

## THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

## VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

No. 50

THURSDAY, 7 MARCH 1991

- 1 The House met, at 9.30 a.m., pursuant to adjournment. Mr Speaker (the Honourable Leo McLeay) took the Chair, and read Prayers.
- 2 **PETITIONS:** The Clerk announced that the following Members had each lodged petitions for presentation, viz.:
  - Mr Aldred, from 10 petitioners, praying that reservations be made to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child prior to its ratification to protect the rights of parents in relation to their children.
  - Mr Andrew, from 342 petitioners, praying that the right of parents to supervise their children's associations be acknowledged.
  - Mr Beale, from 37 petitioners, praying for a twelve month moratorium followed by a referendum to enable the citizens of Australia to consider and decide whether the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child should be ratified.
  - Mr Beazley, from 590 petitioners, praying that stricter control be exercised over petrol companies and that certain action be taken to stabilise the price of petrol.
  - Mr Beazley, from 21 residents of Queensland, praying that the ABC be provided with adequate funding to enable ABC TV daytime educational programs to continue.
  - Mr Braithwaite, from 36 electors of the Division of Dawson, praying for sufficient Commonwealth funding to enable the University College of Southern Queensland to continue to provide a third semester for students.
  - Dr Catley, from 19 residents of South Australia, praying that action be taken to prevent a reduction of funding for public housing in South Australia.
  - Mr Dubois, from 969 petitioners, praying that legislation be enacted to establish a savings fund to encourage saving by young people and to provide low interest housing loans to its contributors.
  - Mr T. A. Fischer, from 31 petitioners, praying that wool quotas not be introduced.
  - Mr Hicks, from 107 electors of the Division of Riverina-Darling, praying that action be taken to cut fuel and sales taxes affecting livestock carriers and graziers in the Broken Hill district, NSW.
  - Mr Howard, from 566 petitioners, praying that regulations empowering the Australian War Memorial Council to charge an admission fee to any section of the Memorial be disallowed.

- Mr Howard, from 518 residents of the Australian Capital Territory, praying that the decision to charge for entry into the Australian War Memorial be reversed.
- Mr Jones, from 189 petitioners, praying for an inquiry into the distribution of wealth, the effectiveness of the taxation system and the measures which should be taken to achieve a more just society.
- Mr Langmore, from 38 petitioners, praying that woodchipping be phased out and certain other action be taken in relation to the forests of south eastern Australia.
- Ms McHugh, from 732 residents of South Australia, praying that peaceful means of resolution of the Gulf war be explored and that Australian personnel be withdrawn from the war zone until adequate parliamentary debate has taken place.
- Ms McHugh, from 60 petitioners, praying that any attempt to restrict access to abortion under Medicare be opposed.
- Mr Mack, from 3417 petitioners, praying that Australian warships in the Middle East be withdrawn immediately.
- Mr Mack, from 340 petitioners, praying that the draft Charter of Residents' Rights and Responsibilities be amended so as not to require proprietors of nursing homes to act contrary to proper moral standards or to incur unnecessary expense and litigation.
- Mr Reid, from 1060 petitioners, praying that Australian warships be withdrawn from the Middle East and that the UN call an international conference to establish peace in the Middle East.
- Mr Reid, from 289 petitioners, in similar terms.
- Mr Somlyay, from 139 residents of Queensland, praying for the establishment of a Medicare office at Maroochy, Qld.

Petitions received.

**3 LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS—STANDING COMMITTEE—REPORT—STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS—MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF PAPER:** Mr Lavarch (Chairman) presented the following report and related papers:

Legal and Constitutional Affairs—Standing Committee—Islands in the sun: Legal regimes of Australia's external territories and the Jervis Bay Territory—

Report, dated March 1991.

Evidence received by the committee.

Minutes of proceedings.

Ordered—That the report be printed.

Mr Lavarch made a statement in connection with the report.

Mr Kerr also made a statement in connection with the report.

Ordered—That Mr Kerr be granted an extension of time.

Mr Sinclair made a statement in connection with the report.

The time allotted for making statements on the report having expired—

Mr Lavarch moved—That the House take note of the report.

In accordance with sessional order 102B the debate was adjourned, and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting Thursday.

**4 ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS—STANDING COMMITTEE—REPORT—PAPER NOTED:**

The order of the day having been read for the resumption of the debate on the motion of Mr Kerr—That the House take note of the paper (*presented on 13 September 1990*), viz.:

Aboriginal Affairs—Standing Committee—Our Future, Our Selves: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community control management and resources—Report, dated August 1990—

Debate resumed.

The time allotted for the debate having expired, the debate was interrupted.

Question—put and passed.

- 5 **TRANSPORT, COMMUNICATIONS AND INFRASTRUCTURE—STANDING COMMITTEE—REPORT—PAPER NOTED:** The order of the day having been read for the resumption of the debate on the motion of Mr P. F. Morris—That the House take note of the paper (*presented on 20 September 1990*), viz.:
- Transport, Communications and Infrastructure—Standing Committee—  
The stamp of approval: A review of the administration of philatelic services by Australia Post—Report, dated 22 August 1990—  
Debate resumed:  
Question—put and passed.
- 6 **PROCEDURE—STANDING COMMITTEE—REPORT—MOTION TO ADOPT REPORT—DISCHARGE OF ORDER OF THE DAY:** The order of the day having been read for the resumption of the debate on the motion of Mr Scholes—That the House adopt the report (*presented on 11 October 1990*), viz.:
- Procedure—Standing Committee—Greater opportunities for debate on reports from parliamentary committees—Report, dated 18 September 1990—  
Mr Scholes moved—That the order of the day be discharged.  
Question—put and passed.
- 7 **ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS—STANDING COMMITTEE—REPORT—MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF PAPER—DISCHARGE OF ORDER OF THE DAY:** The order of the day having been read for the resumption of the debate on the motion of Mr Anderson—That the House take note of the paper (*presented on 6 December 1990*), viz.:
- Aboriginal Affairs—Standing Committee—Review of Auditor-General's audit report No. 29, 1989-90, Aboriginal Affairs Portfolio—Report, dated December 1990—  
Mr Anderson moved—That the order of the day be discharged.  
Question—put and passed.
- 8 **COMMONWEALTH BANKS AMENDMENT BILL 1991:** Mr Beale, pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act to amend the *Commonwealth Banks Act 1959*, so as to facilitate privatisation of the Commonwealth banks, and for related purposes.  
Mr Beale made a statement in relation to the Bill.  
Bill read a first time.  
Ordered—That the second reading be made an order of the day for the next sitting Thursday, in accordance with sessional order 104A.
- 9 **HUMAN RIGHTS IN TIBET:** Mr Kerr, pursuant to notice, moved—That this House:
- (1) expresses its deep concern about the current situation in Tibet;
  - (2) recognises that human rights abuses have been committed in Tibet by the People's Republic of China since 1959 and that human rights abuses are reportedly continuing;
  - (3) endorses Resolutions No. 1353 of 1959, No. 1723 of 1961 and No. 2079 of 1965 of the UN General Assembly and recognises that they remain relevant today;
  - (4) endorses the call for the cessation of practices which deprive the Tibetan people of their fundamental human rights and freedoms;
  - (5) commends the Dalai Lama and his representatives for consistently rejecting the use of violence and notes that this was acknowledged in the awarding of the 1989 Nobel Peace Prize to the Dalai Lama;

- (6) endorses the representations made by the Australian Government and by members of this Parliament to the People's Republic of China on alleged human rights abuses generally and in Tibet;
- (7) calls on the Government of the People's Republic of China to:
  - (a) recognise the fundamental human rights and freedoms of the Tibetan people as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Human Rights Covenants, including the right to practise their cultural and religious traditions without fear of persecution, arrest or torture;
  - (b) enter into earnest discussions, without preconditions, with the Dalai Lama and his representatives with a view to reducing the tensions in Tibet; and
  - (c) respond to representations made by the Australian Government and by members of this Parliament on allegations on human rights abuses and the human rights situation in general in Tibet; and
- (8) calls on the Australian Government to continue to make representations to, and seek responses from, the Government of the People's Republic of China on allegations of human rights abuses in Tibet.

Debate ensued.

The time allotted for the debate having expired, the debate was interrupted and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting Thursday.

- 10 **RESTORATION OF SPORTING LINKS WITH SOUTH AFRICA:** The order of the day having been read for the resumption of the debate on the motion of Mr Cobb—That the Australian Government allow the restoration of normal sporting links with South Africa—

Debate resumed.

The time allotted for the debate having expired, the debate was interrupted, the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting Thursday, and Ms Crawford was granted leave to continue her speech when the debate is resumed.

- 11 **PRESS—PROPOSED ROYAL COMMISSION:** Mr Langmore, pursuant to notice, moved—That, in view of:

- (1) the concentration of ownership of the press which is unprecedented in Australia's history and unparalleled in any Western democracy; and
- (2) the unacceptable concentration of power, the restrictions on the diversity of information and ideas, the barriers to entry and other aspects of market failure, the diminished localism of content and accountability, the debilitating impact on journalistic culture and the conflicts of interest which this concentration of ownership involves—

this House calls for the establishment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the press including:

- (a) the extent of concentration in the ownership and control and the effects of that on:
  - (i) the provision of accurate, fair and comprehensive news;
  - (ii) the diversity of opinions and the opportunities for expression; and
  - (iii) the practice of journalism; and
- (b) the regulatory framework in Australia.

Debate ensued.

It being 12.30 p.m., the debate was interrupted in accordance with sessional order 404A, the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting Thursday, and Mr J. L. Scott was granted leave to continue his speech when the debate is resumed.

- 12 **GRIEVANCE DEBATE:** Pursuant to the provisions of sessional order 106, the order of the day having been read—  
 Question proposed—That grievances be noted.  
 Debate ensued.  
*Papers:* Mr Aldred, by leave, presented the following papers:  
 Income tax—Trusts with non-resident beneficiaries—Copies of Australian Taxation Office documents (9).  
 Debate continued.  
 It being 1.45 p.m., the debate was interrupted in accordance with sessional order 106.  
 Question—That grievances be noted—put and passed.
- 13 **MEMBERS' STATEMENTS:** Members' statements were made.
- 14 **QUESTIONS:** Questions without notice being asked—  
*Papers:* Mr Keating (Treasurer) presented the following papers:  
 Net external debt and liabilities—  
 Net external debt—Minute from G. R. Potts, First Assistant Secretary, Economic Division, the Treasury, to Hon. P. Keating, MP, Treasurer, dated 7 March 1991, with graph.  
 Net external liabilities—Graph.  
 Questions without notice continued.  
 Mr Fife, in accordance with standing order 321, having called for a document quoted from by Mr Keating—  
 Mr Keating laid upon the Table the following paper:  
 Suggested answer—Capital Markets Division, dated 6 March 1991.  
 Questions without notice continued.  
*Paper:* Mr Simmons (Minister for the Arts, Tourism and Territories) presented the following paper:  
 Cocos (Keeling) Islands—Memorandum of understanding relating to the achievement of mainland equivalent living standards and levels of services, between the Commonwealth, the Cocos (Keeling) Islands Council and the Cocos Islands Co-operative Society Ltd, dated 7 March 1991.  
 Questions without notice concluded.
- 15 **PAPER:** Mr Speaker presented the following paper:  
 Incident in the House on 21 January 1991—Letter of apology from Senator J. Vallentine to Hon. L. McLeay, MP, Speaker of the House of Representatives, dated 7 March 1991.
- 16 **PAPERS:** Mr Wright, by leave, during a personal explanation, presented the following papers:  
 Travel entitlements of parliamentarians—Copies of—  
 Airways ticket order No. 6337, dated 15 June 1990.  
 Fax message, from A. Woodward, Clerk of the Parliament, Qld, to Mr K. Wright, MP, dated 1 March 1991.  
 Internal travel request, June 1990.  
 Letter from M. Fishpool, National Media Liaison Service, to Mr K. Wright, MP, dated 25 February 1991.  
 Newspaper article from the Brisbane *Courier Mail*, dated 23 February 1991.  
 Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation Account Number 000042, dated 26 June 1990.
- 17 **DISCUSSION OF MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE—ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES:** The House was informed that Mr Chaney had proposed that a definite matter of public importance be submitted to the House for discussion, namely, "The Hawke Government's political exploitation of

environmental issues which has caused a crisis of confidence in resource investment and threatens to undermine sustainable development in Australia”.

The proposed discussion having received the necessary support—

Mr Chaney addressed the House.

Discussion ensued.

Discussion concluded.

18 **MESSAGES FROM THE SENATE:** Messages from the Senate were reported returning the following Bills without amendment:

21 6 March 1991—Message No. 173—Insurance Amendment 1990.

7 March 1991—Message—

22 No. 175—Companies (Insolvency Assistance) Amendment 1990.

23 No. 176—Family Law Amendment 1991.

9 **SELECTION COMMITTEE—REPORT:** Mr R. F. Edwards (Chairman) presented the following report:

Selection Committee—Report relating to the program of business prior to 12.30 p.m. on Thursday, 14 March 1991.

20 **HIGHER EDUCATION FUNDING AMENDMENT BILL 1991:** Mr Baldwin (Minister for Higher Education and Employment Services), pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act to increase the amount that may be spent on higher education.

Bill read a first time.

Mr Baldwin moved—That the Bill be now read a second time.

*Paper:* Mr Baldwin presented an explanatory memorandum to the Bill.

Debate adjourned (Dr Kemp), and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

21 **STATES GRANTS (TAFE ASSISTANCE) AMENDMENT BILL 1991:** Mr Baldwin (Minister for Higher Education and Employment Services), pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act to vary the amount that may be spent on technical and further education.

Bill read a first time.

Mr Baldwin moved—That the Bill be now read a second time.

*Paper:* Mr Baldwin presented an explanatory memorandum to the Bill.

Debate adjourned (Dr Kemp), and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

22 **LOAN BILL 1991:** Mr Crean (Minister Assisting the Treasurer), pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act to authorise the borrowing and expending of money for certain purposes.

Bill read a first time.

Mr Crean moved—That the Bill be now read a second time.

*Paper:* Mr Crean presented an explanatory memorandum to the Bill.

Debate adjourned (Dr Kemp), and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

23 **OCCUPATIONAL SUPERANNUATION LAWS AMENDMENT BILL 1991:** Mr Crean (Minister Assisting the Treasurer) presented a Bill for an Act to amend the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1936*, the *Insurance and Superannuation Commissioner Act 1987* and the *Occupational Superannuation Standards Act 1987*, and for related purposes.

Bill read a first time.

Mr Crean moved—That the Bill be now read a second time.

*Paper:* Mr Crean presented an explanatory memorandum to the Bill.

Debate adjourned (Dr Kemp), and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

- 24 SUPERANNUATION SUPERVISORY LEVY BILL 1991: Mr Crean (Minister Assisting the Treasurer) presented a Bill for an Act to impose a levy on the lodgment of certain returns under the *Occupational Superannuation Standards Act 1987*.

Bill read a first time.

Mr Crean moved—That the Bill be now read a second time.

*Paper:* Mr Crean presented an explanatory memorandum to the Bill.

Debate adjourned (Dr Kemp), and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

- 25 MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE—INDUSTRY, TECHNOLOGY AND COMMERCE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 1991: Message No. 174, dated 7 March 1991, from the Senate was reported transmitting for the concurrence of the House a Bill for “*An Act to amend various Acts relating to matters dealt with by the Department of Industry, Technology and Commerce, and for related purposes*”.

Bill read a first time.

Mr Crean (Minister for Science and Technology) moved—That the Bill be now read a second time.

*Paper:* Mr Crean presented an explanatory memorandum to the Bill.

Debate adjourned (Dr Kemp), and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

- 26 EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING AMENDMENT BILL 1991: 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 by Dr Kemp who moved, as an amendment—That all words after “That” be omitted with a view to substituting the following words: “whilst not declining to give the Bill a second reading, this House deplores the Government’s continued mismanagement of higher education, and in particular, it deplores the Government’s:

- (1) increasing interference in higher education through the intrusive educational profiles process;
- (2) failure to provide a proper framework for accountability with respect to the exercise of Ministerial discretion;
- (3) failure to provide adequately for independent policy advice;
- (4) policy of forced amalgamations, the disruption it is presently causing in Victoria and the ACT and the damaging pressures it has created towards institutional uniformity;
- (5) failure to provide institutions with the freedom and flexibility needed to address the impending shortage of academic staff;
- (6) unsatisfactory imposition of the Higher Education Contribution charge on full fee postgraduate courses; and
- (7) failure to make inroads into the level of unmet demand”.

Debate continued.

Amendment negatived.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put and passed—Bill read a second time.

The House resolved itself into a committee of the whole.

*In the committee*

Bill, by leave, taken as a whole.

Dr Kemp, by leave, moved the following new clause and amendment together:

*Proposed new clause—*

Page 1, after clause 1 insert the following new clause:

**Reports**

"1A. Section 9 of the Principal Act is amended by omitting from subsection (8) '15 sitting days' and substituting '5 sitting days'."

*Amendment—*

Clause 2, page 1, at the end of the clause add the following subclause:

"(2) Section 25 of the Principal Act is amended by omitting from subsection (3) '15 sitting days' and substituting '5 sitting days'."

Debate continued.

It being 10.30 p.m.—Progress to be reported.

The House resumed; Mr Dubois reported accordingly.

*Adjournment negated:* The question was accordingly proposed—That the House do now adjourn.

Mr Baldwin (Minister for Higher Education and Employment Services) requiring the question to be put forthwith without debate—

Question—put and negated.

The House again resolved itself into a committee of the whole.

*In the committee*

Proposed new clause and amendment negated.

Bill agreed to.

Bill to be reported without amendment.

The House resumed; Mr Dubois reported accordingly.

On the motion of Mr Baldwin, the House adopted the report, and, by leave, the Bill was read a third time.

**27 CORPORATIONS AND SECURITIES—PARLIAMENTARY JOINT COMMITTEE:**

Mr Baldwin (Minister for Higher Education and Employment Services), by leave, moved—That, in accordance with the provisions of the *Australian Securities Commission Act 1989*, Mr Brereton, Mr R. F. Edwards, Mr Ford, Mr Kerr and Mr Moore be appointed members of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Securities.

Question—put and passed.

**28 STANDING AND JOINT COMMITTEES—MEMBERSHIP:** The House was informed of the nominations by the Opposition Whip of Members to be members of the following committees:

*Joint Committee on the Australian Capital Territory:*

Mr Halverson in place of Mr Moore.

*Standing Committee on Community Affairs:*

Mr Broadbent in place of Mr Wilson.

*Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs:*

Mr Ronaldson.

**29 ADJOURNMENT:** Mr Baldwin (Minister for Higher Education and Employment Services) moved—That the House do now adjourn.

Debate ensued.

*Debate extended:* It being 11 p.m., the debate was interrupted.

Mr Staples (Minister for Aged, Family and Health Services) required the debate to be extended.

The debate continuing until 11.06 p.m., Mr Speaker adjourned the House until Monday next at 2 p.m.



**PAPERS:** The following papers were deemed to have been presented on 7 March 1991:

Acts Interpretation Act—Statement relating to failure to furnish periodic report within specified period—Parliament House Construction Authority—Report for 1989-90.

Aged or Disabled Persons Homes Act—

Amendments to General Conditions formulated under subsection 10F(1), dated 2 January 1991.

Amendments to Guidelines for the determination of the amounts of grants of financial assistance under subsection 9B(1), dated 2 January 1991.

Civil Aviation Act—Civil Aviation Regulations—Civil Aviation Orders—Parts—

105—Amendments, dated 12 February 1991 and 5 March 1991 (4).

106—Amendments, dated 12 February 1991 and 5 March 1991.

107—Amendments, dated 12 February 1991.

Commonwealth Electoral Act—Australian Electoral Commission—Certificate pursuant to subsection 49(1), dated 1 March 1991.

Defence Act—Determinations under section 58B—1990—

No. 190—Excess Premiums on Disability Insurance Allowance and Amount of allowance payable.

No. 191—Overseas Living Allowance and other allowances.

1991—

No. 1—Disturbance Allowance.

No. 2—Rates of Travelling Allowance—Jordan and other allowances.

No. 3—Rates of Travelling Allowance—Mauritius and other allowances.

No. 4—Rates of Travelling Allowance—USA—Guam and other allowances.

No. 5—Rates of Travelling Allowance—Indonesia—Elsewhere and other allowances.

No. 6—Disposable salary and other allowances.

National Health Act—Notice of determination of amount for the purposes of subparagraph 47(2)(b)(iii), dated 22 February 1991.

Public Service Act—Determinations—1991—Nos. 4, 13.

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**ATTENDANCE:** All Members attended (at some time during the sitting) except Dr Blewett, Mr Courtice, Mr Downer, Mr Holding, Mr Lindsay, Mr Lloyd, Mr Peacock and Mr Walker.

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**A. R. BROWNING**

Clerk of the House of Representatives