

1998-1999-2000-2001

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

No. 199

TUESDAY, 7 AUGUST 2001

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

2 QUESTIONS

Questions without notice being asked—

Papers

Mr Costello (Treasurer) presented the following papers:

Budget papers—

1995-96—Revised economic outlook and Budget and mid-year review estimates.

2000-2001—Part II: Historical general government data.

Questions without notice continued.

3 PRIVILEGE—COMPLAINT OF BREACH

Mr Emerson raised, as a matter of privilege, the possible conflict of evidence given to the Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Workplace Relations by Australian Taxation Office officers during its inquiry into employee share ownership, entitled *Shared endeavours* and the information contained in an Auditor-General's report entitled *The Australian Taxation Office's Administration of Taxation Rulings: Australian Taxation Office*. Mr Emerson asked whether it constituted a breach of privilege.

The Speaker stated that he would consider the matter and report to the House at a later time.

4 AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORTS

The Speaker presented the following papers:

Auditor-General—

Audit report of 2000-2001—No. 54—Compliance Assessment Audit—Engagement of consultants.

Audit reports of 2001-2002—

No. 1—Financial Statement Audit—Control structures as part of the audit of financial statement of major Commonwealth agencies for the period ended 30 June 2001.

No. 2—Examination of allegations relating to sales tax fraud: Australian Taxation Office.

No. 3—Performance audit—The Australian Taxation Office's administration of taxation rulings: Australian Taxation Office.

No. 4—Performance audit—Commonwealth estate property sales: Department of Finance and Administration.

No. 5—Performance audit—Parliamentarians' entitlements: 1999-2000.

Severally ordered to be printed.

5 PAPERS

The following papers were presented:

Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency—Reports—
1998-99.
1999-2000.

Agriculture and Resource Management Council of Australia and New Zealand—Record and resolutions—
19th meeting, Wellington, 9 March 2001.
20th meeting, Melbourne, 9 May 2001.

Australasian Police Ministers' Council—National Common Police Services—
Report for 1999-2000.

Australia and the Asian Development Bank—Report for 1999-2000.

Australia and the IMF—Report for 1999-2000.

Australia and the World Bank—Report for 1999-2000.

Australian Dried Fruits Board—Report for 1 July 2000 to 31 January 2001 [Final].

Australian River Co Limited—Report for the period 1 December 1999 to 30 November 2000.

Commonwealth Grants Commission—Review of the operation of the *Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995*, June 2001.

Communications, Transport and the Arts—Standing Committee—Report—
Beyond the Midnight Oil: Managing fatigue in transport—Government response, June 2001.

Council of Financial Regulators—Report for 2000.

Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business—
Report—Enquiry arising from Senate Estimates hearings on 4-5 June 2001 into matters concerning Job Network, July 2001.

Department of the Environment and Heritage—Report—Review of the National Environment Protection Council Acts (Commonwealth, State and Territory).

Employment Advocate—Report—The building industry.

Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade—Joint Standing Committee—Report—Australian Government loan to Papua New Guinea—Government response.

Indigenous Land Corporation—National Indigenous Land Strategy 2001-2006.

Treaties—

Bilateral—

Text, together with national interest analyses—

Agreement between Australia and Spain on Social Security.

Agreement between Australia and the Argentine Republic concerning cooperation in peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Agreement by exchange of notes between the Government of Australia and the Government of the United States of America to amend the agreement concerning cooperation in defence logistic support, done at Sydney on 4 November 1989.

Agreement on Social Security between the Government of Australia and the Government of Canada, done at Ottawa on 26 July 2001.

Protocol to the Agreement between Australia and the Republic of Austria on Social Security, done at Vienna on 26 June 2001.

Text, together with national interest analysis and regulation impact statement—

Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands on Social Security, done at The Hague on 2 July 2001.

*Multilateral—Text, together with national interest analysis—*Amendments to the Apia Convention, adopted by consensus at the fifth meeting of contracting parties held in Guam on 9 October 2000.

6 PAPERS—MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF PAPERS

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

Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency—Reports—1998-99. 1999-2000.

Australia and the Asian Development Bank—Report for 1999-2000.

Australia and the IMF—Report for 1999-2000.

Australia and the World Bank—Report for 1999-2000.

Council of Financial Regulators—Report for 2000.

Employment Advocate—Report—The building industry.

Indigenous Land Corporation—National Indigenous Land Strategy 2001-2006.

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

7 DISCUSSION OF MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE—NEW TAX SYSTEM

The House was informed that Mr Crean (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) had proposed that a definite matter of public importance be submitted to the House for discussion, namely, “The government’s failure to respond effectively to the damage it is causing small business by its botched implementation of the new tax system”.

The proposed discussion having received the necessary support—

Mr Crean addressed the House.

Discussion ensued.

Discussion concluded.

8 COMMITTEES—MEMBERSHIP

The House was informed that the Chief National Party Whip had nominated a Member to be a member of certain committees.

Mrs B. K. Bishop (Minister for Aged Care), by leave, moved—That Mr Katter be discharged from the Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs and the Standing Committee on Primary Industries and Regional Services and that, in his place, Mr Forrest be appointed a member of both committees.

Question—put and passed.

9 MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE—ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 2) 2001

Message No. 668, 6 August 2001, from the Senate was reported transmitting for the concurrence of the House a Bill for an Act to amend legislation relating to the environment, and for related purposes.

Bill read a first time.

Ordered—That the second reading be made an order of the day for the next sitting.

10 SELECTION COMMITTEE—REPORT

Mr Nehl (Chair) presented the following paper:

Selection Committee—Report relating to the consideration of committee and delegation reports and private Members’ business on Monday, 20 August 2001.

11 MAIN COMMITTEE—DAY OF NEXT MEETING

The Speaker reported that the Deputy Speaker had fixed Wednesday, 8 August 2001, at 9.40 a.m., for the next meeting of the Main Committee.

12 VETERANS’ AFFAIRS LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (2001 BUDGET MEASURES) BILL 2001

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.

Message from the Governor-General

Message No. 339, 22 June 2001, from His Excellency the Governor-General was announced recommending an appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

Leave granted for third reading to be moved forthwith.

On the motion of Mr Scott (Minister for Veterans' Affairs), the Bill was read a third time.

13 NEW BUSINESS TAX SYSTEM (THIN CAPITALISATION) BILL 2001

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 K. J. Thomson 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 condemns the Government for:

- (1) failing to honour its commitment to provide a revenue neutral business tax package;
- (2) imposing a complex and cumbersome tax system on Australian businesses rather than delivering the simpler system it promised; and
- (3) increasing the compliance burden for Australian businesses thereby reducing their competitiveness, their profitability and, in some cases, their ability to trade”.

Debate continued.

Mr Slipper (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance and Administration) addressing the House—

14 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 9.30 a.m.

PAPERS

The following papers were deemed to have been presented on 7 August 2001:

Australian Bureau of Statistics Act—Australian Bureau of Statistics—Proposal 2001 No. 9.

Higher Education Funding Act—Determinations—2000 Nos T22, T23.

ATTENDANCE

All Members attended (at some time during the sitting) except Mr Kerr.



I. C. HARRIS

Clerk of the House of Representatives