

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

SPEECHES IN DEBATE

ON

CONSTITUTION ALTERATION (ABORIGINES) BILL 1966

(Bill presented by Mr. Wentworth)

[From the "Parliamentary Debates," 10th March 1966]

Bill presented by Mr. Wentworth, and read a first time.

Second Reading.

Mr. WENTWORTH (Mackellar) [11.18].
—I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This is a bill designed to put a third question to the people at the foreshadowed referendum. A short time ago there was some degree of urgency about this Bill because the referendum was to take place on 28th May 1966. Now that the referendum has been postponed there is not the same degree of urgency, particularly since our Constitution provides that a Bill for its alteration evaporates, in effect, unless it is put to a referendum within six months of being passed through this House. In those circumstances it would be inadvisable for this House to finalise the Bill before the date of the referendum is known. The consideration of this Bill is urgent but its finalisation is urgent no longer.

In common with other members of this House I welcomed the Government's decision to put to a referendum a proposal to repeal section 127 of the Constitution which provides that Aborigines shall not be counted for certain purposes. This is good, but does it go far enough? I believe that it does not go far enough, and I have two motives in bringing before the Parliament this expanding Bill which provides that there shall be more responsibility on the Commonwealth to help the States to deal with Aborigines and to prevent racial discrimination in Australia.

Let me refer first to the Aborigines themselves. I think that everyone who has had contact with Aborigines, as I have, has

a personal liking for them and a feeling that we have a responsibility to them. They are nice, good people. Most of us would also have some sense of failure in relation to the way in which we have dealt with our Aborigines in the past. This is a failure which perhaps is not peculiar to the Australian people. Other people, not only white people, have sensed it elsewhere outside Australia. However, there is an inherent difficulty in dealing with this problem. It is not just a matter of saying: "We will regard the Aborigines as merely poor white people". They are not. They are special people and they do need and deserve some special help. We have a special responsibility in this sphere. Hence, in a sense, some discrimination is still necessary but it must be discrimination in their favour, not discrimination against them.

The Commonwealth so far, except in the Northern Territory, has had no direct responsibility in this sphere but there is a feeling that it should assume some greater degree of direct responsibility. That feeling stems from several sources. First, the Aborigines themselves want this to happen. If we were dealing with the rights of trade unionists or companies or pastoralists or any other group in the community we would consult with that group. The Aborigines are such a group and should be the first people to whom we would turn before deciding anything relating to their future. What do they want? What are their feelings in this regard? As a result of inquiry and a very considerable degree of contact with Aborigines, I know—I think the House would agree with me on this—that they want the Commonwealth to assume a greater degree of responsibility towards them, their rights, their opportunities and their advancement.

That is the first reason for desiring some Commonwealth responsibility. I think it is a compelling reason and one to which we have not as yet given sufficient weight. We must not regard the Aborigines as having no rights. We must not regard them as merely a group in the community with no feelings, or as being not even proper people. This is the wrong way in which to regard them. We must look first and foremost to what the Aborigines want, and they want the Commonwealth to accept a greater degree of responsibility towards them.

The second reason why I believe the Commonwealth must assume responsibility is that considerable funds will be needed and these are most readily available from Commonwealth sources. From time to time in the past the States have said: "We would like to do more for our Aborigines but we do not have the funds. There are competing claims for State funds. The Commonwealth has all the cash". In those circumstances and because this is a pressing human problem, the Commonwealth should go to the aid of the States. Indeed, apart from those reasons, it should go to the aid of the States also because the burden of assisting the Aborigines is not shared equally among the States in proportion to their total population. Western Australia and Queensland, for example, have a more than proportionate need for assistance. It is unfair that the taxpayers of Western Australia and Queensland should be asked to bear a disproportionate share of what is really a national responsibility. It is a national task; it is a national problem with international implications. For that reason also the Commonwealth should be playing a direct part.

The Aborigines, very rightly, require equal protection throughout the Commonwealth from adverse discriminatory laws. All of such laws should go. The present position is that an Aboriginal in Queensland has quite different rights before the law from those of an Aboriginal in New South Wales. At the moment I am not suggesting which is correct and which is incorrect. I am saying that it is bad that there should be a lack of uniformity and that the Aborigines throughout Australia need equal protection against adverse discrimination.

For all of these and similar reasons, the Aboriginal problem will be handled better with some Commonwealth help. This does not mean the end of the State welfare administrations. Rather does it mean their extension as more funds become available to them properly from Commonwealth sources. In the administration of Aboriginal welfare there is a great deal to be said for the principle of decentralisation. The problems at Wyndham are not the same as those in Redfern. There are differences. Whilst all Aborigines are entitled to equal protection against adverse discrimination, the special welfare measures that are needed for them may well be different in different parts of Australia.

So I hope that the administration of Aboriginal welfare will continue to be decentralised among the States. Indeed, I believe that at this moment we should be paying some tribute to the new spirit that has come over many of the State administrations in the last few years. They are doing much better with the inadequate resources at their command. They may not be doing as much as we or they would like; but let us acknowledge—I think the Aboriginal people themselves recognise this—that a new and better spirit, which we all should gratefully acknowledge, is abroad in the State administrations. So much for the first motive for bringing in this expanded bill, namely, to help our Aboriginal people.

The second motive is the elimination of racial discrimination inside our Australian Commonwealth. This also affects the Aboriginal people because the Aboriginal problem is best treated within the proper framework of avoidance of racial discrimination in Australia. It is by far the most important part of the Australian picture; but I believe that it is a part which is best treated in relation to the proper framework of the elimination of racial discrimination. That is one part of the motive. The other part is that in the Australian Constitution there are anachronisms dating back to the old Chinese and Kanaka problems of 70 years ago, which no longer exist. It should be a matter of pride for us to remove these anachronisms from the Constitution. It is certainly a matter of avoiding danger because they are subject to misinterpretation overseas and in certain circumstances could imperil Australia's total security considerably. That is

the other leg of the problem. First and foremost, the motive is to help our Aboriginal people. Secondly, it is to put this matter in its proper framework by avoiding the expression of the principle of racial discrimination in our Australian Constitution.

Let me pass now from the motive to the drafting of the Bill before the House. As honorable members will see, there are two operative clauses. The first provides for the repeal of the present sub-section (xxvi) of section 51 of the Constitution, which in its present form gives the Commonwealth power to make laws with respect to "the people of any race other than the Aboriginal race in any State for whom it is deemed necessary to make special laws", and its replacement by a simple provision that the Commonwealth shall have power to make laws for "the advancement of the Aboriginal natives of the Commonwealth of Australia". The second operative clause provides for the addition of a new section 117A after the existing section 117. The proposed new section reads—

Neither the Commonwealth nor any State shall make or maintain any law which subjects any person who has been born or naturalised within the Commonwealth of Australia to any discrimination or disability within the Commonwealth by reason of his racial origin.

There are the two proposals. Let me refer, first, to sub-section (xxvi) of section 51. There are two possible ways of dealing with it: First, the way that I have described and, secondly, the way of simply omitting the words "other than the Aboriginal race in any State" so that the Commonwealth would have power to pass discriminatory laws in regard to people of any racial origin, including Aborigines.

The mere omission of the words seems to me to be unsatisfactory for several reasons. First, the sub-section does not say whether the discrimination should be adverse or favourable. If one looks at it one sees some implication, at any rate, that the discrimination would be unfavorable. We do need the power for favorable discrimination; we should not have the power for unfavorable discrimination. For that reason, I believe that it would be unsatisfactory just to omit the words.

Another reason is that the omission of the words would not confer full protection against State discrimination. It would give the Commonwealth power to legislate and, as honorable members will know, under section 109 of the Constitution Commonwealth legislation overrides State legislation. But, if honorable members will turn their attention to the judgment delivered by the High Court of Australia in the case of the City of Melbourne v. the Commonwealth of Australia in 1947, they will see that the operation of section 109 may not be quite as untrammelled as some people are inclined to suppose. It may be that the High Court, applying the principles that it laid down in that case, would find, for example, that a Commonwealth law providing that Aborigines shall be eligible for a State franchise was a law relating not to Aborigines but to the organisation of State government and, as such, beyond Commonwealth power. So, in spite of section 109, these protections would not be absolute simply because of the removal of those few words.

Thirdly, honorable members will know that there are practical and proper impediments to getting through this House legislation aimed at any specific provision of a law of a State government. Fourthly, we do not want to retain in our Constitution the power to make laws providing for adverse racial discrimination. That power would remain if we just removed those few words. Hence, I think, this sub-section, which has never yet been used, should come out and be replaced by the positive sub-section I have suggested, giving the Commonwealth responsibility for the advancement of our Aborigines.

When I speak of this, I must speak of some things which have been said previously in this House about our need to retain what are described as the plenary powers in this sub-section (xxvi). The Nauseau question, for example, was raised in relation to it. I think there was an error of law here, because the Nauseaus are not a race; hence the powers of sub-section (xxvi) could not be used in regard to them. But there are plenty of alternative powers that we could use in regard to such a problem. Sub-section (xxvi) is not operative but there are other sub-sections which would be operative: sub-section (xix)—naturalisation and aliens; sub-sections (xxvii)—immigration

and emigration; sub-section (xxix)—external affairs, with the treaty making powers; sub-section (xxx)—relations with the islands of the Pacific. These powers exist and their operation has been determined by a series of High Court decisions. They are sufficient to cover any conceivable situation. The plenary racial powers in sub-section (xxvi) are not needed and, indeed, they are an impediment to the good name of Australia overseas.

I have permission from the former Prime Minister, Sir Robert Menzies, to quote from a letter which he wrote to me last week in regard to this when I raised this question with him. He traversed some of the ground that I traversed and I now quote an exact sentence from the letter—

I would shed no tears over the complete repeal of sub-section (xxvi). It is, I think, quite unlikely to be operated by the Commonwealth, having regard to modern circumstances.

I think this might be sufficient to dispose of that particular item.

I come to the second question, the new section 117A. I think it is advisable to write a prohibition against racial discrimination into our Constitution in something like these words, because unless we do so there would be inadequate protection for Aborigines in both the Commonwealth and the State spheres. Our international relations would be improved by the inclusion of this section, which is in accordance with resolutions of the United Nations. It would also give expression to the ideal of homogeneity in our population which was expressed by the Prime Minister (Mr. Harold Holt) only a couple of nights ago in this House.

The suggestion that I have made does not go too far and this does not raise controversial issues which might imperil the success of the referendum. It applies only to Australian electors including, of course, Aborigines, and their children and it applies only inside Australia. It leaves unimpaired other Commonwealth powers, for example, those over aliens, immigration and external affairs. It is not a prohibition which could be used to impede proper Commonwealth action. Objections have been raised that a section on rights of this character, a prohibitory section, is foreign to the spirit of our Constitution. This does not impress me overmuch, particularly

when reading sections 116 and 117 which are in the Constitution already and which themselves have the same prohibitory form.

It is said by some people that the section as I have drafted it is not sufficiently water-tight. If this be so, I shall be glad of any improvements in the drafting. This is always open in the Committee stage. I do not want to be dogmatic about the actual wording of the draft and I hope that if any improvements can be suggested they will be brought forth. Indeed, Professor Cowen, the Professor of Law in Melbourne, has suggested to me one significant improvement—just one or two words to provide for the case of immigrants from the United Kingdom who are neither born in Australia nor naturalised in Australia but are "registered" as citizens in Australia. I think this provision might well be put in. But these are not serious matters and I am not proposing to take up the time of the House by traversing them overmuch now.

There has been great support for this Bill. First and most important, there has been support from the Aboriginal organisations themselves. This I regard as vital and, indeed, decisive. There has been support from church bodies. Three or four weeks ago the Council of Churches, meeting in Melbourne, decided to support these proposals and to ask ministers throughout Australia to work for them. I gratefully acknowledge also editorials in the "Catholic Weekly" of Sydney and the "Catholic Advocate" of Melbourne, giving full support to these proposals. I thank the 250 university people who have signed in support of the proposals. I include among those two vice-chancellors, a dean of law and various other people, whose very weighty support will help.

Spokesmen for the Australian Labour Party in this House have given some support to these principles and the Democratic Labour Party has also indicated support. As regards the Liberal Party I gratefully acknowledge the support of the Women's Group in New South Wales. The Liberal Youth Council in New South Wales has seen fit to give support, as well as numerous branches and conferences.

Apex and Rotary clubs, while not formally committed as bodies to support, have helped very materially. I thank those

very, very numerous helpers who have distributed pamphlets and otherwise worked. I express gratitude to these people and appeal for the continuance of their support.

I think that there is now a deep tide of popular sentiment running in favour of the kind of proposal that I have brought forward in this Bill. It may be that the Bill will be taken over by the Government. I hope that it will, and perhaps be improved on. I shall be very grateful if something of that kind occurs. All I am asking is that the substance of what I am putting forward be placed before the people at the referendum when it occurs.

Will this extra question imperil the success of other questions? I think not—rather the opposite—because there is some emotion and momentum behind this question now. It may help in clarifying these other questions and getting them carried. But this is a subsidiary point. The main point is to help our Aborigines, the people to whom we owe, as I have said, a special duty and for whom we should have a special feeling.

I ask those who support these proposals both inside and outside the House to continue to work for them. It will be necessary to dispel any suspicion that we are out to transfer immense powers from the States to the Commonwealth. This, of course, is not so. We should like the Commonwealth to share a burden with the States in a matter which, in terms of their total responsibility, is a small and embarrassing matter but which, from our point of view in this Commonwealth, should be a matter of quite prime responsibility. I have had some contacts, I am glad to say, with some of the States already. These have been on a confidential basis and I do not wish to discuss them in this House but I would say that I am not without hope and prospect that all will turn out well there. But we must see that this referendum succeeds.

Let us continue our campaign. Let us do this primarily because we want to help our own Australian Aborigines, to help them in this period of transition, to bring them through to full citizenship—a goal which we will not achieve overnight but of which we should never lose sight.

Mr. SPEAKER.—Is the motion seconded?

Mr. Erwin.—I second the motion and reserve the right to speak later.

Leave granted for debate to continue.

Mr. BEAZLEY (Freemantle) (11.46).—The honorable member for Mackellar (Mr. Wentworth) has reminded us that there are differences in State policies as relation to Aborigines. I remember that when the Select Committee on Voting Rights of Aborigines called at Woodend in the north of New South Wales the members of the Committee saw there a number of Aborigines who had come down from the Cherbourg native settlement in Queensland. That settlement was a place where, I would say, the material conditions of Aborigines by normal Australian standards for Aborigines were unusually good. The housing was better than at most of the other places one might visit in Australia. The standards of nutrition were good. But one had no feeling of definite purpose as to what positive-ly was going to happen to the people for their advancement, how they were going to fend for themselves in society. They appeared to be in a kind of protective custody. At Woodend, on the other hand, the housing was disgraceful, employment was intermittent, conditions were not good, the morale in the community was not high.

I asked one man why he had come down from Cherbourg to Woodend and his answer was: "I would rather have freedom than good conditions". Such a statement does, I think, qualify a man for the franchise, but in addition to that it seemed to me a tragedy that there should have been among so many a sense that they had to choose between freedom and good conditions. There was no doubt that in the formal sense of constitutional rights, the right to vote and freedom of movement about the State, Queensland had a policy very different from and much more highly restrictive than the policies of other States. In terms of the ultimate survival of the Aboriginal people I do not say that Queensland policy would have been behind that of the other States; I merely remark that I could not see what the Queensland authorities were doing to enable the Aboriginal people to get off the footing onto which they had been manoeuvred. The Aborigines in that State at that time had no sense of freedom of movement within the State; in that sense they were at that time without some aspects of independence and dignity.

This is a constitutional debate. A constitution is a living document to determine the actions of government in a community. I think the honorable member for Mackellar has a great heart, first for attempting to amend the Constitution at all and, secondly, for trying to amend it in respect of the Aboriginal people. The section which he proposes to eliminate from the Constitution—it contains the restriction on the power of the Commonwealth to legislate for the Aboriginal people—reads—

The Parliament of the Commonwealth shall have power to make laws for the peace, order and good government of the Commonwealth with respect to the people of any race, other than the Aboriginal race in any State, for whom it is deemed necessary to make special laws.

In the 1891 draft of the Constitution this passage read quite differently, and I want to refer to the implied censure of Australia by New Zealand resulting from the original form of words. Last night in the film that was shown in this Parliament House there were references to Sir George Grey, and I am glad to see the beginnings of a reevaluation of his position in history, because I think that when we study fully the history of our country, which in this respect is tied in with that of New Zealand, we are going to see in Sir George Grey the greatest figure of imperial statesmanship in our 19th century history in the senses in which imperial policies have survived the test of the modern conscience. I think it is due very largely to him that provision was made for a democratic franchise for the Senate—a remarkable achievement in 1891 when legislative councillors as a matter of course were elected according to property qualifications. He was representing New Zealand at the Constitutional Convention as the Prime Minister of New Zealand. The original draft gave the Commonwealth power to make laws with respect to—

The affairs of people of any race with respect to whom it is deemed necessary to make special laws not applicable to the general community, but so this power shall not extend to authorise legislation with respect to the Aboriginal native race in Australia and the Maori race in New Zealand.

I have no doubt that what Sir George Grey was trying to do was to throw a defensive screen around the Maori people, to defend them from the kind of Aboriginal policies that we pursued in Australia, and when New Zealand withdrew from the negotiations designed to include it in our Federation

the provision was left in the draft except that the reference to Maoris was eliminated and the Aboriginal people were the only ones then referred to in the limitation of power.

One of the men who stood for this limitation was Sir John Forrest who, as an explorer, had been very dependent on Aborigines to help him locate water and so on. When he referred to this section he said—

I cannot for the life of me see why we should desire to give the Federal parliament control of any person, whoever may be his nationality or colour, who is living in a State.

I think he conceived a defensive role in relation to Aborigines, and he was not even in favour of the Commonwealth having the Authority to repatriate the Pacific Islands labourers, which was the field of power where the real interest centred in this debate at the Constitutional Convention.

Whatever the origins of this, however, the fact remains that the provision continues as a prohibition on the Commonwealth from legislating for the people of the Aboriginal race other than those in Commonwealth territories. The honorable member for Mackellar has, I think, a quite unique and vital distinction in the politics of Australia in this respect, because in his persistent work which led to the establishment of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies he extracted from the Government of the Commonwealth the first gesture of a basic respect for the Aboriginal people in 50 or 60 years. I will make a reference later to earlier gestures, which unfortunately did not live on in history, by the Government of Queensland at the turn of the century and by the Government of South Australia early in the century.

Basically all Aboriginal policy is drifting. The mind of no government in Australia and no political party in Australia are really focused on the Aboriginal people. The way in which a minority people is treated is the touchstone of national character. The true test of our respect for a minority race is whether we want them to be a distinctive people making a distinctive contribution. New Zealanders are proud of Maoris; Maoris are proud to be Maoris. Whatever failures there may be in New Zealand policy, or injustices in New Zealand policy, these fundamental and essential achieve-

ments in the vital realm of the mind are there. Our policy, which we proudly claim to be one of assimilation, is an unconscious revelation to the world that we are not yet capable of New Zealand's maturity. We are not proud of the Aborigines, although there are many reasons why we should be, and almost no policy exists in either the Commonwealth sphere or the State sphere of encouraging Aborigines to be proud of themselves.

I remember a friend of mine who taught at the Forrester River School. He was teaching Australian history to Aboriginal children and he suddenly realised that his teaching of history was totally rejected by the children. He sat down and asked them why, and they said: "You teach us about Australian explorers but you never refer to the Aborigines who we know guided them, showed them how to find water in desert places and helped them." As a result this young man, whose name is Harry Venille, conducted researches into this question and was astounded to find the extent to which the statements of the Aboriginal children about the dependence of Australian explorers on Aborigines were true. But he was cheered to find that these Aboriginal children had a pride in themselves as a people and demanded their place in Australian history. I would say that this was the greatest compliment to the effectiveness of his own teaching, if he could foster self respect, that could possibly be made.

The Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies is the first sign of a real respect on the part of the Commonwealth Government. It is the achievement of the honorable member for Mackellar (Mr. Wentworth), but there is credit due to the acceptance of it on the part of the Government. Every State is utterly indifferent, except perhaps in museums, to Aboriginal music, Aboriginal customs, Aboriginal religion, Aboriginal languages, Aboriginal culture and Aboriginal art. Queensland and South Australia in the 1890s and early in this century respectively took some interest, and Queensland appointed a brilliant ethnologist, Walter Edmund Roth, whose work on Aborigines in the 1890s and early in the 20th century was a vital part of the history of this country and of the Aborigines. The Queensland Government did

attempt to pursue a policy based on an enlightenment proceeding from a real study of the Aboriginal people. South Australia backed the Spencer Baldwin expeditions before the First World War. Apart from that—let us face it—the States have treated Aboriginal life as unworthy of notice. This is not to say that there were no policies; but all policies envisaged the Aborigines as potential black Europeans.

There was no attempt, after Roth and Spencer Baldwin, to get in to find out who the Aboriginal people were, or who they themselves thought they were. Australians policy has been directed towards the destruction of the self consciousness of the Aboriginal people and the policy of assimilation is now a continuation of the destruction of that self consciousness. In most cases in the States the new policy is not, in my view, a policy at all. It is an attempt to avoid the charges of apartheid and discrimination and does not go beyond that in any real creative sense. We will give them drinking rights. We will give them fornicating rights, whereas it used to be—as it is in South African law—an offence for interracial fornication to take place, although we never denied inter-marriage. We will give them voting rights and they may vote every three years for Tweededum or Tweedeides who normally are equally indifferent to their needs. All these reforms cost the Treasury virtually nothing. We have now an Arbitration Commission decision on wages. If we ask for statistics on tuberculosis or leprosy we are told that racially segregated statistics are not kept and we are proud of the fact that we do not racially segregate our statistics. We cannot see races, but we can now identify Aborigines as a distinctive group to whom for three years we can pay lower wages. We can see Aborigines when it comes to a question of wages, but we cannot see them when it comes to a question of health statistics. But we need separate statistics about the Aboriginal people if we are ever to measure the effectiveness of policies and make moral assessments of policies. I have no doubt that in this group of Aborigines in the Northern Territory over whom one blanket definition is now thrown, some individuals are worth full wages now, but we assume that they disqualify as a group.

It is based on no evidence whatsoever presented by the Aboriginal people themselves. White government officials appeared before the judge and white union officials appeared before the judge; but did he go to see the skills of the Aboriginal stockmen?

Mr. Snedden.—He did go to see the skills. There were very many inspections.

Mr. BEAZLEY.—And will they pick out the Aborigine who has skills equal to those of the white stockman and give him equal wages?

Mr. Snedden.—But there were inspections.

Mr. BEAZLEY.—I am grateful to know that, but did Aborigines testify before the judge?

Mr. Snedden.—I believe so.

Mr. BEAZLEY.—There were customs among the Aborigines, such as wife lending, which become desperately degrading out of the context of tribal law and safeguards, and yet when we make a reform like the fornicating rights we do not notice this. In Western Australia venereal disease has quadrupled in the last two or three years and it is very often among Aborigines. We do not want any charges of apartheid. We are not thinking in terms of the real welfare of the Aborigines. We are not thinking of this background of custom. And a double hit is made. They have not wages equal to those of the Europeans. They have this background of wife lending and the giving out of their daughters, and they have developed the expenditure needs of the Europeans. Inadequate income among Aborigines in contact with Europeans leads too often to prostitution and venereal disease. We have really to look intelligently at this Aboriginal community. The honorable member for Mackellar has attempted to make us look at these people—as they look at themselves—through the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies. We have to look at what is really happening to them in health.

The Commonwealth Government, in the 1930s, avoided collecting unemployment statistics because it did not wish to be judged by them; therefore they were not published. Now the Commonwealth and the States avoid any statistics in relation to

Aborigines and treat this deliberately cultivated ignorance as a matter for pride. It is evident that most tuberculosis is among Aboriginal people. If you ask what are the statistics for leprosy and tuberculosis you are told, smugly, that no separation of statistics on racial grounds takes place. Why not? You want statistics if you want to measure the true effectiveness of your health policy. We get glimpses from reputable private investigations of an Aboriginal infant mortality seven or eight times the European rate. If the Commonwealth and the States wish to know the success or failure of their policies they should have clear statistics of leprosy, tuberculosis, infant mortality, housing, education and levels of education before them. The honorable member for Mackellar has tried to write into the Constitution a new attitude of responsibility on the part of the Commonwealth Government. I hope that whatever problems there are about this constitutional referendum the proposals are not going to be bogged down in a fight about power between the Commonwealth and States, and I think that the honorable member has done his uttermost to avoid this.

The nation is judged on this matter. I remember that at the time Dr. Evatt raised before the United Nations the question of the maltreatment by the Communist authorities of the people in certain former Baltic States, an Aborigine was chained, in Western Australia, by the State police. The policeman had gone out to arrest an Aborigine. There were no prisons in which he could put him and he chained him to a tree overnight when bringing him to trial. But there is something peculiarly horrible about handcuffing or chaining people to trees or posts, as we have noticed quite recently. Within 24 hours the account of this episode was in Molotov's hands in the United Nations. The whole of the Afro-Asian delegations in the United Nations immediately reacted. They were much more interested in what was happening to an Aborigine in Western Australia who had been chained—which nobody denied—than they were in what was happening to thousands of people in the former Baltic independent states, which was denied by the Soviet Government at the time. In the Commonwealth Government Doctor Evatt had no power whatever over what the Western

Australian police did and no authority whatever over Western Australian Aboriginal policy, but nobody in the world cares anything for our constitutional distinctions between the Commonwealth and the States. The whole nation is judged on any Aboriginal policy, anywhere in any State, and I feel that this constitutional amendment by the honorable member for Mackellar, which gives the Commonwealth the power to legislate positively for the benefit of people of Aboriginal race—I do not conceive of brushing the States aside and I think we would need to use all the States' instrumentalities and work in conjunction with them—at least places the final responsibility on the Government of this nation; and the final responsibility is placed on the Government of this nation by the world, whether or not we have constitutional power.

If I seem to be critical of any aspect of the policy of the Government or the Minister for Territories (Mr. Barnes), I should like to say that I do not think that there is any place for superiority in this debate. This is not a normal party attack on the Government, even if I am critical of certain things that exist in the Commonwealth. From working with the Minister on two select committees, I know of his interest in the Aboriginal people, though sometimes he disagrees with me and sometimes he agrees with me. What we are trying to conduct here is a dialogue on the question of the Aboriginal people—the people on whose wellbeing we as a nation may very well be judged. The honorable member for Mackellar wants the Commonwealth to have power to discriminate for the Aborigines. "Discrimination", as we know, has become a dirty word because we always assume that discrimination is hostile. I use again an analogy that I have used before. The Commonwealth, under its defence powers, discriminates for ex-servicemen who have suffered special disabilities in the service of the country. We do not give everybody in Australia a repatriation pension, but under the defence powers, the Commonwealth can discriminate in favour of demobilised servicemen so as to meet their needs.

The Aborigines are people whom in the past we have not treated as they should have been treated. They are our people. But we

have not acknowledged their entitlement to any land. We have not, until very recently, bothered to study their outlook and their customs. It almost seems that whenever any action is taken about benefits for Aborigines some delay is involved. Even though the Government's own proposals for amendment of the Constitution with respect to a provision relating to Aborigines related merely to the census, I regret that for the time being we have brushed aside that referendum proposal and decided to delay it. As I have just said, it almost seems that for some reason or other proposed improvements in the conditions of the Aboriginal people are fated always to be delayed. We now propose not to go ahead with the referendum on which we had agreed. There is to be further delay. The Aborigines in the Northern Territory who are engaged in the pastoral industry are not to be given equality of wages until further delay has occurred. This sort of thing always seems to happen in relation to the Aboriginal people. We know that if this were to happen in relation to trade unions, business or any other section of the Australian community the kind of uproar that would immediately arise would prevent any delay in meeting what those people conceived to be their needs. Somehow or other, Aboriginal affairs always seem to be thrust aside as secondary. This is because perhaps I in my heart and many others in their own hearts, as they would agree if they were quite honest, in our basic motives feel that Aborigines are a secondary people.

Dr. Ida Mann, Professor of Medicine at the University of Western Australia, reported some years ago that 78 per cent. of Aboriginal children suffered from trachoma. I think that was the percentage. Magnificently, the State Government has got rid of that disease some years since. If it had been reported that 78 per cent. of the children at the Claremont School, which my children attended, suffered from trachoma, the uproar would have resounded from one end of the State to the other and the State Government either would have had to clear up the situation in a couple of weeks or it would have been out of office, because we are passionately concerned about our own children. But, if we are honest with ourselves, we must admit that we are not passionately concerned about the Aboriginal

people. I believe that this Parliament is capable of being passionately concerned about them.

I consider that the referendum campaign that the honorable member for Mackellar proposes, whether it were to succeed or fail, would be of vital importance as an educational campaign in focusing in the minds of all Australians the whole position of the people of the Aboriginal race. They will not die out. This is the point that makes the issue so vital. Across the north of Australia, there has been a reversal of the population trend. We shall have many more Aborigines in the future. We must get down to some real thinking about their place in the Australian community. I believe that the constitutional changes proposed by the honorable member for Mackellar will provide a documentary basis for new action by the Commonwealth, in conjunction with the States, in the field of Aboriginal welfare. Let us be quite clear about the situation. The States now live with the battle to get money from the Commonwealth. As far as I can see, the sums allocated for the Aboriginal people are not sufficient to meet their needs. But once there is written into the Commonwealth Constitution a clear statement of the Commonwealth's own responsibilities, this will, I believe, lead to a transformation in the finance available to meet the needs of the Aborigines. I believe that it will lead also to a vital transformation of attitude to the building up of staffs to deal with the needs of the Aboriginal people and to a transformation in their conditions.

The Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, which was established at the suggestion of the honorable member for Mackellar, has now given us many clues about the way in which we should deal with the Aborigines. For the first time their thought is being opened to us and we have been shown how to treat them with real respect as a distinctive people with the right to be distinctive. For that reason, the Opposition wholeheartedly supports this Bill which was presented this morning by the honorable member for Mackellar and which is designed to amend the Constitution as it relates to Aborigines.

Mr. ERWIN (Ballarat) [12.11].—Mr. Deputy Speaker, it gave me very much pleasure indeed to second the motion of my colleague, the honorable member for

Mackellar (Mr. Wentworth). I congratulate him on the great deal of work that he has put into this. I must say at the outset that we are all very pleased to see Mrs. Kathleen Walker, the Australian Aboriginal poetess, in the chamber. When we tackle the problem of the integration of these two races, we must first realise that the responsibility is on not only our shoulders but also the shoulders of the Australian Aborigines. Through the years, we have passed the buck by saying that this is not our fault, that it is the fault of our forefathers. We must realise that if we are to bring about any successful integration of Aborigines with Europeans those in the majority—the Europeans—must take the lead. We must give because we have taken. We have taken a good deal, so now it must be nearly all giving on our part. Both races have to work at the task. Today we cannot say that we have Queensland Aborigines, New South Wales Aborigines or Western Australian Aborigines. All are Australian Aborigines. Section 51 of the Constitution, if we allow it to stay as it is at the moment, will not permit us to introduce legislation providing for definite assistance at the national level towards the welfare of our Aborigines, apart from those in the Northern Territory, as we know.

I want to emphasise a point that was stressed by previous speakers. We shall not take anything away from the States. On the contrary, we shall give something. I believe that State officials to whom I have spoken realise their responsibilities and will look at the situation in this light. We realise, as has been realised in many of the other countries where similar problems have existed, that these problems must be tackled first through the channels of education. But when we think of the education of Australian Aborigines we must think not only of reading, writing and arithmetic in our primary schools. We must think of something that is even more important than our Aboriginal children attending with European children in the same schools.

We must think of a special kind of education—an education that will bring these people to appreciate our way of life so that they can have a good life beside us, living as we do and respecting the kind of things that we respect. This will mean a special kind of education. I think this is

what the honorable member for Mackellar and the honorable member for Fremantle (Mr. Beazley) were referring to when they spoke of a kind of discrimination.

In the field of primary and secondary education, the States have done and are doing a wonderful job in the education of Aboriginal children. Recently in the United States of America on a federal basis there has been started what is called the Head Start Programme. This has appealed to me as the sort of thing we could well emulate in Australia. The idea of the Head Start Programme is to bring children back to school during vacation periods. What is more, each child is paid \$1.50 a day as an incentive to return to school at that time. During this period they are given a special type of education they need so much. This is the sort of thing we have to look at from a federal angle.

So I say: Let us all look seriously at the amendment of sub-section (xxv) of section 51 of the Constitution and let us do it now. Unless we correct it now, the eyes of the world will soon be turned on us and we will be held to criticism for our treatment of the Aborigines. To use the common vernacular term, it is better to beat the gun and act now.

Despite the collective wisdom of those who framed the Constitution, one can hardly imagine that the section under discussion would be accepted today as readily as it was almost 70 years ago. This was not the fault of those who framed the Constitution. Conditions were different then. The simple truth is that our knowledge and understanding of the problem have grown. Our ideas have altered and developed. There is now a growing awareness of the human value of these neglected people. Our national task is patiently, consistently and with understanding to help these shy, diffident and deprived people whose age old culture and organisation have been destroyed or are being threatened and disturbed by the march of our own civilisation.

The Aborigines face what is for them the immensely difficult transition from the despised shanty settlements that fringe some of our towns to secure integration and equality with the hearts of our communities. The transition can be achieved only if our national Government has the required constitutional power. This Government

has a strong desire to legislate on all matters that will bring about an improvement in the assistance available to our Aborigines so that in time—no one knows how long—our two peoples ultimately will be successfully integrated.

Mr. BRYANT (Wills) [12.20].—This Bill represents an effort to bring the Australian Aboriginal community into the body of the Australian Commonwealth in a fully constitutional way. That is the project before us. I suppose the immediate project is for those of us who are convinced that this is necessary to convince our colleagues in this House and then to carry with us the rest of Australia—in the terms of the Constitution, a majority of the people in the majority of the States.

From my own experience, which is now lengthy and broad, I am convinced that the people of Australia will support wholeheartedly any referendum that flows from this Bill. I say that because in the 10 years I have been in the Parliament, I have associated myself closely with the movement of the Aboriginal people themselves and those other people who are concerned with this problem. Because of that association, I know that there is a campaign ready to be initiated immediately the Government decides that it is politically possible to proceed with this project.

So I say to honorable members that the first thing we should do is to shed any doubts about the feelings of the citizens of Australia in this matter. The last doubts lie with ourselves perhaps as to whether we can carry our own electorates with us. I think I can give a personal guarantee that a majority of the citizens of Wills will vote for this proposition. I am sure the persuasive advocacy of the Attorney-General (Mr. Snedden) in Bruce will have the same result. The simple question is this: Are the people with us? I say: Yes, they are. This is not a campaign that started only yesterday. Like most of us, I came to this Parliament not very well informed on the Aborigines. The position of these people was brought to my notice only a year or two after I entered the Parliament in late 1955. With the permission of the Australian Labour Party, we of the Opposition moved a motion on the general subject of Aboriginal welfare as long ago as 1957. Only a week later my close friend and former colleague, Mr.

Hayden who was then the honorable member for Parkes, tabled a petition in this House asking that the Commonwealth take action to remove sub-section (xxv) of section 51 from the Constitution and to repeal section 127.

In the intervening time, a tremendous campaign has been associated with this project. In fact, 94 separate petitions have been presented to the House in the nine years since the campaign got under way in 1958. Actually, it is eight years since we launched the project in a national way. Churches, most political parties, people in all the Parliaments and the trade union movement of Australia are all convinced that this change is necessary. The honorable member for Mackellar (Mr. Wentworth) has given the Parliament an opportunity to agree to it and I believe it is our bounden national duty to get on with the job.

The position is this: The Aboriginal people are still denied some of the advantages and benefits of being Australians and they will be denied those advantages while this section of the Constitution remains. While anything inhibits Commonwealth action in the field of Aboriginal advancement, the Aborigines cannot receive the full benefits of Commonwealth resources. The last arrived migrant who steps ashore in Australia can receive the benefits of Commonwealth support in education. He can go to a migrant school to learn the English language. But the Commonwealth Government has no constitutional authority to establish such a system for the Aborigines of Northern Queensland or Western Australia although I do not suppose its authority to do so would be challenged.

This is simply a question of bringing the Australian community together in a partnership. I put it to honorable members that each of them should examine his own conscience, which I presume is as clear as anybody else's in this matter; each should take a look at his own electorate and consider where he will stand when this project comes before the people. Is his electoral committee on side in this matter? Can it carry his electorate with it? If the answer is "Yes", the answer of the House to this Bill will certainly be "Aye". This has been a long campaign for

the Aboriginal people of Australia. The instructions given to Governor Phillip when he set out to establish a settlement in Australia were—

You are to endeavour by every possible means to open an intercourse with the natives, and to conciliate their affections, enjoining all our subjects to live in amity and kindness with them. And if any of our subjects shall wantonly destroy them, or give them any unnecessary interruption in the exercise of their several occupations, it is our will and pleasure that you do cause such offenders to be brought to punishment according to the degree of offence.

Then this portion of the instructions is ironical because we have not yet got round to it—

You will endeavour to procure an account of the numbers inhabiting the neighbourhood of the intended settlement. . . .

The repeal of section 127 will enable us to get on with that for the whole of Australia. The first mention of this proposal that I can find before the Parliament, although I have not delved into every document, is a recommendation by Dr. Donald Thomson in a report to the present Minister for Trade and Industry (Mr. McEwen), who was then Minister for the Interior, on the position in the Northern Territory. This is what he said—

Although I think that the objective should be finally to bring the whole of the administration of native affairs in Australia under one control, since it is obviously desirable that there should be a uniform policy of administration. . . .

It was stated that, finally it will be only the Commonwealth which will have the necessary resources and which will be able to exercise total responsibility effectively for the Aboriginal people of Australia and for all people of Australia. So I invite honorable members to remember that the proposition that we change the Constitution in this way has, so far as I can tell, the wholehearted support of every organisation associated with the Aboriginal people in Australia and the support of the Aboriginal people themselves.

If the House will hear with me for a moment I will tell honorable members something of the organisation with which I am involved as the senior vice-president. I refer to the Federal Council for Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. I would note here that we might have to give some consideration to the definition of the position of the Torres

Strait Islanders in this regard. This organisation has affiliates throughout Australia—church bodies, country women's associations, trade unions, Aboriginal fellowships and so on. But the most significant feature of this organisation is the part played in it by the Aboriginal people themselves. By that term I mean folk of Aboriginal ancestry, whether three quarters or half, or anyone who considers himself to be of that nature. The President of the Council is Mr. Joe McGinness of Cairns. He is a waterside worker and is a very powerful and impressive man. The vice-presidents include Mr. Phillip Roberts, about whom some honorable members may have read in Mr. Douglas Lockwood's book, and Mr. James Morgan who has been around the House interviewing people during the last few days. We have secretaries in the Torres Strait Islands and in each of the States, and in each case these are Aboriginal people. So we speak here this afternoon with the full support of the Aboriginal people. I think this is important to understand.

I hope that before a final decision is made the Government, through the appropriate Minister, will call in the representatives of the Aboriginal people and discuss the proposition with them so that there is complete report on this matter. It is a tradition in Australia that when we are dealing with industrial legislation the trade unions are consulted and that when considering repatriation legislation the Returned Servicemen's League and others are consulted. In this instance the only people who have to be convinced are the members of this Parliament. I am convinced that the citizens of Australia are on side. I am convinced that the electoral machinery is in existence to carry the proposition once it is put before the citizens, and I am convinced that there can be no proper approach to the Aboriginal question in Australia until the Commonwealth Government takes it up in its full and responsible way. It is quite unfair that the principal responsibility for the Aboriginal people of Australia should reside solely in Queensland and Western Australia while the Victorians and New South Welshmen, who number seven or eight million Australian people—the great majority of Australian people and taxpayers—can shed the burden by having a very small Aboriginal community. So I appeal

to the House to give serious consideration to all the proposals now before it and to examine this simple political question.

Granting that the House is agreed that the Aboriginal question is one of conscience which we can clear only by Commonwealth action; that in the political field we can get the majority of people in the majority of States on side; that there are adequate resources to campaign with; that those who campaign will have the co-operation of large bodies of significant organisations; and that, therefore, the only barrier to the successful passage into the Constitution of Commonwealth responsibility for Aborigines lies in our own hearts and our own morale, I believe that this afternoon we are setting our feet upon a path which will change the whole structure and nature of the Aboriginal situation in Australia. I am pleased that on this occasion I speak in full support of and in full rapport with my colleague, the honorable member for Mackellar. This is a notable advance in Australian politics. I know that several other honorable members opposite wish to add their support to this motion. Therefore, in certain ways, this is an historic matter.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. LUCOCK)—Order! As it is now two hours after the time fixed for the meeting of the House, the debate is interrupted.

Motion (by Mr. SNEEDEN) agreed to—

That the time for discussion of notices be extended until 12.45 p.m.

MR. ROBINSON (COWPER)—I rise to support this proposal. I believe that there is a very great need for us to overhaul completely our national approach to the Aboriginal problem. This is a matter that deserves even more consideration than the scope of this debate permits. The Aboriginal problem in Australia was described by the honorable member for Mackellar (Mr. Wentworth) as something that was of both national and international concern. I am one who feels very strongly on the issue of the international implications of the problem. During a visit overseas last year I suppose the question most often raised with me was about Australia's policy in respect of the Aboriginal people of the Commonwealth. I was proud to be able to say that we did not, in a practical way, discriminate, that we were doing things to advance these people

and that we regarded them as citizens of the Commonwealth. But one must go further if one is to be quite serious in a matter of this kind, and to take it further one must have regard to the constitutional factors and to the ways and means of looking to the interests of the advancement of our Aboriginal people.

It has been argued that the Constitution, as it stands, does not permit Parliament to discriminate and that the proposed alteration could introduce a situation in which Parliament could discriminate. I have no doubt that the Government will take this view fully into consideration when, as must happen, this matter comes again before the Executive for consideration. The view of the honorable member for Mackellar that we cannot proceed with this motion hastily because there cannot be a determination that would run longer than six months ahead of a referendum date is a vital consideration. But let us make sure that in the long run we are able to remove any doubt in this matter. The Commonwealth would be the poorer if the eventual outcome of this matter leaves any doubt about discrimination. We cannot permit a situation that would infer discrimination. Having said that, I want very briefly to express some views in respect of what we should be doing in Australia from the standpoint of the practical approach that is necessary. First, we are spending insufficient money in the interests of the advancement of the Aboriginal people. In my own electorate I have many instances of the need for greater expenditure. There is scope not only for housing and education but there is also vast scope for the provision of an adequate approach to the problem of social work and welfare work. There are insufficient officers and an insufficient provision for welfare officers to do a worthwhile job in lifting the standard of the lives of the Aboriginal people. I find that there is an increased Aboriginal population in my electorate. This indicates very clearly the need for more work to be done.

In New South Wales a parliamentary select committee is currently investigating the Aboriginal problem. This will be a useful move, so far as the State is concerned. However, there is no national policy so that whatever is the determination of the parliamentary committee and whatever is its

recommendation, there is still a situation of doubt and difficulty not conducive to an atmosphere in which we can successfully resolve the needs of the day of the Aborigines.

One of the principal requirements is to ensure that in respect of employment and well being the Aboriginal people are properly cared for. We are not approaching this problem as we might do. I believe that a great deal more could be done to raise their status by ensuring that we discover the things that will give them gainful employment and a useful way of life. Finance and a national policy are therefore necessary.

I support the motion because I believe it is the only way in which we can bring the overall problem effectively under notice. The Government must ensure that no doubt exists as to where the Commonwealth stands and that there is no room for doubt on the score of discrimination. Let us support this proposal so that the Government will again have the responsibility of examining the problem effectively with a view to ensuring that in the long run we do something worthwhile in the interests of the Commonwealth and, in particular, of the Aboriginal people.

Mr. CROSS (Brisbane) [12.37].—It is my privilege and pleasure to speak on this matter for a few minutes. I wish to associate my remarks with those made by previous speakers on both sides of the chamber. My friend and colleague, the honorable member for Leichhardt (Mr. Fulton), will not be able to speak in this debate and has asked me to raise the question of the status of Torres Strait Islanders. I have consulted the honorable member for Mackellar (Mr. Wentworth) who has informed me that Torres Strait Islanders would be covered by the amendment that he has proposed. It is important in drafting any legislation related to the Aboriginal people to realise and recognise that Torres Strait Islanders do not regard themselves as Aborigines. This should be made quite clear.

I propose to deal very briefly with the Queensland position. In Queensland 28,436 Aborigines are covered by the administration of the Department of Native Affairs; 21,100 are exempt from the Act and there are also 5,207 Torres Strait Islanders. In recent times in Queensland, under Mr.

Pizzey as Minister in charge of the Department of Native Affairs, and Mr. Killoran, the Director of Native Affairs, material advances have been made. The Queensland Government would like to do a great deal more but its financial resources do not enable it to do so. I have already pointed out that 21,100 Aborigines are exempt from the provisions of the present Act. New legislation, which will be proclaimed early this year, will enable the State to give assistance to Aborigines not covered by the present legislation. At a time when the State is already struggling with its financial resources to meet the needs of the reserves, it seems extraordinarily difficult for any State government to do the right thing by the Aborigines in the outside communities. I refer to fringe dwellers and such people for whom very little is done. There is great need to throw the financial resources of the Commonwealth behind those of the Queensland Government. A great deal has been done on the reserves, where there are quite substantial settlements. At Cape York the settlement contains 1,015 Aborigines; at Cherbourg, 1,088; and at Palm Island, 1,550. I could name 20 or more settlements which, if they existed within our community, would have facilities such as post office, savings banks and the like which they do not enjoy at the present time.

It is necessary to provide for assimilation of the people in the settlements so that their standards may be raised to equal ours. If they so choose, they should be able to live in our community. If they prefer to do so, they may remain in their own settlements, which should contain the facilities available outside. At present the State does not have the resources to provide them. Some of the facilities are really Commonwealth matters which should be provided from national finance, thus removing some of the burden from the State Governments and leaving their resources free for other works. The Aboriginal community at Yarrabah contains over 800 people but is not connected by road with Cairns, which is only a comparatively few miles away. Where else in Australia is there a community of over 800 people which has no communication with outside except by small boats? Such conditions would not apply in our society, but they do apply in an Aboriginal settlement.

A special housing scheme is needed to provide in Queensland for 21,100 Aborigines living outside reserves. A low deposit housing scheme is necessary to enable these Aborigines to be settled properly in our community; not on reserves, but in the townships. Such a housing scheme can be brought about only if the Commonwealth grants assistance. I wish to affirm that we should not and would not want to take over the position entirely. I am sure that is not the intention of speakers on either side of the House. State Governments have their land administrations and only through co-operation between the Commonwealth and the States can the problem be solved. I support the legislation proposed by the honorable member for Mackellar.

Mr. CLEAVER (Swan) [12.41].—I am sure that the quality of the debate this morning has been appreciated, and the unanimity of views on the Bill before us is most noticeable. I support previous speakers who have said that surely this proposal should be put before the people of Australia as the third point in the anticipated referendum. We are greatly indebted to the honorable member for Mackellar (Mr. Wentworth) because of the initiative he has shown and we are conscious, too, of the able support given by so many other honorable members.

Some time ago the honorable member for Mackellar printed this measure as a draft bill, with a very simple and clear explanation. I think it was done at his own cost; I doubt whether anybody assisted him. It has been widely distributed and I wish to make it known that as a result, very many people have been in touch with me as an individual member of the Federal Parliament urging their support of the proposition. The honorable member for Fremantle (Mr. Beazley) in his very thought provoking speech, gave the illustration that the measure proposes discrimination for Aborigines rather than discrimination against them. I support him, but I point out that it would have to be discrimination for the Aborigines sparingly and wisely used, because at no point do the educated Aborigines, or those with any sense of personal pride, want to see an attitude of condescension towards them. Many Aborigines are not looking for a hand-out. Whilst

we want the power to assist them, we do not want foolishly to use a power of condescension.

I believe that fundamentally the Australian people are against discrimination. This Bill is not a move to take away power from the State Governments, but rather to authorise the Commonwealth deliberately and specifically to extend assistance to the Aboriginal people beyond the efforts of the State Governments. I believe that the State Governments should come in behind any move of this kind and help us because, unfortunately, there is sensitivity about a referendum. Where there is not only party unanimity in this Parliament but also agreement by the State Governments and a clear understanding of what is our intention, I believe it would help tremendously if the State Governments indicated their support and approval.

I wish in the minute or two remaining to refer to the very helpful material supplied

to the honorable member for Mackellar by Mr. Peter Hanks. Mr. Hanks drew attention to the fact that when we get back to the matter of Federal initiative, the appropriation power that is now in the hands of the Commonwealth is not sufficient. He said it is not sufficient that the Government should have power to pass laws regarding grants only and that there is a need to pass laws regulating conduct; for instance, providing for compulsory education or ensuring minimum standards of employment or housing. This is the power that the measure before us would provide.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER.—Order! The time allowed for precedence of general business has expired. The honorable member for Swan will have leave to continue his speech when the debate is resumed. Resumption of the debate will be made an order of the day for the next day of sitting.