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Page 1 of 1

# Grandstanding does not help

THE new Member for Herbert shows her lack of understanding in her comments on the Singapore Defence Deal to be unveiled shortly (*TB*, 26/9).

During the election campaign the then candidate didn't even accept the deal was a reality referring to it as the "alleged" deal. She is clearly now no better informed but is "frustrated" it is taking her so long to find out what it's all about.

For Ms O'Toole's benefit, can I say that international

agreements are always sensitive and there is a certain protocol to follow if Australia is to reap the benefits.

I have made the inquiries and am aware of the detail from briefings with both the Singaporeans and Australia's Defence Department.

But, for reasons that should be obvious, the Singaporean Prime Minister is keen to make the announcement during his publicised visit to Australia on October 12 this year.

Grandstanding in the media by local politicians is no substitute for the real effort of making the deal work.

I and the Government will be ensuring that local business has the maximum opportunity to ensure the deal works to our local advantage and this will not be helped by ill-informed comments from those with little or no serious contribution to make.

**IAN MACDONALD**  
**LNP Senator, Townsville.**