

1998-1999-2000

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS**

No. 128

TUESDAY, 15 AUGUST 2000



1 The House met, at 2 p.m., pursuant to adjournment. The Speaker (the Honourable Neil Andrew) took the Chair, and read Prayers.

2 QUESTIONS

Questions without notice were asked.

3 AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORTS

The Speaker presented the following papers:

Auditor-General—

Audit report of 1999-2000—No. 52—Financial statement audit—Control structures as part of the audits of financial statements of major Commonwealth agencies for the period ended 30 June 2000.

Audit reports of 2000-2001—

No. 1—Performance audit—Commonwealth assistance to the agrifood industry.

No. 2—Performance audit—Drug evaluation by the Therapeutic Goods Administration—Follow-up audit: Department of Health and Aged Care Therapeutic Goods Administration.

No. 3—Performance audit—Environmental management of Commonwealth land—Follow-up audit: Department of Defence.

No. 4—Audit activity report—January to June 2000: Summary of outcomes.

Severally ordered to be printed.

4 PAPERS

The following papers were presented:

Energy Research and Development Corporation—Report for 1 July to 15 December 1999.

Judge Advocate General—Report for 1999.

Migration—Joint Standing Committee—Report—Deportation of Non-Citizen Criminals—Government response.

Productivity Commission—Report No. 8—Impact of Competition Policy Reforms on Rural and Regional Australia: Inquiry Report—Government response, August 2000.

Treaties—*Bilateral—Texts, together with national interest analyses—*

Exchange of Notes, done at Canberra on 16 June and 1 August 2000, constituting an Agreement to further amend the Exchange of Letters constituting an Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of Japan establishing an Implementing Arrangement pursuant to the Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of Japan for Co-operation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy of 5 March 1982, as amended.

Exchange of Notes, done at Canberra on 4 August 2000, constituting an Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of the United States of America to further amend and extend the Agreement concerning Space Vehicle Tracking and Communication Facilities of 29 May 1980, as amended.

Treaty on extradition between Australia and the Republic of Latvia, done at Riga on 14 July 2000.

5 PAPERS—MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF PAPERS

Mr Reith (Leader of the House) moved—That the House take note of the following papers:

Energy Research and Development Corporation—Report for 1 July to 15 December 1999.

Judge Advocate General—Report for 1999.

Productivity Commission—Report No. 8—Impact of Competition Policy Reforms on Rural and Regional Australia: Inquiry Report—Government response, August 2000.

Debate adjourned (Mr McMullan), and the resumption of each debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

6 DISCUSSION OF MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE—GOODS AND SERVICES TAX AND PETROL PRICES

The House was informed that Mr Fitzgibbon had proposed that a definite matter of public importance be submitted to the House for discussion, namely, “The failure of the Government to deliver on its election promise that the GST will not lead to an increase in petrol prices”.

The proposed discussion having received the necessary support—

Mr Fitzgibbon addressed the House.

Discussion ensued.

Discussion concluded.

7 MAIN COMMITTEE—DAY OF NEXT MEETING

The Deputy Speaker reported that Wednesday, 16 August 2000, at 9.40 a.m., had been fixed for the next meeting of the Main Committee.

8 MATTERS REFERRED TO MAIN COMMITTEE

Mr Ronaldson (Chief Government Whip), by leave, moved—That:

- (1) the following Bills be referred to the Main Committee for further consideration:

Family and Community Services (2000 Budget and Related Measures) 2000;

Trade Marks Amendment (Madrid Protocol) 2000;

Customs Tariff Amendment (No. 3) 2000;

Trade Practices Amendment (International Liner Cargo Shipping) 2000;

Protection of the Sea (Civil Liability) Amendment 2000;

Patents Amendment (Innovation Patents) 2000; and

- (2) the following order of the day, committee and delegation reports, be referred to the Main Committee for debate:

Procedure—Standing Committee—Report—Second Chamber: Enhancing the Main Committee—Motion to take note of papers: Resumption of debate.

Question—put and passed.

9 SELECTION COMMITTEE—REPORT

Mr Nehl (Chair) presented the following paper:

Selection Committee—Report relating to the consideration of committee and delegation reports and private Members' business on Monday, 28 August 2000.

10 HIGHER EDUCATION FUNDING AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 1) 2000

The order of the day having been read for the resumption of the debate on the question—That the Bill be now read a second time—*And on the amendment moved thereto by Mr Lee, viz.*—That all words after “That” be omitted with a view to substituting the following words:

“whilst not declining to give the bill a second reading, the House:

- (1) notes with concern that the Government has failed:
- (a) to address the problems in universities which its own Cabinet submission identified, such as higher student/staff ratios, less frequent lecture and tutorial contact, the persistence of outdated technology and gaps in key areas of professional preparation, as well as eight institutions operating at a deficit, with some regional campuses at risk;
 - (b) to respond to calls from academics, scientists and the business community to increase significantly higher education research funding; and
 - (c) to produce legislation to implement its proposed changes to university research funding, due to start in six months, and legislation to make urgently-needed changes to the Education Services for Overseas Students Act; and

- (2) calls on the Government to immediately address each of these major issues”—

Debate resumed.

Paper

Ms Worth (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Education, Training and Youth Affairs) presented a replacement explanatory memorandum to the Bill.

Ms Worth, by leave, again addressed the House.

Amendment negatived.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put and passed—Bill read a second time.

Messages from the Governor-General

The following messages from His Excellency the Governor-General were announced:

No. 215, 27 June 2000, recommending an appropriation for the purposes of the Bill; and

No. 226, 14 August 2000, recommending an appropriation for the purposes of amendments to the Bill.

Consideration in detail

Bill, by leave, taken as a whole.

Dr Theophanous moved an amendment.

Debate continued.

Amendment negatived.

On the motion of Ms Worth, by leave, Government amendments (1) to (4) were made, together, after debate.

On the motion of Ms Worth, by leave, Government amendments (5) and (6) were made, together, after debate.

On the motion of Ms Worth, by leave, Government amendments (7) and (8) were made, together.

On the motion of Ms Worth, by leave, Government amendments (9) to (11) were made, together, after debate.

On the motion of Ms Worth, by leave, Government amendments (12) to (14) were made, together.

Paper

Ms Worth presented a supplementary explanatory memorandum to the Bill.

Debate continued.

Bill, as amended, agreed to.

Consideration in detail concluded.

On the motion of Ms Worth, by leave, the Bill was read a third time.

11 POSTPONEMENT OF BUSINESS

Ordered—That business intervening before order of the day No. 48, government business, be postponed until a later hour this day.

12 CLASSIFICATION (PUBLICATIONS, FILMS AND COMPUTER GAMES) AMENDMENT BILL 1998—SENATE’S AMENDMENTS

The order of the day having been read for the consideration of the amendments made by the Senate—

On the motion of Mr Williams (Attorney-General), the amendments were agreed to, after debate.

13 RETIREMENT ASSISTANCE FOR FARMERS SCHEME EXTENSION BILL 2000

The order of the day having been read for the resumption of the debate on the question—That the Bill be now read a second time—

Debate resumed by Mr O’Connor who moved, as an amendment—That all words after “That” be omitted with a view to substituting the following words:

“whilst not declining to give the Bill a second reading, the House condemns the Government for failing to meet its target under the Retirement Assistance for Farmers Scheme of allowing up to 10,000 older farmers to retire with dignity with control of their farm assets passing to the next generation”.

Debate continued.

Amendment negatived.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put and passed—Bill read a second time.

Message from the Governor-General

Message No. 227, 19 June 2000, from His Excellency the Governor-General was announced recommending an appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

Leave granted for third reading to be moved forthwith.

On the motion of Mr Scott (Minister for Veterans’ Affairs), the Bill was read a third time.

14 VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING FUNDING AMENDMENT BILL 2000

The order of the day having been read for the resumption of the debate on the question—That the Bill be now read a second time—

Debate resumed by Mr Lee who moved, as an amendment—That all words after “That” be omitted with a view to substituting the following words:

“whilst not declining to give the Bill a second reading, the House:

(1) notes that:

- (a) the broadest possible access to quality training opportunities is a vital part of Australia becoming a Knowledge Nation; and
- (b) demand for vocational education and training is likely to increase by at least 2.8% a year over the next four years; and

- (2) condemns the Government for:
- (a) failing to provide any funding to support this growth;
 - (b) failing to negotiate a fair and reasonable new ANTA Agreement with the States and Territories; and
 - (c) pursuing policies which damage the quality of training and put at risk the nation's skills base".

Debate continued.

15 ADJOURNMENT

It being 10.30 p.m.—The question was proposed—That the House do now adjourn.

Debate ensued.

The House continuing to sit until 11 p.m.—The Speaker adjourned the House until tomorrow at 9.30 a.m.

PAPERS

The following papers were deemed to have been presented on 15 August 2000:

Civil Aviation Act—Civil Aviation Regulations—Civil Aviation Orders—Instrument 2000 No. CASA 326.

Cocos (Keeling) Islands Act—Utilities and Services Ordinance—Determination—2000 Electricity Fees (Amendment) No. 4.

Dairy Produce Act—Scheme—2000 Dairy Structural Adjustment Program Amendment (No. 2).

Telecommunications Act 1997—Carrier Licence Conditions (Telstra Corporation Limited) Declaration 1997 (Amendment No. 1 of 2000).

ATTENDANCE

All Members attended (at some time during the sitting) except Mr Anthony and Mr Katter.

I. C. HARRIS

Clerk of the House of Representatives