THE SENATE

WOOL INTERNATIONAL AMENDMENT BILL 1998

In Committee

SPEECH

Monday, 7 December 1998
Senator O’BRIEN (TAS) (8.05 pm)—I will bring those quotations up to date. On page 15 of the *Hansard*, Mr Thirkell-Johnston was asked questions about reconsidering the chill option. At the top of page 13, he said:

If you want my personal opinion—

talking about the chill option—

I think it would still be a better way if it were possible, but I doubt whether it is practically possible.

I then said:

We may ask Dr Richardson to take that on notice as well as the other questions.

Having been at all the inquiry’s hearings, I can tell you that Dr Richardson did take it on notice. In response to a question on notice, he said that it was feasible. My understanding, from talking to Mr Thirkell-Johnston at that hearing, was that he accepted, if it were possible, that the chill option was the better way to go.

I am not trying to prolong this debate. However, the suggestion is that there was selective quoting or misquoting of the facts. They are the facts. That is the more up-to-date position which Mr Thirkell-Johnston took at the hearing. It is all very well to say ‘Go forward’, but we have said—and I do not think I need repeat it—that the proposal now before the Senate is one that puts the unit holders backward. It does not advance them at all.