



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**BUSINESS**

**SPEECH**

**Thursday, 22 August 2002**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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**Questioner**  
**Speaker** Abbott, Tony, MP

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**Mr ABBOTT** (Warringah—Leader of the House) (10.01 am)—I do not wish to detain the House any longer, but I rise again to say that I welcome the comments from the member for McPherson and the member for Chifley. I also take in a good spirit the comments made by the Manager of Opposition Business. I neglected in my opening comments to thank the then Chairman of the Procedure Committee, the member for Sturt, for his good work in producing this particular report.

As members of this House know only too well, there is a degree of tension at times between the desires of the executive government and those of this parliament. We have to manage that tension. We should do our best to try to ensure that, as far as is humanly possible, members of the parliament have every opportunity to express a view, have every opportunity to engage in meaningful debate with each other and have every opportunity to subject the actions of the executive government to appropriate scrutiny. I do not say that that tension is ever going to be satisfactorily resolved; I do not say that there is ever going to be any executive government which is entirely happy with the procedures of the House. I suspect that the House will always in some of its corners be unhappy with the procedures which the executive government is prepared to contemplate. But I do think this was a good report and we have substantially adopted its recommendations. I accept that it was brought down two years ago. But, Mr Speaker, as you know, if something is worth doing, it is worth doing in part; if something is worth doing, it is better late than never. I commend these changes to the House. I say it is a down payment on reform. It is a significant step in the right direction.

Question agreed to.