

1998-99

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

No. 70

TUESDAY, 28 SEPTEMBER 1999

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—

Member ordered to withdraw

At 2.48 p.m. the Member for Rankin (Dr Emerson) was ordered, under standing order 304A, to withdraw from the House for one hour for continuing to interject after a warning had been given from the Chair, and he accordingly withdrew from the Chamber.

Questions without notice continued.

3 PAPERS

The following papers were presented:

Aboriginal Land Commissioner—Report and recommendations to the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs and to the Administrator of the Northern Territory—

No. 56—Roper Valley (Kewulyi) land claim No. 163.

Explanatory statement.

4 DISCUSSION OF MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE—FOREIGN POLICY

The House was informed that Mr Beazley (Leader of the Opposition) had proposed that a definite matter of public importance be submitted to the House for discussion, namely, “The need for a coherent and effective foreign policy to advance Australia’s international interests, particularly in the Asia Pacific region”.

The proposed discussion having received the necessary support—

Mr Beazley addressed the House.

Discussion ensued.

Discussion concluded.

5 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, 11 October 1999.

6 EAST TIMOR—UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL—RESOLUTION 1264, 15 SEPTEMBER 1999—REPORT FROM MAIN COMMITTEE

The Deputy Speaker reported that the order of the day relating to the motion to take note of the East Timor—United Nations Security Council—Resolution 1264, 15 September 1999 had been debated in the Main Committee and returned to the House.

Question proposed—That the House take note of the paper.—

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

7 MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE—ELECTORAL AND REFERENDUM AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 2) 1998

Message No. 206, 27 September 1999, from the Senate was reported returning the Electoral and Referendum Amendment Bill (No. 2) 1998 and acquainting the House that the Senate insists on its amendment (21) disagreed to by the House, does not agree to amendments (1) and (3) made by the House and has made amendments consequential on its amendment (21); does not insist on its amendment (26) disagreed to by the House, agrees to amendment (2) made by the House in place thereof and agrees to the additional amendment made by the House; and desires the reconsideration of the bill by the House in respect of amendment (21) and requests concurrence of the House in the consequential amendments made by the Senate.

Ordered—That consideration of the message be made an order of the day for the next sitting.

8 MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE—NATIONAL HEALTH AMENDMENT (LIFETIME HEALTH COVER) BILL 1999

A message from the Senate was reported returning the following Bill with amendments:

27 September 1999—Message No. 207—National Health Amendment (Lifetime Health Cover) 1999.

Ordered—That the amendments be considered forthwith.

On the motion of Dr Wooldridge (Minister for Health and Aged Care), the amendments were agreed to, after debate.

9 POSTPONEMENT OF ORDER OF THE DAY

Ordered—That order of the day No. 1, government business, be postponed until a later hour this day.

10 WORKPLACE RELATIONS LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (MORE JOBS, BETTER PAY) BILL 1999

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—*And on the amendment moved thereto by Mr Bevis, viz.*—That all words after “That” be omitted with a view to substituting the following words:

- “(1) the House condemns the Government for introducing a bill which:
- (a) further entrenches unfairness and bias in the existing industrial relations system;
 - (b) ensures that the role of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission is further restricted and the independence of the Commission is compromised;
 - (c) reduces the minimum conditions available to all Australian workers by further undermining the award system as the dynamic framework for the protection and advancement of wages and conditions, through further award stripping;
 - (d) denies Australia’s lowest paid workers any further wage increase unless their award is stripped of basic entitlements such as long service leave, superannuation and paid jury service leave;
 - (e) further removes workplace and enterprise bargaining from the protection of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission, placing it solely in the hands of the Office of the Employment Advocate, which is run by one of the Minister’s former senior personal political staffers;
 - (f) further weakens opportunities for employees to organise and bargain collectively;
 - (g) aggravates problems of inequality for women and the most vulnerable in the labour market;
 - (h) further restricts workers who are denied proper industrial protection in their state from accessing federal protection;
 - (i) prevents the Australian Industrial Relations Commission from conducting much of its traditional conciliation role;
 - (j) further dismantles the framework for the prevention and settlement of industrial disputes;
 - (k) amends the termination of employment provisions to limit an employee’s right to pursue an application and extends the cost provisions;
 - (l) emphasises the punishment and prevention of industrial action rather than its resolution;
 - (m) unduly hinders the entry and inspection of premises by relevant organisations;
 - (n) demonstrates a lack of balance in freedom of association provisions;

- (o) fails to ensure that Australia's labour standards meet our international obligations;
 - (p) continues to breach international standards as identified by the ILO panel of experts' findings concerning the right to strike and to bargain collectively;
 - (q) has a short title which is deliberately misleading and fails to represent the actual intention and impact of the bill; and
 - (r) exposes workers to loss of award or agreement entitlements when ownership of a business is transferred;
- (2) the House also condemns the Government for its eagerness in tabling a bill that will specifically strip workers of their basic rights while failing to protect workers' legally accrued entitlements in cases of corporate insolvency; and
- (3) recommends that a new bill be introduced which:
- (a) delivers fair and equitable outcomes for Australian workers;
 - (b) preserves basic conditions for all Australian workers;
 - (c) provides for an independent commission with the appropriate power to conciliate fairly and settle disputes; and
 - (d) provides jobs and income security"—

Debate resumed.

Ms Hoare addressing the House—

11 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 28 September 1999:

Aged Care Act—Principles under section 96-1—1999—Residential Care Subsidy Amendment (No. 1).

Cocos (Keeling) Islands Act—Utilities and Services Ordinance—Determinations 1999 Nos. 19, 20.

Health Insurance Commission Act—Determination 1999 HICA 8AA(4)/1.

Radiocommunications Act—Declaration 1999 Spectrum Re-allocation No. 2.

ATTENDANCE

All Members attended (at some time during the sitting) except Mr Brereton, Ms Burke*, Mr Costello, Mr Downer, Mr Georgiou, Mr Lee, Mr Moore and Mr Prosser*.

* On leave



I. C. HARRIS

Clerk of the House of Representatives