

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

No. 2.

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

THURSDAY, 1ST MARCH, 1923.

1. The House met, at half-past two o'clock p.m., pursuant to adjournment.—Mr Speaker took the Chair, and read Prayers.
2. PAPERS.—The following Papers were presented, pursuant to Statute—
 Trading with the Enemy Act—Regulations Amended—Statutory Rules 1922, No. 192.
 Treaty of Peace Act—Regulations Amended—Statutory Rules 1922, No. 127.
 Treaty of Peace (Germany) Act—Regulations Amended—Statutory Rules 1922, Nos. 187, 190, 191.
 Treaties of Peace (Austria and Bulgaria) Act—Regulations Amended—Statutory Rules 1922, Nos. 128, 129, 185, 186, 188, 189.
3. ADDRESS IN REPLY TO THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S SPEECH.—NO-CONFIDENCE AMENDMENT.—The Order of the Day having been read for the resumption of the debate on the question—That the following Address in Reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor-General be agreed to by this House:—

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY—

We, the House of Representatives of the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech which you have been pleased to address to Parliament—

Mr. Austey (Assistant Leader of the Opposition) moved, as an amendment, That the following words be added to the proposed Address:—

“but we regret that this House views with disapprobation the conduct of the Government in meeting Parliament with a Speech containing no evidence of any public policy. There is no mention of any intended policy upon the subject of international trade which the head of the Government has asserted to be fundamental to the progress and prosperity of Australia. There is no mention of a policy on the Sugar Agreement, which expires next June. There is no mention of a policy relating to the development of internal trade which is so vital to the employment of our people, but on the contrary the administrative methods pursued by the Government accentuate unemployment.

There is no mention of the attitude of the Government towards Arbitration, towards the Oil and Wireless Agreements, or towards Old-age and Invalid Pensions. The Speech makes no mention as to whether the Government intends to investigate the War Service Homes and other matters of maladministration exposed last Session by the Labour party.

In brief, this Government, which claims to be a Government of business men, gives no evidence of such qualification. There is not one subject in His Excellency's Speech upon which is given a definite, a concrete, or a composite opinion.

Under these circumstances, and in view of the peculiar methods under which this Government was formed, and in view of the fact that this Government discloses an unseemly haste to reach the haven of a recess of several months' duration, thus leaving in abeyance the discussion of these subjects vital to the welfare of our country, this House deems it necessary to protest and declare that this Government does not possess its confidence.”

Debate continued.

Mr. McNeill addressing the House, and not having concluded his speech, the House ordered that the honorable Member have leave to continue his speech when the debate is resumed.

Ordered—That the debate be now adjourned, and that the resumption of the debate be made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

1st March, 1923.

4. PAPER.—The following Paper was presented, by command of His Excellency the Governor-General—
Iron and Steel Products Bounty Act—Approval of the use of Imported Material in the Manufacture of Goods on which Bounty is provided by the Act.

Ordered to lie on the Table.

5. TIME OF NEXT MEETING.—Mr. Bruce (Prime Minister) moved, That the House, at its rising, adjourn until to-morrow at eleven o'clock a.m.

Question—put and passed.

6. ADJOURNMENT.—Mr. Bruce (Prime Minister) moved, That the House do now adjourn.

Question—put and passed.

And then the House, at sixteen minutes past ten o'clock p.m., adjourned until to-morrow at eleven o'clock a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT. —All Members were present (at some time during the sitting) except—Mr. Josiah Francis.

WALTER A. GALE,
Clerk of the House of Representatives.