

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

JOURNALS OF THE SENATE

No. 12

TUESDAY, 26 MARCH 1985

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- 1 **MEETING OF SENATE:** The Senate met at 2 p.m., pursuant to adjournment. The President (Senator the Honourable Douglas McClelland) took the Chair.
 - 2 **PRAYERS.**
 - 3 **PETITIONS:** The following 6 petitions, lodged with the Clerk by the Senators indicated, were received:
 - Senators Kilgariff and Messner, from 27 and 220 petitioners, respectively, praying that the Senate repeal the Labor Government's iniquitous and unfair assets test.
 - Senator Zakharov, from 35 petitioners praying that legislation for any plant variety rights system which gives exclusive ownership rights over seeds to individuals, organisations or enterprises be not passed.
 - Senator Reynolds, from 37 petitioners praying that the Senate reverse any decision which commits Australia to participate in the testing of MX Peacemaker missiles, and ensure that Australia's commitment to a nuclear-free zone in the South Pacific be maintained.
 - Senator Chipp, from 20 petitioners praying that the Parliament consider the desirability of replacing indirect taxes with a land value tax in order to stimulate Australia's economy.
 - Senator Button, from 219 petitioners praying that post-secondary tuition fees and any form of the user-pays principle in education not be introduced, that student financial assistance be increased and that visa charges on private overseas students be removed.
 - 4 **NOTICE:** Senator Mason gave a Notice of Motion, as follows—To move on the next day of sitting—That leave be given to introduce a Bill for an Act to alter the Constitution with respect to the qualification and disqualification of Members of the Parliament and Parliamentary Candidates.
 - 5 **GOVERNMENT PAPERS:** The Manager of Government Business (Senator Grimes) tabled the following Papers:
 - Australia-China Council—Annual Report 1983-84.
 - Environment and Conservation—House of Representatives Standing Committee—Report on Australia's Participation in International Environmental Organisations—Government Response—Statement by the Minister for Arts, Heritage and Environment.
 - Expenditure—House of Representatives Standing Committee—Statement by the Minister for Communications relating to a proposed Government Response to the Committee's Report on Telecom's Zonal Charging Policies.
 - Parliament Act—Proposal, together with site plans (3) and design sketches (2), for the construction within the Parliamentary Zone of additional administrative accommodation at the Australian National Gallery.
 - South Africa—Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the killings in South Africa, dated 22 March 1985.

Special Broadcasting Service—Serving Multicultural Australia: The Role of Broadcasting—Report by the Committee of Review (Chairman: The Hon. X. Connor, Q.C.), dated 31 December 1984 (4 vols).

6 QUESTIONS: Questions without Notice being proceeded with—

Paper: The Minister for Finance (Senator Walsh) tabled the following Paper from which he had quoted:

Oil exploration sites—Allocation by cash bidding—Background paper.

Further Questions without Notice were answered.

- 7 URGENCY MOTION:** The President informed the Senate that he had received a letter from the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate (Senator Chaney) advising that this day he intended to move—That in the opinion of the Senate the following is a matter of urgency: "In light of the kite flying about means testing the supporting spouse allowance in the taxation system and family allowances in the social security system, the need to make it clear to the Government and the pending tax summit that there must be provisions in the tax and social security systems to allow for the additional responsibilities of those with dependents".

And at least 4 Senators having risen in support of the motion—

Senator Chaney thereupon moved the motion.

Debate ensued.

Closure: Senator Short moved—That the Question be now put.

Question—That the Question be now put—put and passed.

Question—That the motion be agreed to—put accordingly and passed.

Pursuant to Sessional Order, consideration of Government Papers was called on.

- 8 GOVERNMENT PAPERS—CONSIDERATION:** The following Government Papers, tabled earlier this day (*see Entry No. 5 above*), were considered pursuant to Sessional Order:

Australia-China Council—Annual Report 1983-84—Motion to take note of Paper moved by Senator Cook, debated and agreed to.

South Africa—Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the killings in South Africa—Motion to take note of Paper moved by the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate (Senator Chaney) and debated.

Pursuant to Sessional Order, consideration of Government Papers was interrupted.

- 9 EXPENDITURE—HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STANDING COMMITTEE—REPORT ON TELECOM'S ZONAL CHARGING POLICIES—PAPER:** Senator Reid, by leave, moved—That the Senate take note of the following Paper:

Expenditure—House of Representatives Standing Committee—Ministerial Statement on the Report on Telecom's Zonal Charging Policies.

Ordered—That the debate be adjourned till Thursday at General Business, and that Senator Reid have leave to continue her speech on the resumption of the debate.

- 10 SPECIAL BROADCASTING SERVICE—REPORT BY COMMITTEE OF REVIEW—PAPER:** Senator Lajovic, by leave, moved—That the Senate take note of the following Paper:

Special Broadcasting Service—Serving Multicultural Australia: The Role of Broadcasting—Report by the Committee of Review.

Ordered—That the debate be adjourned till Thursday at General Business, and that Senator Lajovic have leave to continue his speech on the resumption of the debate.

11 **STATEMENT BY SENATOR:** The Leader of the Opposition in the Senate (Senator Chaney), by leave, made a statement relating to the consideration of Government Papers.

12 **PAPERS:** The following Papers were tabled:

Fisheries Act—Fisheries Notice 1985 No. 138—Minimum mesh sizes for certain trawl-nets, dated 8 March 1985.

Quarantine Act—Determination—Notice under section 86E, dated 22 March 1985.

13 **ESTIMATES COMMITTEES—APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS:** The Deputy-President (Senator Hamer) reported that the President had received letters from the Leader of the Government and the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate nominating Senators to be members of Estimates Committees, as follows:

Estimates Committee A

Senators Cook, Cooney, Hill, Jessop, Robert Ray and Short

Estimates Committee B

Senators Crowley, Elstob, Giles, Messner, Sheil and Walters

Estimates Committee C

Senators Boswell, Brownhill, Childs, Maguire, Parer and Primmer

Estimates Committee D

Senators Aulich, Baume, Colston, Puplick, Watson and Zakharov

Estimates Committee E

Senators Black, Sir John Carrick, MacGibbon, Reynolds, Sibraa and Teague

Estimates Committee F

Senators Georges, Hearn, Reid, Richardson, Townley and Vanstone

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs (Senator Gietzelt), by leave, moved That the Senators, having been duly nominated in accordance with Standing Order 36AB, be appointed members of the respective Committees.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

14 **FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENCE—STANDING COMMITTEE—REFERENCES:** The Chairman of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence (Senator McIntosh), pursuant to notice, moved—That the following matters be referred to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence:

(1) The Australian Army's rapid deployment capability.

(2) The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

Question—put and passed.

15 **BOUNTY (COMMERCIAL MOTOR VEHICLES) AMENDMENT BILL 1985:** Order of the Day read for the adjourned debate on the motion of the Minister for Education (Senator Ryan)—That this Bill be now read a second time.

Debate resumed.

Paper: The Minister for Industry, Technology and Commerce (Senator Button) tabled the following Paper:

Bounty (Commercial Motor Vehicles) Act—Return, for year 1983-84.

Debate continued.

Question—put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

The Senate, according to Order, resolved itself into Committee for the consideration of the Bill.

In the Committee

Bill, by leave, taken as a whole and agreed to.

Bill to be reported without amendment.

The Deputy-President (Senator Hamer) resumed the Chair; and the Temporary Chairman of Committees (Senator Jones) reported accordingly.

On the motion of Senator Button the Report from the Committee was adopted, and the Bill read a third time.

- 16 **GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S OPENING SPEECH—ADDRESS-IN-REPLY:** Order of the Day read for the adjourned debate on the motion of Senator Aulich—That the following Address-in-Reply be agreed to:

To His Excellency the Governor-General

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY—

We, the Senate of the Commonwealth of Australia in Parliament assembled, desire 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.

And on the amendment moved thereto by the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate (Senator Chaney), viz: That the following words be added to the Address-in-Reply “, but the Senate is of the opinion that the Government's program outlined in the Governor-General's Speech fails to address critical problems facing Australia in that—

- (a) it fails to reassure the Australian people that the country's defence arrangements within the western alliance will be preserved and strengthened following:
 - (i) the Prime Minister's capitulation to internal party pressures on the issue of Australia providing logistical assistance to the United States for its testing of the MX missile, and
 - (ii) increasing uncertainty as to the future of the ANZUS Treaty fuelled by members of the Labor Government, including a Cabinet Minister;
- (b) it contains no coherent economic strategy at a time when recovery is threatened by:
 - (i) record government taxation and spending,
 - (ii) continuing pressure within the Government for new taxes on assets,
 - (iii) growing demands for higher wages and other extra cost burdens on industry,
 - (iv) the level of public debt repayments, and
 - (v) loss of value of the currency reflecting world concern about Australia's competitiveness and government instability; and
- (c) it endorses a rigid, centralised wage determining structure which imposes the same cost burdens on commerce and industry regardless of ability to pay”.

Debate resumed.

On the motion of the Minister for Community Services (Senator Grimes) the debate was adjourned.

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

- 17 **ADJOURNMENT:** The Manager of Government Business (Senator Grimes) moved—That the Senate do now adjourn.

Debate ensued.

Question—resolved in the affirmative.

The Senate adjourned at 11.07 p.m. till tomorrow at 10 a.m.

- 18 **ATTENDANCE:** Present, all Senators except Senators Coleman (on leave), Colston, Crichton-Browne, Gareth Evans, Georges and Robertson.

A. R. CUMMING THOM,
Clerk of the Senate