

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

JOURNALS OF THE SENATE

No. 45

WEDNESDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER 1976

1 MEETING OF SENATE: The Senate met at half-past two p.m., pursuant to adjournment. The Deputy-President (Senator Drake-Brockman) took the Chair.

2 PRAYERS.

3 PETITIONS: Senator Wriedt (two) and Senator McLaren presented petitions, similar in wording, from 152, 75 and 13 citizens of Australia, respectively, praying that the Senate insist that the Budget provide for specific measures to lift building activity.

Petitions received and one petition read.

Senators Baume, Messner, Knight and Webster presented petitions, similar in wording, from 539, 300, 500 and 242 citizens of Australia, respectively, praying that the Government act to remedy discrimination against people of Croatian origin.

Petitions received and one petition read.

Senators Keffe and Sibraa presented petitions, similar in wording, from 179 and 327 citizens of Australia, respectively, praying that the independence of the Australian Broadcasting Commission be preserved.

Petitions received and one petition read.

Senators Colston and Bonner presented petitions, similar in wording, from 380 and 268 citizens of Australia, respectively, praying that the Government withdraw its proposed changes to Medibank.

Petitions received and read.

Senator Melzer presented a petition from 174 citizens of Australia praying that the Government observe the promise in the Prime Minister's election speech to maintain Medibank and standards of health care.

Petition received and read.

Senator Colston presented a petition from 48 citizens of Australia praying that the Senate ensure that agreements between the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments relating to health matters be maintained and that Medibank not be altered in cost or complexity.

Petition received and read.

Senator Knight presented a petition from 209 citizens of Australia praying that the Government increase funds for child-care services throughout Australia, and ensure the wider utilisation of Government buildings for child-care facilities.

Petition received.

Senators Ryan and Melzer presented petitions, similar in wording, from 110 and 124 citizens of Australia, respectively, praying that the Senate give urgent consideration to the continuation of federal finance for family planning and similar organisations.

Petitions received and read.

Senator Colston presented a petition from 118 citizens of Australia praying that cows' milk substitutes be restored to the Schedule of Pharmaceutical Benefits for children up to the age of six years as soon as possible.

Petition received and read.

The Clerk announced that the following Senators had lodged petitions for presentation, viz.:

Senators Tehan and Lajovic, similar in wording, from 20 and 1030 citizens of Australia, respectively, praying that the Government act to remedy discrimination against people of Croatian origin.

Senator Walsh, from 39 citizens of Australia praying that the Government retain at least the original Medibank scheme.

Senator Grimes, from 25 citizens of Australia praying that the Government reject any proposal to build an Omega Station in Australia.

Petitions received.

- 4 NOTICE OF MOTION: The Minister for Administrative Services (Senator Withers) gave a Notice of Motion as follows—That, on the next day of sitting, he would move—That leave be given to introduce a Bill for an Act to approve an Agreement entered into between the Government of Australia and the Government of New Zealand to amend the Christmas Island Agreement 1958.
- 5 QUESTIONS: Questions without Notice being proceeded with—

Distinguished Visitors: The Deputy-President drew attention to the presence in the gallery of members of the Committee on Production and Exchange of the French National Assembly, led by Deputy Henri de Gastines, and, on behalf of honourable Senators, extended to members of the Committee a warm welcome.

Disorder in the public galleries: And a number of strangers in the public galleries interrupting the proceedings, the President ordered their withdrawal from the Chamber.

Further Questions without Notice were answered.

- 6 LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS IN AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES—PAPER—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: The Minister for Education (Senator Carrick), by Command of His Excellency the Governor-General, laid upon the Table the following Paper:
Languages and Linguistics in Australian Universities—Report of Working Party to the Universities Commission, dated May 1975.
Senator Carrick, by leave, made a statement relating to the Paper.
- 7 CYCLONE TRACY—PAPERS: The Minister for Science (Senator Webster), by Command of His Excellency the Governor-General, laid upon the Table the following Papers:
Cyclone Tracy—Monthly Reports (five) of the Darwin Cyclone Tracy Relief Trust Fund for February, March, April, May, and June 1976 (including a review of activities for the year 1975–76), together with financial statements.
Senator Douglas McClelland, on behalf of Senator Robertson, by leave, moved—That the Senate take note of the Papers.
Ordered—That the debate be adjourned till the next day of sitting, and that Senator Douglas McClelland have leave to continue his speech on the resumption of the debate.
- 8 PAPERS: The following Papers were presented, by Command of His Excellency the Governor-General:
Freight Wagon Bogies—Report by the Bureau of Transport Economics, entitled “The 2CM Freight Wagon Bogie—An Appraisal”, dated March 1976.
Scientific and Technological Co-operation—Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, signed at Canberra on 24 August 1976.
The following Paper was presented, pursuant to Statute:
National Health Act—Fifth Annual Report on the operations of the Registered Medical and Hospital Benefits Organizations, for year 1974–75.
- 9 AGED AND DISABLED PERSONS ACCOMMODATION—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: The Minister for Social Security (Senator Guilfoyle), by leave, made a statement relating to the Government’s three year accommodation program for aged and disabled persons.
Senator Grimes, by leave, moved—That the Senate take note of the Statement.
Ordered—That the debate be adjourned till the next day of sitting, and that Senator Grimes have leave to continue his speech on the resumption of the debate.

- 10 **WAGES POLICY—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT:** The Minister for Repatriation (Senator Durack), by leave, made a statement relating to the Government's wages policy and moved—That the Senate take note of the Statement.

Debate ensued.

Ordered—That the debate be adjourned till the next day of sitting, and that Senator Button have leave to continue his speech on the resumption of the debate.

- 11 **BUDGET PAPERS 1976–77:** Order of the Day read for the adjourned debate on the motion by the Minister for Industry and Commerce (Senator Cotton)—That the Senate take note of the Papers—*And on the amendment moved thereto by the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate (Senator Wriedt)*—Leave out all words after "That", insert "the Senate condemns the Budget because:

- (a) it pursues a policy of unemployment as a weapon to reduce real wages and salaries;
- (b) it abdicates Federal Government responsibilities and forces the State governments and local governments either to reduce their services or to institute additional charges, or both;
- (c) it introduces an additional tax in the form of the Medibank levy, thus further reducing consumer spending;
- (d) it reduces the availability of services to the whole community, but particularly to those most vulnerable to hardship—notably Aborigines, the unemployed and migrants; and
- (e) it fails to institute selective stimulatory expenditure to reduce unemployment and restore consumer confidence".

Debate resumed.

On the motion of the Minister for Administrative Services (Senator Withers) the debate was adjourned.

Ordered—That the resumption of the debate be an Order of the Day for the next day of sitting.

- 12 **ADJOURNMENT:** The Minister for Administrative Services (Senator Withers) moved—That the Senate do now adjourn.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

The Senate adjourned at fifteen minutes past eleven p.m. till to-morrow at eleven a.m.

- 13 **ATTENDANCE:** Present, all Senators except Senators Sir Magnus Cormack, Davidson, Georges, Greenwood (on leave), Laucke (on leave), McAuliffe, James McClelland, Townley and Wright.

J. R. ODGERS,
Clerk of the Senate