be rectified to allow listeners in the Mackay region to receive ABC FM radio.
- Mr E. C. Cameron—from certain citizens praying that funding for education centres be restored to 1986 levels.
- Mr E. C. Cameron—from certain residents of the Division of Indi praying that rent assistance to pensioners and beneficiaries be restored to the level it was prior to 25 December 1986.
- Mr Fife—from certain citizens praying that any act which would desecrate the Australian War Memorial be prevented.
- Mr Halverson—from certain residents of Victoria praying that the fringe benefits tax legislation be withdrawn.
- Mr Hand—from certain residents of Victoria praying that the reduction in funding for the English as a second language program in Our Lady Help of Christians School in East Brunswick, Vic., be reviewed.
- Mr Hawker—from certain citizens praying that the Australian Bill of Rights Bill be opposed and certain other action be taken in relation to the Bill.
- Mr Hawker—from certain citizens praying that family allowance payments be increased and proposed changes to the spouse rebate be rejected.
- Mr Hawker—from certain citizens praying that the assets test on pensions be repealed.
- Mr Hicks—from certain citizens praying that interest rates be reduced and certain other action be taken with respect to the Australian dollar.
- Mrs Kelly—from certain citizens praying that the pension discourting effect of the Superannuation and Other Benefits Legislation Amendment Act be limited to restore the base level for pension adjustment and certain other action be taken in relation to the Commonwealth Occupational Superannuation Schemes.
- Mrs Kelly—from certain citizens praying that landscaping for the new Parliament House be reinstated according to the original plans and certain action be taken to ensure this can be achieved.
- Mr Kent—from certain citizens praying that the US Government be urged to join the Soviet Union's nuclear test ban.
- Mr Kent—from certain citizens praying that any proposal for a national identification numbering system be rejected.
- Mr Kent—from certain citizens praying that the Government support the stand taken by the New Zealand Government on nuclear vessels and that the policy of developing zones of peace and nuclear free zones in the Indian and Pacific Oceans be implemented.
- Mr Nehl—from certain citizens praying that funding be provided to improve the Pacific Highway between Port Macquarie and Woolgoolga, NSW.

Petitions received.

- 9 **DISCUSSION OF MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE—OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG AUSTRALIANS:** The House was informed that Mr Shack had proposed that a definite matter of public importance be submitted to the House for discussion, namely, “The failure of the Hawke Government to expand opportunities for young Australians”.

The proposed discussion having received the necessary support—

Mr Shack addressed the House.

Discussion ensued.

Discussion concluded.

- 10 **EXPENDITURE—STANDING COMMITTEE—REPORT—STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS:**

Mr Beale presented the following report from the Standing Committee on Expenditure:

An efficient organization or an efficient audit?—Review of the Auditor-General’s efficiency audit report into construction project management practised by the Department of Housing and Construction—Report, dated February 1987, together with the minutes of proceedings and the evidence received by the committee.

Ordered—That the report be printed.

Mr Beale, Mr Mountford and Mr McLeay, by leave, made statements in connection with the report.

- 11 **PETROLEUM RESOURCE RENT TAX ASSESSMENT BILL 1986:** 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.

Privilege—Statement by Madam Speaker: Madam Speaker referred to the matter raised earlier this day by Mr Braithwaite (*see* entry No. 2) claiming that reported statements of the Secretary of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, Mr Bill Kelty, were an attempt to intimidate him as a Member of Parliament. Having considered the matter, Madam Speaker stated that the evidence available to her did not disclose evidence of a *prima facie* case of breach of privilege or contempt and that precedence should not be accorded to a motion on the matter.

Mr Braithwaite addressed himself to the matter.

Debate continued.

Mr McGauran addressing the House—

- 12 **ADJOURNMENT:** It being 10.15 p.m.—The question was proposed—That the House do now adjourn.

Debate ensued.

The House continuing to sit until 11 p.m.—Madam Speaker adjourned the House until tomorrow at 2 p.m.

PAPER: The following paper was deemed to have been presented on 23 March 1987: Acts Interpretation Act—Statement relating to failure to furnish periodic report within specified period—Fishing Industry Research Committee—Report for 1985-86.

MEMBERS PRESENT: All Members were present (at some time during the sitting) except Mr Baldwin, Mr Dawkins, Mr Gayler, Ms McHugh and Mr Robinson.

A. R. BROWNING
Clerk of the House of Representatives