

2002-03

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

No. 84

MONDAY, 24 MARCH 2003

1 The House met, at 12.30 p.m., pursuant to adjournment. The Speaker (the Honourable Neil Andrew) took the Chair, and read Prayers.

2 AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION—REPORT—STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Mr Forrest presented the following paper:

Australian Parliamentary Delegation to Canada and China, 17 to 30 November 2002—Report, March 2003.

Mr Forrest, Mr Edwards and Mr Nairn made statements in connection with the report.

Paper

Mr Edwards, by leave, presented the following paper:

Remembrance Day at Menin Gate, Belgium—Speech by Graham Edwards, 11 November 2002.

3 AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION—REPORT—STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Mr Hawker presented the following paper:

Australian Parliamentary Delegation to the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, 18 to 29 November 2002—Report, March 2003.

Mr Hawker and Mr Albanese made statements in connection with the report.

4 MOBILE PHONE THEFT

Mr P. E. King, pursuant to notice, moved—That this House:

- (1) notes the widespread use of mobile phones in Australia, with subscriptions now at approximately 12 million;
- (2) commends the Commonwealth Government and Australia's telecommunications carriers for their cooperative action in developing measures to address the problem of loss and theft of mobile phones, including:
 - (a) carriers implementing IMEI (International Mobile Equipment Identification) number blocking technology, which can render a lost or stolen mobile phone inoperable;
 - (b) examination of regulatory reform to support IMEI blocking; and
 - (c) encouraging greater public awareness of this problem and recommending action consumers can take to protect themselves in the event of the loss or theft of their mobile phones; and
- (3) notes the success of these measures to date and the recently reported falls in the level of mobile phone theft in Australia.

Debate ensued.

The time allotted for the debate having expired, the debate was interrupted, and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

5 MATURE-AGE UNEMPLOYMENT

Ms Burke, pursuant to notice, moved—That this House:

- (1) notes that statistics may not reveal the true extent of the unemployment problem for the over 45's;

- (2) notes the additional impediments to gaining employment following the loss of a job for those aged over 45;
- (3) notes the lack of opportunities for the older worker to change career paths and consider education and retraining before attempting to re-enter the workforce. The skills and knowledge of the older worker also need to keep pace with change so as not to alienate them from the workforce;
- (4) acknowledges the benefit to employers of older workers as they generally demonstrate a greater commitment to a good employer and show competence in their dealings with customers; and
- (5) calls on the Government to put in place policies that are more specific in tackling mature-age unemployment and that remove age-based discrimination and access to the labour market.

Debate ensued.

At 1.45 p.m., the time allotted for the debate having expired, the debate was interrupted in accordance with standing order 106A, Mr Johnson was granted leave to continue his speech when the debate is resumed, and the resumption of the debate was made an order of the day for the next sitting.

6 MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Members' statements were made.

7 QUESTIONS

Questions without notice being asked—

Paper

Mr Rudd, by leave, presented the following paper:

John Bray Memorial Oration—Text of speech by Senator the Hon. Robert Hill, Minister for Defence, University of Adelaide, 28 November 2002.

Questions without notice continued.

8 MEMBER ORDERED TO WITHDRAW

At 3.09 p.m. the Member for Brisbane (Mr Bevis) was ordered, under standing order 304A, to withdraw from the House for one hour for continuing to interject after a warning had been given from the Chair, and he accordingly withdrew from the Chamber.

9 LEAVE OF ABSENCE TO MEMBER

Mr Crean (Leader of the Opposition) moved—That leave of absence for the remainder of the current period of sittings be given to Mrs Crosio, on the ground of ill health.

Question—put and passed.

10 PETITIONS

Petitions lodged for presentation were announced.

11 PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE REBATE

Mr Pyne, pursuant to notice, moved—That this House:

- (1) reaffirms its support for the 30% private health insurance rebate which helps give Australians choice and is financially assisting almost 9 million Australians and their families, including one million Australians who earn less than \$20,000 a year;
- (2) notes the Labor Party opposed the introduction of the private health insurance rebate and voted against the legislation when it was debated in the House of Representatives and the Senate;
- (3) notes that numerous Labor Party members have called for major changes to the rebate; and
- (4) calls on the Labor Party to express its support for the 30% private health insurance rebate or urgently release its private health insurance policy.

Debate ensued.

The time allotted for the debate having expired, the debate was interrupted, and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

12 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Mr M. J. Ferguson, pursuant to notice, moved—That this House:

- (1) condemns the Howard Government's seven years of disinterest and denial on public transport as evidenced by its:
 - (a) decision to add a Goods and Services Tax to fares;
 - (b) failure to address the FBT disincentives on public transport fares;
 - (c) failure to give urban buses a fair go under the Diesel and Alternative Fuel Grant Scheme; and
 - (d) stated denial of any responsibility or consideration of public transport in the Auslink Green Paper that purports to lay the groundwork for a national transport plan;
- (2) notes with concern the impact of increased congestion in urban and outer urban areas on quality of life, health and access to jobs and services for Australians;
- (3) emphasises the environmental gains to be made through policy measures that reduce transport emissions, especially by reducing car dependency;
- (4) stresses that access to public transport is an issue in all regions, including regional towns and cities, impacting daily on access to jobs, education and services for Australians;
- (5) calls on the Howard Government to release any policy option and research papers commissioned or undertaken by the Commonwealth that canvas policy measures and costs associated with tax and regulatory barriers to increasing public transport usage, including the "*Cost Benefit Analysis Study for Exempting Employer-Provided Public Transport from Fringe Benefits Taxation*" conducted by the Australian Greenhouse Office in 2002; and
- (6) calls on the Howard Government to accept a role for the Commonwealth in relation to public transport and declare that role in the Auslink White Paper due to be released this year.

Debate ensued.

The time allotted for private Members' business having expired, the debate was interrupted, and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

13 GRIEVANCE DEBATE

Pursuant to the provisions of standing order 106, the order of the day having been read—

Question proposed—That grievances be noted.

Debate ensued.

The time allotted for the debate having expired—

Question—That grievances be noted—put and passed.

14 APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 3) 2002-2003—REPORT FROM MAIN COMMITTEE

The Deputy Speaker reported that the Bill had been fully considered by the Main Committee and agreed to without amendment, and presented a certified copy of the Bill.

Bill agreed to.

On the motion of Jackie Kelly (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister), by leave, the Bill was read a third time.

15 APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 4) 2002-2003—REPORT FROM MAIN COMMITTEE

The Deputy Speaker reported that the Bill had been fully considered by the Main Committee and agreed to without amendment, and presented a certified copy of the Bill.

Bill agreed to.

On the motion of Jackie Kelly (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister), by leave, the Bill was read a third time.

16 MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate was reported returning the following Bill without amendment:

20 March 2003—Message No. 228—Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Legislation Amendment 2002.

17 MEDICAL INDEMNITY (PRUDENTIAL SUPERVISION AND PRODUCT STANDARDS) BILL 2002

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.

Question—put and passed—Bill read a second time.

Consideration in detail

Bill, by leave, taken as a whole.

Paper

Mr Slipper (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance and Administration) presented a supplementary explanatory memorandum to the Bill.

On the motion of Mr Slipper, by leave, Government amendments (1) to (25) were made together, after debate.

Bill, as amended, agreed to.

Consideration in detail concluded.

On the motion of Mr Slipper, by leave, the Bill was read a third time.

18 MEDICAL INDEMNITY (PRUDENTIAL SUPERVISION AND PRODUCT STANDARDS) (CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS) BILL 2002

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—

Question—put and passed—Bill read a second time.

Leave granted for third reading to be moved forthwith.

On the motion of Mr Slipper (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance and Administration), the Bill was read a third time.

19 HEALTH INSURANCE AMENDMENT (DIAGNOSTIC IMAGING, RADIATION ONCOLOGY AND OTHER MEASURES) BILL 2002

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.

Mr Wilkie addressing the House—

20 ADJOURNMENT

It being 9 p.m.—The question was proposed—That the House do now adjourn.

Debate ensued.

The House continuing to sit until 9.30 p.m.—The Speaker adjourned the House until tomorrow at 2 p.m.

PAPERS

The following papers were deemed to have been presented on 24 March 2003:

Australian Bureau of Statistics Act—Australian Bureau of Statistics—Proposal 2003 No. 6.

Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act—Guidelines for the Classification of Films and Computer Games 2003.

Defence Act—

Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal—Determinations—2003 Nos 2, 3, 4.

Determination under section 52—2003 No. 1.

Determination under section 58B—2003 No. 7.

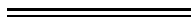
Financial Sector (Collection of Data) Act—Reporting standards under subsection 13(1)—RRS 231.1a, RRS 231.1b, RRS 231.2, RRS 231.3a, RRS 231.3b, ARS 231.1a, ARS 231.1b, ARS 231.2, ARS 231.3a, ARS 231.3b

Migration Act—Summary statement—Strip searches under section 252A.

Taxation Administration Act—

Determination—2003 No. TD 3.

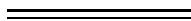
Rulings—2003 Nos CR 20, CR 21, CR 22, CR 23, CR 24, PR 1.



ATTENDANCE

All Members attended (at some time during the sitting) except Mr Andren, Mrs Crosio*, Mrs Draper, Ms Livermore*, Mr Lloyd* and Dr Southcott.

* On leave



I. C. HARRIS

Clerk of the House of Representatives