

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Supplementary Budget Estimates 18-21 October 2010

Question: PM15

Asked By: Senator Abetz

Topic: Independents/Greens - Access to the APS

Type of Question: FPA 58, 18 October

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 3 December 2010

Number of pages: 3

Senator ABETZ-Yes, but nothing that follows from it, which is always: we get the spin but not the substance. Can I ask: does a note-taker attend these meetings? Once again, if both PM&C and the PMO can take that question on notice, because-

Mr Lewis-We can give you an answer to that, Senator.

Senator ABETZ-Sorry?

Mr Lewis-We do not.

Senator ABETZ-All right. You do not. Thank you. Then, Minister, if you can take that on notice in relation to the PMO. Can we also be advised what issues have been discussed at each meeting, and these questions are for both PM&C and the PMO in relation to this agreement. Has a regular day or time now been set for these meetings?

Mr Lewis-We have no visibility of that at all, Senator. I am sorry, we cannot help you.

Senator ABETZ-All right. Once again, if the minister's office can take that on notice. And have any Green policy proposals been put to PM&C or, indeed, the Prime Minister's office? Do we know about that?

Mr Lewis-No.

Senator ABETZ-All right. If you can take-

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Supplementary Budget Estimates 18-21 October 2010

Mr Lewis-Some visibility, perhaps, of private members' bills, but not in line with your question, no.

Senator ABETZ-All right. Then if the minister's office could take on notice as to what they might be able to tell us about any proposals that have been put forward. Can we also be advised, Minister, what access Senator Brown and Mr Bandt and other Greens have sought with ministers, key public servants, and the Prime Minister and, in each case, for what purpose, and have there been any meetings between the Greens' treasury spokesman, Mr Bandt, the treasurer, and the minister for finance and, if so, when, who attended, what was discussed, and did the Greens put forward any proposals?

...

Senator ABETZ-Right. Minister, can you confirm that the three agreements that were entered into-one with the Independent members, one with Mr Wilkie, and one with the Greens-were prepared in the Prime Minister's office?

Senator Chris Evans-Unless PM&C can help me, I have to take that on notice, Senator.

Senator ABETZ-All right.

Senator Chris Evans-I assume so, but I do not strictly know the answer, so I will take that on notice.

Senator ABETZ-All right. It just seems that all three have a similar typeface-and allow me to give credit to Senator Scott Ryan on the record for this, who drew this to my attention-and that they all seem to be set out exactly the same way, suggesting the same hand and draftspersons were involved in these agreements.

Senator Chris Evans-It is not counter-intuitive, but I will take it on notice.

Senator ABETZ-And if you could advise us as to who advised and who was present at the time that these

three agreements were made. You will do that for us, Minister?

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Supplementary Budget Estimates 18-21 October 2010

Senator Chris Evans-I will take the question on notice.

Answer:

Each of the agreements between the Greens and independent members has previously been disclosed and is publicly available. The parties have regular meetings in accordance with the agreements. Briefings on particular issues or legislation are provided as requested from time to time.