

AUSTRALIA

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

No. 17

WEDNESDAY, 31 MARCH 1976

1 The House met, at 2.15 p.m., pursuant to adjournment. Mr Speaker (the Right Honourable B. M. Snedden) took the Chair, and read Prayers.

2 PETITIONS: The Clerk announced that the following Members had each lodged petitions for presentation, viz.:

Mr Falconer, Mr Fry, Mr Jones, Mr MacKenzie and Mr Ruddock—from certain citizens of Australia praying that the Government reverse the decision to cut 1975–76 overseas development assistance, reaffirm Australia's commitment of assistance of a minimum of 0.7% of G.N.P. and establish an independent statutory authority to administer such assistance.

Mr Bradfield and Mr Ruddock—from certain citizens of Australia praying that the Australian Heritage Commission be appointed urgently and grants be given to community organisations concerned with conservation.

Mr Lucock and Mr Shipton—from certain members of the Port Macquarie Koala Preservation Society and certain members of the Committee for Urban Action, respectively, in terms similar to the last preceding petition.

Mr Staley (Minister for the Capital Territory)—from certain citizens of Australia praying that the Molonglo Arterial-Western Distributor be deferred until the project has been further investigated and reported upon in relation to cost, need and possible alternatives.

Mr Armitage—from certain citizens of Australia praying that milk substitutes for children up to 6 years of age be restored to the schedule of Pharmaceutical Benefits.

Mr Beazley—from certain citizens of Australia praying that the decision to reduce Australia's bilateral aid projects and training programs by \$4.25 million and direct foreign food aid by \$5.3 million be reversed as a matter of urgency.

Mr Connolly—from certain citizens of Australia praying that the Government remove or substantially increase the \$300 limit on income tax deductibility on personal residential land and water rates.

Mr Fry—from certain citizens of Australia praying that the Government demand a ceasefire in East Timor and the withdrawal of Indonesian troops, supply medical and humanitarian aid to Fretilin-controlled areas and withdraw all military aid to Indonesia.

Mr Haslem—from certain citizens of Australia praying that the proposed new tariff at Lawley House be not applied.

Mr McVeigh—from certain citizens of Australia praying that the Cadet forces be re-instated.

Mr Thomson—from certain electors of the Division of Leichhardt in terms similar to the last preceding petition.

Petitions received.

3 QUESTIONS: Questions without notice being asked—

Paper: Mr Scholes, in accordance with standing order 321, having called for a document quoted from by Mr Nixon (Minister for Transport)—

Mr Nixon laid upon the Table the following paper:

Photo-copy of an article in the *West Australian*, dated 30 March 1976, relating to an incident at Perth Airport.

Questions without notice continued.

4 PRESENTATION OF ADDRESS IN REPLY: Mr Speaker informed the House that the Address in Reply would be presented to His Excellency the Governor-General at Government House at 5.15 p.m. on Wednesday, 7 April.

Mr Speaker said he would be glad if the mover and seconder, together with other honourable Members, would accompany him to present the Address.

5 DISCUSSION OF MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE—AUSTRALIA'S TRADING AND POLITICAL RELATIONSHIPS AND ENERGY RESERVES: Mr Speaker informed the House that both Mr Keating and Mr Wentworth had proposed that definite matters of public importance be submitted to the House for discussion today. In accordance with the provisions of standing order 107, he had given priority to the matter proposed by Mr Keating, namely, "The threat to Australia's trading and political relationship with Japan and other trading nations and the serious implications for Australia's energy reserves caused by the recent statements and actions of the Deputy Prime Minister".

The proposed discussion having received the necessary support—

Mr Keating addressed the House.

Discussion ensued.

Discussion concluded.

6 UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT AND THE WORK TEST—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—PAPER NOTED: The order of the day having been read for the resumption of the debate on the motion of Mr Sinclair (Leader of the House)—That the House take note of the paper (*presented on 23 March 1976*), viz.:

Unemployment benefit and the work test—Ministerial statement, 23 March 1976—

Debate resumed by Mr Wentworth who moved, as an amendment—That the following words be added to the motion: "and this House commends the Government for its initiative in taking steps to ensure that the unemployment benefit relates to the genuine needs of the community and is not used as a vehicle for wilful job avoidance and the misuse of taxpayers' money".

Debate continued.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion, as amended, agreed to.

7 HOME SAVINGS GRANTS—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF PAPER:

Mr MacKellar (Minister representing the Minister for Environment, Housing and Community Development), by leave, made a ministerial statement with reference to the Government's restructured home savings grant scheme and changes in the home loan interest tax deduction scheme, and, by command of His Excellency the Governor-General, presented the following paper:

Home savings grants—Ministerial statement, 31 March 1976.

Mr Newman (Minister for Repatriation) moved—That the House take note of the paper.

Debate adjourned (Mr Uren—Deputy Leader of the Opposition), and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

8 SOCIAL SERVICES AMENDMENT BILL 1976: 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 Hayden who moved, as an amendment—That all words after “That” be omitted with a view to substituting the following words: “while not declining to give the Bill a second reading, the House deplores the failure of the Government to index dependants allowances to meet increases in the cost of living”.

Debate continued.

Mr Bryant addressing the House—

9 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 11.00 p.m.—Mr Deputy Speaker adjourned the House until tomorrow at 10.30 a.m.

PAPER: The following paper was deemed to have been presented on 31 March 1976, pursuant to statute:

Commonwealth Banks Act—Appointment certificate—E. C. Hungerford.

MEMBERS PRESENT: All Members were present (at some time during the sitting) except Mr K. M. Cairns, Mr Groom*, Mr King and Mr W. McMahon.

* On leave

N. J. PARKES,
Clerk of the House of Representatives