



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Main Committee

APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 1) 2009-2010

Consideration in Detail

SPEECH

Thursday, 18 June 2009

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Date Thursday, 18 June 2009
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Questioner
Speaker Smith, Anthony, MP

Source House
Proof No
Responder
Question No.

Mr ANTHONY SMITH (Casey) (10.32 am)—I thank the minister for his answer and for answering, to the best of his ability within the constraints, the questions I have put. With respect to certain issues I have raised where there has been a crossover between Finance and Treasury, the minister has rightly pointed out that some of those issues are better directed to the Treasury portfolio, and I agree with him on that. Given that our timetable is to be considering that now, on a point of order I ask whether there has been a change to the schedule that is here before us, which calls for Minister Bowen to appear at 10.30.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms AE Burke)—That is not in the hands of the chair. It is not something that I can advise on. Given that the division happened, I was letting you go for another five minutes to make up for it. If the member for Shortland, as the whip, can advise on where the Treasury spokesperson is, that would be very helpful.

Ms Hall—Yes. To clarify the matter, initially we thought the adjustment was made for this to go 10 minutes longer and to shorten the adjournment debate. When it became apparent that you were going to finish at 10.30, I sent a message to the minister, and the minister will be here very soon. He was going to come 10 minutes later to allow for the 10 minutes that was taken up with the division, and we were going to compensate.

Mr ANTHONY SMITH—Thank you for that clarification, Madam Deputy Speaker, and thank you to the member for Shortland. I am happy to keep asking a number of questions of the minister.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—I can actually close this off and we can continue with you putting questions on the record without the minister being here. This is not question time. It is not actually within the standing orders that the minister has to answer. So if you have things you want to put on the record, you have that opportunity now—or I can continue with the Minister for Finance and Deregulation for another five minutes.

Mr Tanner—I can hold the fort.

Mr ANTHONY SMITH—Madame Deputy Speaker, I thought we had had a very productive half an hour.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—We had, and I was trying to be as helpful as possible. But the standing orders actually give us fairly limited scope in this matter.

Mr ANTHONY SMITH—It might come as a shock to learn that the minister and I have policy differences and differences in our choice of football team, but we tend to conduct ourselves appropriately on very detailed policy matters. As Minister Bowen, the Minister for Human Services and Minister for Financial Services, Superannuation and Corporate Law, has appeared, I will just finish with one final question, which is a particularly relevant question given that the minister has appeared. My final question to the Minister for Finance and Deregulation is whether he has altered his view with respect to employee share ownership schemes—a view he expressed on the Sunday following the budget; a view to the effect that all employee share ownership schemes were tax rorts.