

1996-97

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

No. 110

MONDAY, 22 SEPTEMBER 1997

1 The House met, at 12.30 p.m., pursuant to adjournment. The Speaker (the Honourable Bob Halverson) took the Chair, and read Prayers.

2 CUSTOMS TARIFF AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 5) 1997

Mr Crean, pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act to amend the *Customs Tariff Act 1995*.

Mr Crean made a statement in relation to the Bill.

Paper

Mr Crean, by leave, presented an explanatory memorandum to the Bill.

Bill read a first time.

Ordered—That the second reading be made an order of the day for the next sitting, in accordance with standing order 104A.

3 AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE PERSONNEL IN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

Mr Price, pursuant to notice, moved—That this House:

- (1) applauds the efforts of those Australian Defence Force Personnel who served in Australia's peacekeeping operations;
- (2) congratulates Major Carol Vaughan-Evans, Lieutenant Thomas Tilbrook, Warrant Officer Rodrick Scott and Corporal Andrew Miller on their receipt of the first gallantry medals since the Vietnam War for their distinguished service in Rwanda, particularly during the massacre of civilian refugees at Kibeho in April 1995;
- (3) expresses the thanks and pride of all Australians for their efforts; and
- (4) regrets that the Minister for Defence Industry, Science and Personnel felt it was too costly and impractical to receive in person the Parliament's congratulations, gratitude and recognition of their distinguished service and apologises for the Minister's slight of these gallant soldiers.

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.

4 ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY SERVICE IN MALAYA

Mr Adams, pursuant to notice, moved—That this House:

- (1) notes that:
 - (a) the members of the Royal Australian Navy who served in Malaya between 1955 and 1960 are the only Australians to be deliberately excluded from eligibility for repatriation benefits for honourable “active service” under the *Veterans’ Entitlements Act 1986*;
 - (b) the members of the Australian Army and the Royal Australian Air Force serving in Malaya were not similarly excluded; and
 - (c) a letter, dated 11 November 1955, from the Department of the Navy to the Department of the Treasury stated that the date on which RAN ships were allotted for duty as the RAN component of the Strategic Reserve was 1 July 1955;
- (2) calls on the Minister for Defence to take action to ensure that members of the Royal Australian Navy between 1955 and 1960 are recognised as being allotted for duty in the Malayan theatre; and
- (3) calls on the Minister for Veterans’ Affairs to take action to ensure that naval veterans of the Malayan theatre are recognised with the relevant campaign medal and the Returned from Active Service Badge.

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.

5 RESCUE OF THE THAI ECONOMY

Ms Hanson, pursuant to notice, moved—That this House:

- (1) condemns the Government for committing \$1.3 billion to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) rescue of the Thai economy without recourse to the Australian Parliament;
- (2) calls on the Government to publish immediately all the details of the currency swap undertaken by the Reserve Bank; and
- (3) calls on the Government to freeze its undertaking pending a full parliamentary inquiry into the circumstances surrounding Australia’s participation in the IMF rescue.

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.

6 POPULATION PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN THAILAND AND VIETNAM

Mrs Stone, pursuant to notice, moved—That this House:

- (1) recognises the dedication and commitment of the Thai and Vietnamese Governments as they work towards achieving their population planning and community development goals;
- (2) recognises the coordinating role Thailand is now playing in population planning and reproductive health work in its region;
- (3) recognises the enormity of the task and commends the commencement of HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention programs in Thailand;
- (4) recognises the appropriateness and significance of AusAID projects aimed at partnering and supporting communities as they work to improve reproductive health, community development, general hospital facilities and HIV/AIDS treatments in Thailand and Vietnam; and
- (5) notes the existence of the All Party Parliamentary Committee on Population Planning and Development which focuses on the need for population policy that takes into account a nation's ecological, social and economic resources.

Debate ensued.

At 1.45 p.m., the time allotted for the debate having expired, the debate was interrupted in accordance with standing order 106A, Ms Ellis was granted leave to continue her speech when the debate is resumed, and the resumption of the debate was made an order of the day for the next sitting.

7 MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Members' statements were made.

8 DEATH OF MOTHER TERESA OF CALCUTTA

Mr Howard (Prime Minister) referred to the death of Mother Teresa, and moved—That this House records its deep sadness at the death on 5 September 1997, of Mother Teresa, the former head of the Missionaries of Charity and expresses its deep sympathy to the members of the Society of the Missionaries of Charity order and the people of India in their bereavement, and requests that this motion be conveyed by the Speaker on behalf of the House to the Government of India, the Holy See and to Sister Nirmala Joshi, Superior General of the Missionaries of Charity.

And Mr Beazley (Leader of the Opposition) having seconded the motion, and Mr Fischer (Leader of the National Party of Australia) having addressed the House in support thereof, and all Members present having risen, in silence—

Question—passed.

9 MINISTERIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Mr Howard (Prime Minister) informed the House that, during the absence abroad of Mr Costello (Treasurer), Mr Fahey (Minister for Finance) would be Acting Treasurer and would answer questions on Mr Costello's behalf.

Mr Howard also informed the House that, during the absence of Dr Wooldridge (Minister for Health and Family Services), Mr Scott (Minister for Veterans' Affairs) would answer questions on his behalf.

10 QUESTIONS

Questions without notice were asked.

11 PETITIONS

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

Mrs Bailey, Mr Bevis, Mr E. H. Cameron, Mr Causley, Mr Entsch, Mr Fitzgibbon, Mrs E. J. Grace, Mr McDougall, Mr McLachlan, Mr McMullan, Mr Marek, Mr Martin, Mr Nairn, Mr Rocher, Mr Sercombe, Mr A. C. Smith, Mr Truss and Mr Williams, from 36, 53, 79, 100, 21, 22, 36, 126, 26, 35, 56, 51, 32, 16, 32, 73, 41 and 26 pensioners, superannuants and retirees, respectively, praying that funding be provided to the Australian Pensioners' and Superannuants' Federation.

Mr McClelland, from 59 residents of Sydney, in similar terms.

Mr L. D. T. Ferguson, Mr M. J. Ferguson and Mr Fitzgibbon, from 140, 335 and 846 petitioners, respectively, praying that tariffs not be reduced.

Mr Anthony and Mr Nairn, from 40 and 21 petitioners, respectively, praying that action be taken to remove the exclusion of members of the Royal Australian Navy, who served in the Malaya campaign, from repatriation benefits under the Veterans' Entitlements Act.

Mr Nairn and Mr W L Smith, from 16 and 8 petitioners, respectively, in similar terms.

Mr Bevis, from 237 residents of Queensland, and Mr P F Morris, from 82 electors of the Division of Shortland, respectively, praying that the proposal to introduce nursing home entry fees be abandoned and full funding for capital assistance to nursing homes be restored.

Ms Macklin, from 9493 residents of Victoria, 6073 residents of Queensland, 506 residents of Tasmania, 229 residents of South Australia, and 59 residents of New South Wales, respectively, praying that all families have access to affordable and quality child care.

Mr Fitzgibbon, from 360 families and friends of child care users in the Newcastle, Hunter and Lake Macquarie regions, NSW, and 90 families and friends of Singleton Heights Pre-school Inc., NSW, respectively, praying that operational subsidies to community based long day care centres be retained.

Mr Bevis, from 16 petitioners, praying that a high profile anti-racism campaign be mounted.

Mr E. H. Cameron, from 1342 petitioners, praying that action be taken to stop the practice in China of extracting bile from caged bears for medical purposes.

Mr M. J. Evans, from 1078 electors of the Division of Adelaide, praying that the Sefton Park, SA, Medicare office retain its functions.

Ms Jeanes, from 201 petitioners, praying that an Australian citizen be Head of State.

Mr Jones, from 320 residents of Victoria, praying that certain action be taken to protect the Asian sun bear.

Mr Martin, from 21 petitioners, praying that the importation of animals for exhibition in circuses be prohibited.

Mr Martin, from 3 petitioners, praying that certain action be taken to permit better business conduct.

Mr McClelland, from 112 electors of the Division of Barton, praying that the Rockdale, NSW, Medicare office remain open.

Mr McMullan, from 30 petitioners, praying that certain action be taken in relation to the reporting and recording of vaccinations.

Mr Miles, from 1074 residents of Tasmania, praying that the pulp and paper industry in North-West Tasmania be recognised and the entry into Australia of dumped paper be prevented and the entry into Australia of dumped paper be prevented.

Mr A. A. Morris, from 19 residents of the Newcastle region, praying that the principles of cultural diversity, freedom of speech and mutual respect be promoted actively.

Mr P. F. Morris, from 21 petitioners, praying that the removal of the superannuation means test exemption for people aged 55 to age pension age be recognised as unfair and disappointing.

Mr Nehl, from 67 electors of the Division of Cowper, praying that the giant Parramatta grass be included in the National Weeds Strategy.

Mr Price, from 247 residents of western Sydney, praying that the Mt Druitt, NSW, Medicare office remain open.

Mr Truss, from 62 petitioners, praying that the City of Gympie and the Shire of Cooloola be included in the Sunshine Coast local telephone call area.

Mr Williams, from 5 petitioners, praying that the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission be funded appropriately.

Petitions received.

12 CHILD ABUSE

Ms Jeanes, pursuant to notice, moved—That this House:

- (1) congratulates the organisers of Child Protection Week and recognises its important role in raising the issue of child abuse;
- (2) acknowledges the extent of the most insidious form of child abuse, paedophilia, identified in reports including *Paedophilia in Queensland* by the Childrens Commission of Queensland and the *Paedophile Inquiry* by the Royal Commission into the NSW Police Service;
- (3) acknowledges that paedophilia constitutes a tragedy of national proportions; and

- (4) is committed to eradicating the disease of paedophilia by addressing its causes and raising the public's awareness of its extent and the trauma that it causes to the victims, our children.

Debate ensued.

Paper

Mr McClelland, by leave, presented the following paper:

Paedophile Inquiry—Police Royal Commission—Copy of letter from Bob Carr, Premier of New South Wales, to the Honourable J. W. Howard, Prime Minister.

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.

13 SBS TELEVISION SERVICES TO REGIONAL AREAS

Mr Hicks, by leave, for Mr M. A. J. Vaile, pursuant to notice, moved—That this House:

- (1) acknowledges the expansion of SBS television services to regional areas by the present Government;
- (2) notes that there is a significant number of people throughout rural and regional areas wishing to access the service; and
- (3) affirms its support for the continuation of the expansion program to areas not yet receiving the service across regional Australia.

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.

14 CHILDREN AND YOUNGER AUSTRALIANS

Mr Fitzgibbon, pursuant to notice, moved—That this House:

- (1) recognises the important role today's children and younger Australians will play in determining Australia's future prosperity;
- (2) recognises that the overwhelming majority of younger Australians have no voice in the decision making processes which affect them;
- (3) recognises that younger Australians are growing increasingly cynical towards politicians and the political processes and increasingly pessimistic about Australia's future;
- (4) recognises that such pessimism is likely to affect the attitude of younger Australians toward key aspects of Australian society;
- (5) recognises the need to keep the interests of children and young people at the forefront when considering policy direction; and
- (6) calls on the Government to establish an Office of Children and Young People within the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to provide advice to the Prime Minister on matters affecting children and young Australians.

Debate ensued.

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

15 GRIEVANCE DEBATE

Pursuant to the provisions of standing order 106, the order of the day having been read—

Question proposed—That grievances be noted.

Debate ensued.

The time allotted for the debate having expired—

Question—That grievances be noted—put and passed.

16 MESSAGES FROM THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL—ASSENT TO BILLS

Messages from His Excellency the Governor-General were announced informing the House that His Excellency, in the name of Her Majesty, had assented to the following Bills:

15 September 1997—Message No. 178—

Carriage of Goods by Sea Amendment 1997.

Income Tax Rates Amendment (No. 1) 1997.

Higher Education Funding Amendment (No. 1) 1997.

Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency 1997.

International Monetary Agreements Amendment 1997.

Constitutional Convention (Election) 1997.

17 September 1997—Message No. 179—

Health Insurance (Pathology Services) Amendment 1997.

Transport Legislation Amendment (Search and Rescue Service) 1997.

17 MESSAGES FROM THE SENATE

Messages from the Senate were reported:

(a) acquainting the House that Senators Childs and Forshaw had been discharged from attendance on the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, and Senators Cook and O'Brien had been appointed members of the committee—4 September 1997—Message No. 315;

(b) acquainting the House that Senator Cook had been discharged from attendance on the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Securities, and Senator Conroy had been appointed a member of the committee—4 September 1997—Message No. 316; and

(c) returning the following Bills without amendment:

22 September 1997—Message—

No. 317—Broadcasting Services Legislation Amendment 1997.

No. 318—Television Licence Fees Amendment 1997.

No. 319—Radio Licence Fees Amendment 1997.

18 HEALTH INSURANCE AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 1) 1997—SENATE'S AMENDMENT

The order of the day having been read for the consideration of the amendment made by the Senate, viz.:

SCHEDULE OF THE AMENDMENT MADE BY THE SENATE

Schedule 1, page 3 (after line 27), after item 4, insert:

4A At the end of section 86

Add:

- (5) If, after 30 June 1994 but before the commencement of this subsection, a member of the Commission's staff (within the meaning of the *Health Insurance Commission Act 1973*) purported to refer conduct of a person to the Director under this section, then for all purposes:
- (a) the referral is taken to be, and always to have been, made by the Commission; and
 - (b) all proceedings, matters, acts and things taken, made or done (or purporting to have been taken, made or done) because of the referral are taken to have, and always to have had, the same force and effect as they would have, or would have had, if the referral in fact had been made by the Commission—

On the motion of Ms Worth (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Family Services), the amendment was agreed to.

19 VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING FUNDING AMENDMENT BILL 1997

The order of the day having been read for the resumption of the debate on the question—That the Bill be now read a third time—

Debate resumed.

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

20 WORKPLACE RELATIONS AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 1997

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 McMullan 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, the House deplores the Government's attempt to give the Employment Advocate more powers and to undermine the rights of employees under the existing Act, under the guise of so-called ‘technical amendments’”.

Debate continued.

21 ADJOURNMENT

It being 10.30 p.m.—The question was proposed—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 2 p.m.

PAPERS

The following papers were deemed to have been presented on 22 September 1997:

Acts Interpretation Act—Statement relating to failure to furnish report within specified period—National Health and Medical Research Council—Report for 1996.

Air Navigation Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1997 No. 230.

Air Services Act—Instrument 1997 No. M94.

Australian Bureau of Statistics Act—Australian Bureau of Statistics—Proposal 1997 No. 16.

Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act—National Capital Plan—Certification of draft amendment No. 18.

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1997 No. 231.

Census and Statistics Act—Statement 1997 No. 3.

Christmas Island Act—Casino Control Ordinance—

Appointment of Administrator of Casino Operations (Amendment), 28 August 1997.

Authority to use offshore bank accounts, 28 August 1997.

Civil Aviation Act—Civil Aviation Regulations—

Civil Aviation Orders—

Part 40—Amendment 27 August 1997.

Part 105—Amendments 1997 7 August, 13 August, 25(5) August, 26(9) August, 27 (10) August.

Part 106—Amendments 1 (2) September 1997.

Part 107—Amendments 1997 6 August, 25 August, 12 September.

Instruments 1997 Nos. CASA 210, CASA 214.

Family Law Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1997 No. 232.

Federal Airports Corporation Act—Regulation—Statutory Rules 1997 No. 233.

Fisheries Management Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1997 No. 234.

Health Insurance Act—Declaration 1997 No. QAA 2.

Higher Education Funding Act—Determinations 1997 Nos. T19, T20.

- Insurance (Agents and Brokers) Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1997 No. 237.
- Insurance Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1997 No. 235.
- Insurance Acquisitions and Takeovers Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1997 No. 236.
- Insurance Contracts Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1997 No. 238.
- Jervis Bay Territory Acceptance Act—Ordinance 1997 No. 1.
- Lands Acquisition Act—Statement under—
Section 40.
Section 125.
- Life Insurance Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1997 No. 239.
- Navigation Act—Marine Orders 1997 Nos. 6, 7.
- Proceeds of Crime Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1997 No. 240.
- Public Service Act—Determinations 1997 Nos. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, LES 22, LES 23, LES 24, LES 25, SESROB 73, SESROB 74, SESROB 75, SESROB 76, SESROB 77, SESROB 78, SESROB 79, SESROB 80, SESROB 81, SESROB 82, SESROB 83, SESROB 84, SESROB 85, SESROB 86, SESROB 87, SESROB 88, SESROB 89, SESROB 90, SESROB 91, SESROB 92, SESROB 93, SESROB 94, SESROB 95, SESROB 96.
- Remuneration Tribunal Act—Determinations 1997 Nos. 4, 6, 7, 8, 9.
- Retirement Savings Accounts Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1997 No. 242.
- Road Transport Reform (Dangerous Goods) Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1997 No. 241.
- Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act—Notices 1997 Nos. 4, 5, 6.
- Seat of Government (Administration) Act—Ordinance 1997 No. 3.
- Student and Youth Assistance Act—Determination 1997 No. 1.
- Superannuation Act 1976*—Declaration—Statutory Rules 1997 No. 228.
- Superannuation Act 1990*—Declaration—Statutory Rules 1997 No. 229.
- Superannuation Industry (Supervision) Act—
Determination under section 153, 1 July 1997.
Regulations—Statutory Rules 1997 No. 243.
- Taxation Administration Act—Ruling 1997 No. TR 18.
- Telstra Corporation Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1997 Nos. 244, 247.
- Therapeutic Goods Act—Determination under section 19A, 26 August 1997.
- Trade Practices Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1997 No. 245.
- Veterans' Entitlements Act—Instruments 1997 Nos. 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78.
- Workplace Relations Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1997 No. 246.
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ATTENDANCE

All Members attended (at some time during the sitting) except Mr Albanese, Mr P. J. Baldwin, Mr Cadman, Mr Costello, Mr Dondas, Mr Hockey, Mr Latham, Mr Lee, Mr Lieberman, Mr Pyne, Mr Taylor, Dr Theophanous, Mr Truss, Mr M. A. J. Vaile and Dr Wooldridge.



I. C. HARRIS

Clerk of the House of Representatives