



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

BUSINESS

SPEECH

Thursday, 12 December 2002

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

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Speaker	Abbott, Tony, MP	Question No.	

Mr ABBOTT (Warringah—Leader of the House) (5.41 am)—Mr Speaker, on indulgence: this is a discourtesy to the member for Barton, for which I apologise, but I thought he would not mind if I interrupted him to provide some further important information to the House.

The SPEAKER—The minister may proceed.

Mr ABBOTT—I very much regret to have to inform members of further disruptions to our late night and early morning. My understanding is that, in order to try to facilitate the passage of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Legislation Amendment (Terrorism) Bill 2002, it is now the plan of the Attorney-General to accept some amendments which the Senate has proposed but reject others. This means that the bill will have to go from here back to the Senate for further consideration. If the Senate accepts the bill as it leaves this House then we will be able to go home. If the Senate does not accept the bill, I am afraid we will have to stay here and lay the bill aside. That, as I understand it, is the position. Again, I apologise to members for the fact that we are not able to organise these things to accommodate people's schedules better.

Mr McMullan—What is the time frame for the return of the bill?

Mr ABBOTT—I believe it is not far off.

The SPEAKER—I recognise the question by the member for Fraser. I think members would like a time frame, if possible. It would be very helpful.

Mr ABBOTT—I cannot give a definite time frame but I was told, about 20 minutes ago, that it was not far off. Let us hope that by the time the member for Barton has finished his typically excellent presentation on this bill we are able to get on to the ASIO bill. We will not, I fear, be able to count on those early morning planes that I thought we would be able to just half an hour ago.