

1957.

## THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

No. 43.

TUESDAY, 15TH OCTOBER, 1957.

1. The House met, at half-past two o'clock p.m., pursuant to adjournment.—Mr. Speaker (the Honorable J. McLeay) took the Chair, and read Prayers.
2. DEATH OF THE HONORABLE SIR THOMAS WHITE.—Mr. Menzies (Prime Minister) referred to the death, on the 13th October, of the Honorable Sir Thomas White, K.B.E., D.F.C., V.D., and moved, That this House expresses its deep regret at the death of the Honorable Sir Thomas Walter White, a former Member of this House for the Division of Balaclava and a former Minister of the Crown, places on record its appreciation of his long and meritorious public service and tenders its profound sympathy to his widow and family in their bereavement.  
And Mr. Evatt (Leader of the Opposition) having seconded the motion, and Mr. Joske having addressed the House in support thereof, and all Members present having risen, in silence—  
Question—passed.
3. PAPERS.—The following Papers were presented, pursuant to Statute—  
Canned Fruits Export Control Act—Australian Canned Fruits Board—Thirty-first Annual Report, for year 1956–57, together with Statement by Minister regarding the operation of the Act.  
Dairy Produce Export Control Act—Australian Dairy Produce Board—Thirty-second Annual Report, for year 1956–57, together with Statement by Minister regarding the operation of the Act.  
Defence Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1957, No. 53.  
Defence Transition (Residual Provisions) Act—National Security (Industrial Property) Regulations—Order—Inventions and designs.  
Judiciary Act—Rule of Court, dated 2nd October, 1957.  
National Health Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1957, No. 52.  
Public Service Arbitration Act—Determination—1957—No. 69—Australian Broadcasting Commission Staff Association.  
Seat of Government (Administration) Act—Regulations—1957—No. 9 (Education Ordinance).  
Sulphuric Acid Bounty Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1957, No. 55.  
War Service Homes Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1957, No. 54.
4. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS—PRECEDENCE TO NOTICE OF MOTION.—Mr. H. E. Holt (Minister for Labour and National Service) moved, by leave, That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as would prevent (a) Notice of Motion No. 1, General Business, taking precedence of all other business during this sitting and (b) Mr. Evatt (Leader of the Opposition) and Mr. Beale (Minister for Defence Production) each speaking on the motion for a period not exceeding one hour.  
Question—put and passed.
5. ST. MARY'S AMMUNITION FILLING FACTORY—PROPOSED SELECT COMMITTEE.—Mr. Evatt (Leader of the Opposition) moved, pursuant to notice—  
(1) That as a matter of extreme public importance a Select Committee of this House be appointed immediately to inquire into—  
(a) the initiation and carrying out of Commonwealth Government Project 590 (being the new munitions filling factory at St. Mary's, New South Wales), the construction, planning, location, design, organization and supervision of same together with the costs and expenses incurred by the Commonwealth in connexion with the project or the equipment used in connexion therewith and whether such costs and expenses were made subject to proper control and checking or were excessive, extravagant or unnecessary and whether any of such costs or expenses were incurred through the neglect, default or wilful act of any corporation or person; and

15th October, 1957.

(b) the correctness or otherwise of the findings and comments of the Auditor-General in relation to the said project as contained in his Reports of 4th September, 1956, and 4th September, 1957, with special reference to—

- (i) cases of alleged inadequate supervision by the Architects and Contractors;
  - (ii) the alleged failure of the Architects and Contractors to carry out supervisory arrangements promised before the contract was let upon assurances given to the Government by the Architects that careful control and economies and all reasonable safeguards would be provided;
  - (iii) the alleged cases of extremely poor, and, in some instances, complete lack of supervision not only in regard to the responsibilities of the Area Superintendent but to all supervision down to the grades of foreman and ganger;
  - (iv) the alleged cases where jobs were "over-manned", or where costs were excessive and brought to the notice of Architects and Contractors;
  - (v) the alleged cases where specifications were varied and did not conform to the Architects' drawings;
  - (vi) the alleged failure of the Architects to meet their responsibilities regarding presentation of regular cost forecasts;
  - (vii) alleged instances of lack of efficiency, organization, direction and control causing loss or damage to the Commonwealth;
  - (viii) whether as alleged the cost accounting in relation to the building and services of the project cannot be established so that the ultimate value of the individual assets will have to be determined at the completion of the project by an allocation of final expenditure on the basis of arbitrary assessment; and
  - (ix) alleged cases where estimates were substantially exceeded due to neglect or default in unsatisfactory costing or the use of more expensive materials causing loss or damage to the Commonwealth.
- (2) That the Committee consist of five Members to be nominated by the Government Parties and four Members to be nominated by the Opposition Party.
  - (3) That four members of the Committee constitute a quorum.
  - (4) That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers and records, to sit during any recess or any adjournment of the Parliament and during the sittings of the House, to adjourn from place to place, and have leave to report from time to time its proceedings and the evidence taken.
  - (5) That the Committee may, in cases where in its opinion considerations of defence security require, sit *in camera*.
  - (6) That the Committee report to the House on the 3rd December, 1957.

Debate ensued.

Ordered—That Mr. Menzies (Prime Minister) be granted an extension of time.

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

Debate continued.

Several Members rising to address the House—

*Closure*.—Mr. H. E. Holt (Minister for Labour and National Service) moved, That the question be now put.

Question—That the question be now put—put.

The House divided (The Speaker, Mr. McLeay, in the Chair)—

AYES, 59.

Mr. Adermann	Mr. Cramer	Mr. Fox	Mr. Killen	Mr. Pearce
Mr. Anderson	Mr. Davidson	Mr. J. M. Fraser	Mr. Lawrence	Mr. Robertson
Mr. J. D. Anthony	Mr. Davis	Mr. Freeth	Mr. Lindsay	Mr. Snedden
Mr. Aston	Mr. Dean	Mr. Graham	Mr. Luck	Mr. Stokes
Mr. Bate	Mr. Downer	Mr. Hamilton	Mr. Mackinnon	Mr. Swartz
Mr. Beale	Mr. Drummond	Mr. Hasluck	Sir P. McBride	Mr. Timson
Mr. Bostock	Mr. Erwin	Mr. Haworth	Mr. McColm	Mr. Townley
Mr. Brimblecombe	Sir A. Fadden	Mr. H. E. Holt	Mr. McEwen	Mr. Wentworth
Mr. Buchanan	Mr. Failes	Mr. Howse	Mr. McMahon	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Bury	Mr. Fairbairn	Mr. Howson	Mr. Menzies	<i>Tellers:</i>
Mr. Chaney	Mr. Fairhall	Mr. Joske	Mr. Osborne	Mr. Opperman
Mr. Cleaver	Mr. Forbes	Sir W. Kent Hughes	Sir E. Page	Mr. Turnbull

NOES, 34.

Mr. Barnard	Mr. Clark	Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Makin	Mr. Thompson
Mr. Bird	Mr. Cope	Mr. Haylen	Mr. McIvor	Mr. Ward
Mr. Bruce	Mr. Crean	Mr. R. W. Holt	Mr. Minogue	Mr. Webb
Mr. Bryant	Mr. Curtin	Mr. H. V. Johnson	Mr. O'Connor	Mr. Whitlam
Mr. Cairns	Mr. Daly	Mr. L. R. Johnson	Mr. Riordan	<i>Tellers:</i>
Mr. C. R. Cameron	Mr. Edmonds	Mr. Kearney	Mr. Russell	Mr. Coutts
Mr. Clarey	Mr. Evatt	Mr. Lawson	Mr. Stewart	Mr. Luchetti

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

And the question—That the motion be agreed to—being accordingly put—

15th October, 1957.

The House divided (The Speaker, Mr. McLeay, in the Chair)—

## AYES, 34.

Mr. Barnard	Mr. Clark	Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Makin	Mr. Thompson
Mr. Bird	Mr. Cope	Mr. Haylen	Mr. McIvor	Mr. Ward
Mr. Bruce	Mr. Crean	Mr. R. W. Holt	Mr. Minogue	Mr. Webb
Mr. Bryant	Mr. Curtin	Mr. H. V. Johnson	Mr. O'Connor	Mr. Whitlam
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Mr. Buchanan	Mr. Failes	Mr. Howse	Mr. McMahon	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Bury	Mr. Fairbairn	Mr. Howson	Mr. Menzies	<i>Tellers:</i>
Mr. Chaney	Mr. Fairhall	Mr. Joske	Mr. Osborne	Mr. Opperman
Mr. Cleaver	Mr. Forbes	Sir W. Kent Hughes	Sir E. Page	Mr. Turnbull

And so it was negated.

6. MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE.—A Message from the Senate was reported returning the following Bill without amendment:—

15th October, 1957—*Message No. 53*—Aged Persons Homes 1957.

7. ADJOURNMENT.—Mr. H. E. Holt (Minister for Labour and National Service) moved, That the House do now adjourn.

Question—put and passed.

And then the House, at seventeen minutes past eleven o'clock p.m., adjourned until to-morrow at half-past two o'clock p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT.—All Members were present (at some time during the sitting) except Mr. Allan, Mr. Beazley, Mr. Bowden\*, Mr. Brand, Mr. Calwell, Mr. D. A. Cameron, Mr. Casey\*, Mr. Costa\*, Mr. Drury, Mr. Duthie, Mr. Falkinder, Mr. Galvin, Mr. Harrison\*, Mr. Jack\*, Mr. James, Mr. Leslie, Mr. Lucock, Mr. Morgan, Mr. Peters, Mr. Pollard\*, Mr. Turner\*, Mr. Watkins\*, Mr. Wheeler\* and Mr. Wight.

\*On leave.

A. A. TREGEAR,  
*Clerk of the House of Representatives.*