

1998-1999-2000

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

No. 121

WEDNESDAY, 21 JUNE 2000



1 The House met, at 9.30 a.m., pursuant to adjournment. The Speaker (the Honourable Neil Andrew) took the Chair, and read Prayers.

2 EXCISE AMENDMENT (COMPLIANCE IMPROVEMENT) BILL 2000

Mr Slipper (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance and Administration) presented a Bill for an Act to amend the *Excise Act 1901*, and for related purposes.

Bill read a first time.

Mr Slipper moved—That the Bill be now read a second time.

Paper

Mr Slipper presented an explanatory memorandum to the Bill.

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

3 HIGHER EDUCATION FUNDING AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 1) 2000

Dr Kemp (Minister for Education, Training and Youth Affairs), pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act to amend the *Higher Education Funding Act 1988*, and for related purposes.

Bill read a first time.

Dr Kemp moved—That the Bill be now read a second time.

Paper

Dr Kemp presented an explanatory memorandum to the Bill.

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

4 VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING FUNDING AMENDMENT BILL 2000

Dr Kemp (Minister for Education, Training and Youth Affairs), pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act to amend the *Vocational Education and Training Funding Act 1992*.

Bill read a first time.

Dr Kemp moved—That the Bill be now read a second time.

Paper

Dr Kemp presented an explanatory memorandum to the Bill.

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

5 PRIMARY INDUSTRIES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (VEGETABLE LEVY) BILL 2000

Mr Truss (Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry) presented a Bill for an Act to amend the Primary Industries Levies and Charges Collection (Vegetable) Regulations, and for related purposes.

Bill read a first time.

Mr Truss moved—That the Bill be now read a second time.

Paper

Mr Truss presented an explanatory memorandum to the Bill.

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

6 FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (DEBT RECOVERY) BILL 2000

Mr Anthony (Minister for Community Services), pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act to amend the law relating to the recovery of debts due to the Commonwealth by social security and family assistance recipients and veterans, and for related purposes.

Bill read a first time.

Mr Anthony moved—That the Bill be now read a second time.

Paper

Mr Anthony presented an explanatory memorandum to the Bill.

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

7 A NEW TAX SYSTEM (TAX ADMINISTRATION) BILL (NO. 2) 2000

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 Crean (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) 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:

- (1) condemns the Government for its continual amendment and complication of the New Tax system, especially the GST;
- (2) notes that the Tax Office is now swamped by the requirements of implementing the largest tax change in the history of the country;

- (3) notes that the Government is trying to rush through another 195 amendments in a very short time, without proper consultation; and
- (4) acknowledges that the Government has wasted over \$430 million selling a tax that the majority of Australians do not want”.

Debate continued.

Amendment negatived.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put and passed—Bill read a second time.

Consideration in detail

Bill, by leave, taken as a whole.

Mr Slipper (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance and Administration), by leave, moved Government amendments (1) to (34) together.

Paper

Mr Slipper presented a supplementary explanatory memorandum and correction to the explanatory memorandum to the Bill.

Amendments agreed to.

Bill, as amended, agreed to.

Consideration in detail concluded.

On the motion of Mr Slipper, by leave, the Bill was read a third time.

8 TARIFF PROPOSALS

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

Excise Tariff Proposal No. 2 (2000); and

Customs Tariff Proposal No. 2 (2000).

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

9 CUSTOMS AMENDMENT (ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES) BILL 2000

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.

Leave granted for third reading to be moved forthwith.

On the motion of Mr Slipper (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance and Administration), the Bill was read a third time.

10 EXCISE AMENDMENT (ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES) BILL 2000

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 Sidebottom 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) promising that ordinary beer would only rise by 1.9% because of the tax package before the election and then revealing after the election that draft beer would rise by around 8%; and
- (2) promising that packaged low alcohol beer would decrease in price before the election, and then announcing excise rates in the Budget which are estimated to make the price of low alcohol beer increase by more than 11% due to the new tax system”.

Amendment negatived.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put and passed—Bill read a second time.

Leave granted for third reading to be moved forthwith.

On the motion of Mr Slipper (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance and Administration), the Bill was read a third time.

11 QUESTIONS

Questions without notice were asked.

12 MEMBERS ORDERED TO WITHDRAW

Mr Abbott (Minister for Employment Services), by indulgence, adding to an answer to a question without notice given yesterday—

At 3.03 p.m. the Member for Dickson (Ms Kernot) was ordered, under standing order 304A, to withdraw from the House for one hour for continuing to interject after she had been given a specific warning and a general warning had been given by the Chair, and she accordingly withdrew from the Chamber.

At 3.04 p.m. the Member for McMillan (Mr Zahra) was ordered, under standing order 304A, to withdraw from the House for one hour for continuing to interject after a general warning had been given by the Chair, and he accordingly withdrew from the Chamber.

At 3.05 p.m. the Member for Paterson (Mr Horne) was ordered, under standing order 304A, to withdraw from the House for one hour for continuing to interject after a general warning had been given by the Chair, and he accordingly withdrew from the Chamber.

At 3.06 p.m. the Member for Sturt (Mr Pyne) was ordered, under standing order 304A, to withdraw from the House for one hour for continuing to interject after a general warning had been given by the Chair, and he accordingly withdrew from the Chamber.

At 3.07 p.m. the Member for Makin (Mrs Draper) was ordered, under standing order 304A, to withdraw from the House for one hour for continuing to interject after a general warning had been given by the Chair, and she accordingly withdrew from the Chamber.

Mr Abbott continuing to address the House—

Closure of Member moved

Mr Beazley (Leader of the Opposition) moved—That the Member be not further heard.

Question—put.

The House divided (the Speaker, Mr J. N. Andrew, in the Chair)—

AYES, 59

Mr Adams	Mr L. D. T. Ferguson	Dr Lawrence	Mr Quick
Mr Albanese	Mr M. J. Ferguson	Mr Lee	Mr Ripoll
Mr Beazley	Mr Fitzgibbon	Mr McClelland	Ms Roxon
Mr Bevis	Ms Gerick	Ms J. S. McFarlane	Mr Rudd
Mr Brereton	Mr Gibbons	Ms Macklin	Mr Sawford*
Ms Burke	Ms Gillard	Mr McLeay	Mr Sciacca
Mr Byrne	Mr Griffin	Mr McMullan	Mr Sercombe*
Mr Cox	Ms Hall	Mr Martin	Mr Sidebottom
Mr Crean	Mr Hatton	Mr Melham	Mr Smith
Mrs Crosio	Ms Hoare	Mr Morris	Mr Snowdon
Mr Danby	Mr Hollis	Mr Mossfield	Mr Swan
Mr Edwards	Mrs Irwin	Mr Murphy	Mr Tanner
Ms Ellis	Mr Jenkins	Mr O'Connor	Dr Theophanous
Mr Emerson	Mr Kerr	Ms Plibersek	Mr K. J. Thomson
Mr M. J. Evans	Mr Latham	Mr Price	

NOES, 74

Mr Abbott	Mr Fahey	Mr Lindsay	Mr Secker
Mr Anderson	Mr Fischer	Mr Lloyd	Mr Slipper
Mr K. J. Andrews	Mr Forrest*	Mr McArthur*	Mr Somlyay
Mr Anthony	Mrs Gallus	Mr I. E. Macfarlane	Dr Southcott
Fran Bailey	Ms Gambaro	Mr McGauran	Dr Stone
Mr Baird	Mrs Gash	Mrs May	Mrs Sullivan
Mr Barresi	Mr Georgiou	Mr Moore	Mr C. P. Thompson
Mr Bartlett	Mr Haase	Mrs Moylan	Mr A. P. Thomson
Mr Billson	Mr Hardgrave	Mr Nairn	Mr Truss
Mrs B. K. Bishop	Mr Hawker	Mr Nehl	Mr Tuckey
Ms J. I. Bishop	Mr Hockey	Dr Nelson	Mr M. A. J. Vaile
Mr Brough	Mrs Hull	Mr Neville	Mrs D. S. Vale
Mr Cadman	Mr Jull	Mr Nugent	Mr Wakelin
Mr Cameron	Mr Katter	Mr Prosser	Dr Washer
Mr Causley	Mrs D. M. Kelly	Mr Reith	Mr Williams
Mr Charles	Jackie Kelly	Mr Ronaldson	Dr Wooldridge
Mr Costello	Dr Kemp	Mr Ruddock	Ms Worth
Mr Downer	Mr Lawler	Mr St Clair	
Mr Entsch	Mr Lieberman	Mr Scott	

* Tellers

Pairs

Mrs Elson Ms Livermore

And so it was negatived.

Mr Abbott concluded his answer.

At 3.23 p.m. the Member for Warringah (Mr Abbott—Minister for Employment Services) was ordered, under standing order 304A, to withdraw from the House for one hour for continuing to argue after a general warning had been given by the Chair, and he accordingly withdrew from the Chamber.

13 PAPERS

The following papers were presented:

Australasian Police Ministers' Council—National Common Police Services—Report for 1998-99.

Australian National University—Report for 1999.

Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation—
Corroboree 2000: Towards Reconciliation.

Roadmap for Reconciliation.

14 DISCUSSION OF MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE—GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

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 adverse economic effects on Australian families and households caused by prices for everyday goods and services rising by more than the Government said they would because of their GST".

The proposed discussion having received the necessary support—

Mr Crean addressed the House.

Discussion ensued.

Discussion concluded.

15 CORPORATIONS AND SECURITIES—PARLIAMENTARY JOINT COMMITTEE—REPORT—STATEMENT BY MEMBER

Mr Sercombe presented the following papers:

Corporations and Securities—Parliamentary Joint Committee—Mandatory Bid Rule—Report, incorporating dissenting reports, June 2000.

Ordered to be printed.

Mr Sercombe, by leave, made a statement in connection with the report.

16 NATIONAL HEALTH AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 1) 2000

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.

Leave granted for third reading to be moved forthwith.

On the motion of Mr Entsch (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Industry, Science and Resources), the Bill was read a third time.

17 FINANCIAL SECTOR LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 1) 2000

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) merely paying lip service to the social obligations of banks while failing to take action to ensure equitable banking services for all Australians; and
- (2) failing to ensure sufficient public input into the ACCC’s recent inquiry into the competitive consequences of the proposed merger between the Commonwealth Bank of Australia and Colonial”.

Debate continued.

Amendment negatived.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put and passed—Bill read a second time.

Message from the Governor-General

Message No. 206, 12 April 2000, from His Excellency the Governor-General was announced recommending an appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

Consideration in detail

Bill, by leave, taken as a whole.

On the motion of Mr K. J. Thomson, by leave, Opposition amendments (1) and (2) were made, together, after debate.

Mr K. J. Thomson moved Opposition amendment (3).

Debate continued.

Amendment negatived.

Mr Hockey (Minister for Financial Services and Regulation), by leave, moved Government amendments (1) and (2) together.

Paper

Mr Hockey presented a supplementary explanatory memorandum to the Bill.

Debate continued.

Amendments agreed to.

Bill, as amended, agreed to.

Consideration in detail concluded.

On the motion of Mr Hockey, by leave, the Bill was read a third time.

18 TELECOMMUNICATIONS (CONSUMER PROTECTION AND SERVICE STANDARDS) AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 1) 2000

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 Smith 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, recognising the fundamental importance of high quality and reliable telecommunications services to all Australians now and in the future:

- (1) condemns the Government for its continuing push towards the full privatisation of Telstra which will inevitably lead to a decline in services to rural and regional Australia;
- (2) recognises the importance of the Universal Service Obligation to the delivery of minimum communications services to rural and regional Australia;
- (3) notes that while the Government is holding up competitive tendering as the solution to rural and regional service delivery difficulties and as a justification of the full privatisation of Telstra:
 - (a) its plan is limited to two pilot projects in undefined areas the results of which will not be known for a number of years; and
 - (b) its decision to require Telstra to remain as a safety net provider of last resort in the areas to be covered by the pilot projects acknowledges the unique role of Telstra in the delivery of services to rural and regional Australia and the folly of pursuing full privatisation;
- (4) recognises that the Universal Service Obligation will need to encompass minimum digital data services in future; and
- (5) notes the wide Ministerial discretion given with respect to the calculation of the cost of the Universal Service Obligation, and the need for this to be on the basis of Australian Communication Authority advice”.

Debate continued.

19 ADJOURNMENT

It being 7.30 p.m.—The question was proposed—That the House do now adjourn.

Debate ensued.

The House continuing to sit until 8 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 21 June 2000:

Australian National University Act—Statute No. 262.

Navigation Act—Marine Orders—2000 Nos 3, 4.

ATTENDANCE

All Members attended (at some time during the sitting) except Mrs Elson, Ms Livermore, Ms O'Byrne, Mr O'Keefe, Mr Schultz and Mr Wilkie.



I. C. HARRIS

Clerk of the House of Representatives

1998-1999-2000

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
SUPPLEMENT TO VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

No. 121

MAIN COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

WEDNESDAY, 21 JUNE 2000

1 The Main Committee met at 9.40 a.m.

2 MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Members' statements were made.

3 APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 1) 2000-2001—BUDGET DEBATE

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 Tanner, viz.—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 its:*

- (1) failure to address the significant investment needs in the areas of education, health and the provision of social services in the 2000-2001 Budget;
- (2) wasteful and profligate spending on poor quality programs to buy Democrat support for its unfair GST;
- (3) misuse of over \$360 million of taxpayers' money on its politically partisan GST advertising campaign;
- (4) reduction of a potential Budget cash surplus in 2000-2001 of \$11 billion, to a real Budget deficit of \$2.1 billion;
- (5) use of creative accounting techniques in an attempt to deceive the Australian public on the true state of the Budget;
- (6) mishandling of the move to accrual accounting by providing complex, confusing and uninformative budget documents;
- (7) failure to identify in the Budget papers the cost of GST collection and implementation; and
- (8) failure to put in place arrangements that deliver its guarantee that no Australian will be worse off as a result of the GST package”—

Debate resumed.

Paper

Mr Griffin, by leave, presented the following paper:

Community Affairs—Senate Legislation Committee—Copy of transcript, 22 May 2000, pp 41-42.

Debate continued.

Amendment negatived.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put and passed—Bill read a second time.

Consideration in detail

Schedule—

Ordered—That the proposed expenditure for the purposes and services in the Schedule be considered in the following order, either separately or together, as shown:

- Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs
- Department of the Environment and Heritage
- Department of Defence
- Department of Veterans' Affairs
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- Attorney-General's Department
- Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts
- Department of Transport and Regional Services
- Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
- Department of Family and Community Services
- Department of Health and Aged Care
- Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs
- Department of Industry, Science and Resources
- Department of Finance and Administration
- Department of the Treasury
- Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business

} together

} together

Suspension of sitting

At 1.34 p.m., the Deputy Speaker left the Chair.

Resumption of sitting

At 4.30 p.m., the Deputy Speaker resumed the Chair.

Proposed expenditures—

Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, \$994 606 000—debated and agreed to.

Department of the Environment and Heritage, \$632 413 000—debated and agreed to.

Department of Defence, \$16 107 509 000—

Department of Veterans' Affairs, \$406 619 000—
together debated and agreed to.

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, \$2 631 815 000—debated and agreed to.

Attorney-General's Department, \$1 477 311 000—debated and agreed to.

Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, \$1 796 449 000—debated and agreed to.

Department of Transport and Regional Services, \$508 145 000—

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

4 ADJOURNMENT

On the motion of Mr McGauran (Deputy Leader of the House), the Main Committee adjourned at 7.48 p.m.

The Deputy Speaker fixed tomorrow at 9.40 a.m. for the next meeting of the Main Committee.

B. C. WRIGHT
Clerk of the Main Committee