

1996

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

No. 5

TUESDAY, 7 MAY 1996

1 The House met, at 2 p.m., pursuant to adjournment. The Speaker (the Honourable Bob Halverson) took the Chair, and read Prayers.

2 MINISTRY—PAPER

Mr Howard (Prime Minister) presented the following paper:

Howard Ministry, 7 May 1996—

and advised the House that he had appointed Mr W. L. Smith (Minister for Sport, Territories and Local Government) as the Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Sydney 2000 Games.

3 QUESTIONS

Questions without notice were asked.

4 AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT—PUBLICATION OF PAPER

The Speaker presented the following paper:

Audit Act—Auditor-General—Audit report No. 21 of 1995-96—Performance audit—Meat Research Corporation: Management of Project Fututech.

Mr Reith (Leader of the House), by leave, moved—That:

- (1) this House authorises the publication of the Auditor-General's audit report No. 21 of 1995-96; and
- (2) the report be printed.

Question—put and passed.

5 COMMITTEE REPORTS—MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF PAPERS

The Speaker presented the following papers:

Committee reports received by the Speaker after the last sitting of the House of Representatives in 1995 pursuant to resolutions agreed to on 29 November 1995—

Transport, Communications and Infrastructure—Standing Committee—

Plane safe—Report on the inquiry into aviation safety: The commuter and general aviation sectors—
Report, December 1995.
Minutes of proceedings.

Ships of shame—A sequel: Report on the inquiry into ship safety—
Report, November 1995.
Minutes of proceedings.

Ordered—That each of the reports be printed.

Mr Reith (Leader of the House), by leave, moved—That the House take note of the reports.

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

6 PAPERS—MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF PAPERS

The following papers were presented:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act—Indigenous Land Corporation—National Indigenous Land Strategy 1996-2001.

Australian Horticultural Corporation Act—Australian Dried Fruits Board—4th report, for 1994-95.

National Procurement Board—Report for 1995.

Mr Reith (Leader of the House) moved—That the House take note of the papers.

Debate adjourned (Mr Crean), and the resumption of each debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

7 SPEAKER'S PANEL

The following warrant nominating members of the Speaker's panel, pursuant to standing order 18, was laid on the Table:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Pursuant to the provisions of standing order 18, I nominate—

Dick Godfrey Harry Adams,
Janice Ann Crosio,
Colin Hollis,
Frank William Mossfield, and
Harry Vernon Quick,

to be members of the Speaker's panel to assist the Chair when requested to do so by the Speaker or Deputy Speaker.

Given under my hand on 7 May 1996.

ROBERT HALVERSON
Speaker

8 SELECTION COMMITTEE—SESSIONAL ORDER

Mr Reith (Leader of the House), by leave, moved—That the following amendment to paragraph (a) of standing order 28D be adopted for the remainder of this session:

28D. (a) A Selection Committee, to consist of the Deputy Speaker, the Chief Government Whip, the Chief Opposition Whip, the Third Party Whip, four government members, three opposition members and one independent Member, shall be appointed at the commencement of each Parliament to arrange the timetable and order of business for private Members' business and committee and delegation reports on each sitting Monday pursuant to standing order 101.

Question—put and passed.

9 SELECTION COMMITTEE

Mr Reith (Leader of the House), by leave, moved—That Mr J. N. Andrew, Mr Filing, Mr E. L. Grace, Mr Hollis, Mr McArthur, Mr Sawford, Mr M. A. J. Vaile and Ms Worth be members of the Selection Committee.

Question—put and passed.

10 DISCUSSION OF MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE—TRADE AND INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

The House was informed that Mr S. F. Smith had proposed that a definite matter of public importance be submitted to the House for discussion, namely, "The threat to the capacity of small business to develop export potential as a result of the planned abolition of trade and industry development programs, in particular the Export Market Development Grants Scheme".

The proposed discussion having received the necessary support—

Mr S. F. Smith addressed the House.

Discussion ensued.

Discussion concluded.

11 MAIN COMMITTEE—DAY OF MEETING

The Second Deputy Speaker reported that the Deputy Speaker had fixed Wednesday, 8 May 1996, at 10 a.m., for the meeting of the Main Committee.

12 BILLS REFERRED TO MAIN COMMITTEE

Mr Cadman (Chief Government Whip), pursuant to notice, moved—That the following Bills be referred to the Main Committee for consideration:

Ministers of State Amendment 1996;

Excise Tariff Amendment 1996;

Dairy Produce Levy (No. 1) Amendment 1996; and

Dairy Produce Amendment 1996.

Question—put and passed.

13 TELSTRA (DILUTION OF PUBLIC OWNERSHIP) BILL 1996

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 Mr Latham who moved, as an amendment—That all words after “That” be omitted with a view to substituting the following words: “the House is of the opinion that the Bill should not be proceeded with, for the following reasons:

- (1) it represents the start of a process leading to the full privatisation of Telstra;
- (2) it will lead to a loss of jobs, investment and exports, and the Bill also fails to establish an Australia-first purchasing policy for Telstra;
- (3) the remittance of profits overseas which will follow enactment will damage Australia’s balance of payments;
- (4) it provides inadequate protection of universal service obligations and preservation of services in regional, rural and remote Australia;
- (5) the Government’s failure to bring outer metropolitan telephone zones into the capital city local call zones;
- (6) the Government’s failure to fulfil its commitment to establish an ISDN service throughout Australia plus establish A and B share categories to monitor foreign ownership;
- (7) the failure to preserve Ministerial directions and accountability to the Parliament for the delivery of Telstra’s universal service obligations;
- (8) there are much better ways of funding environmental programs than selling Australia’s major public asset;
- (9) it represents an ideological obsession with ownership issues instead of focussing on the competitive features of the telecommunications market;
- (10) at a time of rapid technological change in telecommunications, the public sector should continue to hold a major strategic asset like Telstra to avoid inequity of access and affordability on the so-termed ‘information superhighway’;
- (11) with the Government’s recent decision to review the 1997 telecommunications regulations it is inappropriate for the Parliament to be considering the sale of Telstra”.

Debate continued.

Adjournment negatived: It being 10.30 p.m.—The question was proposed—That the House do now adjourn.

Mr W. L. Smith (Minister for Sport, Territories and Local Government) requiring the question to be put forthwith without debate—

Question—put and negatived.

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

14 SELECTION COMMITTEE—REPORT—GENERAL PRINCIPLES—PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr Nehl (Chair) presented the following report from the Selection Committee:

General principles relating to the selection of private Members' business, 7 May 1996.

The report is as follows:

REPORT

The Selection Committee submits its report to the House on the proposed general principles relating to the selection of private Members' business, and recommends its adoption.

In accordance with sessional order 28D(b) the Selection Committee has resolved that the general principles be as follows:

Proposed general principles relating to the selection of private Members' business

1. In formulating the priority to be given to items of private Members' business the Selection Committee shall have regard to:
 - (a) the importance of the subject;
 - (b) the current level of interest in the subject;
 - (c) the extent of the current discussion on the subject both in the Parliament and elsewhere;
 - (d) the extent to which the subject comes within the responsibility of the Commonwealth Parliament;
 - (e) the probability of the subject being brought before the House by other means within a reasonable time; and
 - (f) whether the subject is the same, or substantially the same, as another item of business which has been debated or on which the House has already made a decision in the same period of sittings and, if so, whether new circumstances exist.
2. The Committee shall accord priority to private Members' business:
 - (a) with regard to the numbers of Members affiliated with each party in the House;
 - (b) in a way which ensures that a particular Member or the Members who comprise the Opposition Executive do not predominate as the movers of the items selected; and
 - (c) in a way which seeks to ensure balance is achieved over each period of sittings.
3. When a private Member has the responsibility for the carriage of a Bill transmitted from the Senate for concurrence, the Bill shall be accorded priority following the question for the second reading being put to the

House in the same way as a private Member's Bill originating in the House is accorded priority by sessional order 104A.

4. Priority shall not be accorded to any item of private Members' business if the matter should be dealt with by the House in another, more appropriate, form of proceeding.
5. The general principles set out above shall be observed by the Selection Committee but nothing in the general principles shall be taken to prevent the Selection Committee departing from those general principles in order to meet circumstances, which, in its opinion, are unusual or special.

GARRY NEHL

Chair

7 May 1996

Mr W. L. Smith (Minister for Sport, Territories and Local Government), by leave, moved—That the proposed general principles relating to the selection of private Members' business reported to the House by the Selection Committee this day be adopted.

Question—put and passed.

15 SELECTION COMMITTEE—REPORT

Mr Nehl (Chair) presented the following report:

Selection Committee—Report relating to the program of private Members' business on Monday, 20 May 1996—

and, by leave, moved—That the report be adopted.

Question—put and passed.

16 ADJOURNMENT

Mr W. L. Smith (Minister for Sport, Territories and Local Government) moved—That the House do now adjourn.

Debate ensued.

The House continuing to sit until 11 p.m.—The Speaker adjourned the House until tomorrow at 9.30 a.m.

PAPERS

The following papers were deemed to have been presented on 7 May 1996:

Civil Aviation Act—Civil Aviation Regulations—Civil Aviation Orders—Part 105—Amendments 1996 24(2) April, 6(4) May.

Native Title Act—Determinations—

1995 No. 6.

1996 Nos. 2, 3.

ATTENDANCE

All Members attended (at some time during the sitting) except Mr Brough, Mr R. A. Cameron, Mr Forrest, Mr Hawker, Mr Jones and Mr Neville.

L. M. BARLIN

Clerk of the House of Representatives