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No. 78/1976

The Parliament of the
Commonwealth of Australia

JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE
PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE
SYSTEM

Resolution of Appointment of the
Committee

Special Report

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JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE SYSTEM RESOLUTION OF APPOINTMENT

- (1) That a Joint Committee be appointed to inquire into, report on and make recommendations for—
 - (a) a balanced system of committees for the Parliament;
 - (b) the integration of the committee system into the procedures of the Parliament, and
 - (c) arrangements for committee meetings which will best suit the convenience of Senators and Members.
- (2) That the committee consist of four Members of the House of Representatives nominated by the Prime Minister, three Members of the House of Representatives nominated by the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Representatives, three Senators nominated by the Leader of the Government in the Senate and three Senators nominated by the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate.
- (3) That every nomination of a member of the committee be forthwith notified in writing to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.
- (4) That the committee elect as Chairman of the committee one of the members nominated by the Prime Minister or by the Leader of the Government in the Senate.
- (5) That the committee elect as Deputy Chairman one of the members nominated by the Leader of the Opposition being a member from a different House than the Chairman, and that the member so elected act as Chairman of the committee at any time when the Chairman is not present at a meeting of the committee.
- (6) That the committee have power to appoint sub-committees consisting of three or more of its members and to refer to any such sub-committee any of the matters which the committee is empowered to examine.
- (7) That the committee have power to send for persons, papers and records, to move from place to place and to sit during any recess or adjournment of the Parliament.
- (8) That seven members of the committee constitute a quorum of the committee, and a majority of the members of a sub-committee constitute a quorum of that sub-committee.
- (9) That in matters of procedure the Chairman or Deputy Chairman presiding at the meeting have a deliberative vote and, in the event of an equality of voting, have a casting vote, and that, in other matters, the Chairman or Deputy Chairman have a deliberative vote only.
- (10) That the committee be provided with all necessary staff, facilities and resources.
- (11) That the committee or a sub-committee have power to authorise publication of any evidence given before it and any document presented to it.
- (12) That the committee may proceed to the dispatch of business notwithstanding that all members of the committee have not been appointed and notwithstanding any vacancy on the committee.
- (13) That the committee in selecting particular matters for investigation take account of the investigations of other Parliamentary committees and avoid duplication.
- (14) That the committee or any sub-committee have power to consider and make use of the evidence and records of the Joint Committee on the Parliamentary Committee System appointed during the Twenty-ninth Parliament.
- (15) That the committee have leave to report from time to time but so that its final recommendations be presented on or before 26 May 1976 and that any member of the committee have power to add a protest or dissent to any report.
- (16) That the foregoing provisions of this resolution, so far as they are inconsistent with the standing orders, have effect notwithstanding anything contained in the standing orders.

Resolution agreed to by the House of Representatives on 17 March 1976 (*Votes and Proceedings* No. 11 of 1976) and by the Senate on 18 March 1976 (*Journals of the Senate* No. 12 of 1976).

PERSONNEL OF THE COMMITTEE

Chairman	Senator the Hon. Sir Magnus Cormack, K.B.E.
Deputy Chairman	Dr H. A. Jenkins, M.P.
Members	Senator A. T. Gietzelt Senator R. E. McAuliffe Senator J. A. Mulvihill Senator P. E. Rae Senator T. J. Tehan Mr A. G. Cadman, M.P. Mr P. F. Johnson, M.P. Mr P. F. Morris, M.P. The Hon. I. L. Robinson, M.P. Mr W. Yates, M.P. Mr M. J. Young, M.P.
Clerk to the Committee	Mr G. J. Horsfield

REPORT RELATING TO THE RESOLUTION OF APPOINTMENT OF THE COMMITTEE

- (1) The joint committee was appointed in this Parliament to conclude the work begun by its predecessor in the 29th Parliament.
- (2) The resolution of appointment agreed to by the 29th Parliament was changed in only 2 respects: the committee is required to report by a specific date and to avoid duplicating the work of other committees.
- (3) The committee is conscious of the need to report as quickly as possible and has every expectation of tabling its final report by 26 May.
- (4) Of the 13 members of the committee, 9 have continued their membership from the 29th to the 30th Parliament. The Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the committee in the 29th Parliament are members of the present committee. The committee believes that there is advantage in maintaining continuity between the committees of the two Parliaments. Continuity of occupancy of the chair is also essential to the effective management of the committee, especially as it has less than two months to report and has reached a conclusive stage in the preparation of its final report.
- (5) At its first meeting the committee unanimously agreed to the following resolution:
 - (1) That, in the opinion of the committee, paragraphs (4) and (5) of the resolution of appointment agreed to by the House of Representatives on 17 March, and the Senate on 18 March, be omitted and the following paragraphs substituted:
 - (4) That the chairman of the committee be the chairman of the committee in the Twenty-ninth Parliament.'
 - (5) That the deputy chairman of the committee be the deputy chairman of the committee in the Twenty-ninth Parliament, and that the deputy chairman act as chairman of the committee at any time when the chairman is not present at a meeting of the committee.'
 - (2) That this resolution be communicated to the Houses by a special report.
- (6) The purpose of such an amendment to the resolution of appointment is to permit the committee to maintain continuity of chairman and deputy chairman. The committee is a select committee. There are recent precedents for select committees completing their work under an Opposition chairman. The resolution of appointment presently only permits a Government member to be elected chairman (as was the case in the 29th Parliament). This is not in accordance with the wishes of the committee.
- (7) *The Committee recommends that the resolution of appointment of the Committee be varied in the terms set out in paragraph (5).*

MAGNUS CORMACK
Chairman

Parliament House
Canberra, A.C.T.
6 April 1976

Senators nominated on 25 March 1976 (*Journals of the Senate* No. 15 of 1976), Members of the House of Representatives nominated on 1 April 1976 (*Votes and Proceedings* No. 18 of 1976).