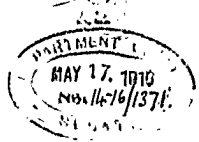


of the Senate

*Brought up by
Senator Staworth*

1914 - 15 - 16.

*C. R. Boydell
Clerk of the Senate
11-5-16.*



THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

R E P O R T

from the

JOINT COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

upon

THE STATIONERY, PRINTING AND ADVERTISING ACCOUNTS OF COMMONWEALTH DEPARTMENTS..

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M E M B E R S

of the

COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY

JOINT COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

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C O N T E N T S

	<u>Page</u>
Proceedings of the Committee	1. IV
Report	1
Introductory	1
Stationery and Office Requisites ..	5
Printing11
Advertising.	20
Recommendations	22

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE.

The taking of evidence in the Enquiry into the Stationery, Printing and Advertising Accounts of Commonwealth Departments was commenced on the 30th October 1915, and terminated on 3rd March 1916. Altogether 18 Meetings have been held in Melbourne, and the following Witnesses have been examined:-

ALLEN, George Thomas, Secretary, Department of the Treasury.
EASTWOOD, John Saville, Senior Clerk, Taxation Department.
EDWARD, David Barnett, Acting Chief Clerk, Department of External Affairs.
FAHRAR, Joshua Dyson, Senior Clerk, Electoral Office.
HUBER, Edward Theodor, Clerk of the Records, House of Representatives.
INGAMELLS, Frederick Norman, Clerk, Meteorological Bureau.
JENSEN, John Klunder, Acting Senior Clerk, Department of Defence.
JONES, Hubert Harry, Accountant, Department of External Affairs
LITTLE, Andrew, Controller of Stores, G.P.O., Melbourne
MULLETT, Albert James, Government Printer for State of Victoria
McDONALD, William Elliot, Contract Clerk, G.P.O., Melbourne
PATERSON, David Winter, President Master Printers Association Melbourne.
SHEPHERD, Malcolm Lindsay, Secretary, Prime Minister's Department
STEVENS, Locell Edward, Accountant, Central Staff, Department of Trade and Customs.
STONHAM, John, Chief Compiler, Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics.
WALTERS, Henry Latimer, Accountant, Home Affairs Department.
WHITE, John Goldsworthy, Secretary, Victorian Tender Board.
WILKINSON, William Percy, Commonwealth Analyst.

**REPORT OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS UNDER
THE " COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS ACT 1913" UPON THE STATIONERY,
PRINTING AND ADVERTISING ACCOUNTS OF COMMONWEALTH DEPARTMENTS.**

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I N T R O D U C T O R Y

In consequence of the large expenditure^{as} tabulated below in regard to Stationery, Printing and Advertising., the then Treasurer: (The Rt. Hon. Andrew Fisher) requested the Committee to enquire into the system of obtaining and distributing supplies with a view to greater economy and efficiency.

Department	Office Requisites	Writing Paper & Envelopes	Printing including A/c Record and Other Books	Advtg
	£	£	£	£
Prime Minister	570	410	2305	350
Treasury	1610	1210	3335	(not shown)
Attorney-General	405	315	8895	50
External Affairs	1295 ^o	1115 ^o	2625 ^o	20125 ^o
Defence	8420	8470	5905	(not shown)
Trade & Customs	2165	1470	6845	do
Home Affairs	5135	1705	10315	do
Postmaster-General	19803	8820	88074 x	1792
	£ 39403	23515	128299	22317

TOTAL ... £213,534.

- ^o Includes figures of Offices of High Commissioner and Administrator Northern Territory.
- x Includes cost of printing Stamps, Postal Guides, Postal Notes, Telephone Directories and Lists, and Telegraph Forms (Value £42,445)

Methods of Obtaining and Distributing Supplies - Generally speaking there seems to have been a diversity of procedure in obtaining requirements. Efforts have been made from time to time to establish a uniform system. Conferences which have taken place would appear not to have had sufficient authority to make their findings binding or imperative on the Departments.

The Treasury has at different times issued instructions

as to the methods to be adopted, and the class of paper to be bought but it was no one's duty to see that the instructions were carried out.

In advertising, steps have been lately taken to place matters on a business-like footing. Evidence showed that "there had been many anomalies in the matter of charges and methods of advertising". The Government Printer of Victoria supervises and controls advertising expenditure in all the State Capitals, also the Country Press of Victoria.

In the other States the advertising in the Country Press is controlled by the Heads of Departments direct.

Provision is made under the Contracts entered into by the Victorian Tender Board, for Commonwealth Offices to participate in State Contracts just as freely as the State Departments do, and under the same conditions.

STANDARDIZATION - As to the necessity of standardization all authorities agree. Mr. Paterson, who undertook an investigation into the working of the State Printing Office some two years ago, stated that a Stationery Department had been established at the Government Printing Office, Melbourne. He also said that at the time he made his investigation, some forty or fifty varieties of paper were being used, of varying qualities. One Department required a particular kind of paper, whilst another Department used a different kind. He proposed that all these papers should be cut down to four or five, and as the result of adopting this recommendation the Victorian Government are now saving a good deal of money.

Mr Paterson stated he had also looked into the different qualities and varieties of stationery that are used by the Commonwealth as well as the State. He was of opinion they could be cut down by one-half, at least. In regard to qualities, he saw temporary Circulars and forms printed upon very dear papers.

He thought the Commonwealth could accept the State Standards for our requirements in Stationery and Paper. He further said "The Commonwealth is very extravagant in the matter of the quality of paper which it uses."

Mr. Mullett is of opinion that standardization would lead to economy.

Representatives from the various Commonwealth Departments unanimously expressed opinions in favor of standardization for various reasons, viz:- Purchases could be made in large quantities, which would mean a reduction in price, and for convenience of handling and filing.

As previously stated an attempt was made some 10 years ago to choose certain types of paper suitable to all Departments, but with little result. One witness told the Committee that no effort had been made by the different branches of his Department to standardize the quality of the stationery, and there existed only a general similarity. Another witness stated that there is practically no check over each Department and Sub-Branch choosing its own class of Stationery, and this has led to the use of between 40 and 50 different qualities of paper.

The Controller of Stores in the Postmaster-General's Department stated that - "Standardization commenced in his Department soon after the inauguration of Federation, and it has been in progress continuously. From time to time different items are brought under the notice of the Central Office, the most suitable standards for all the States are selected, and they become what is known as Sealed Patterns."

There is a want of uniformity in some Forms, which in the Committee's opinion appear to most readily adapt themselves to standardization. This is notably the case in regard to Telegraph and Money Order Forms; nearly every State having separate designs.

The Department of Home Affairs has been particularly active in striving to obtain uniformity, and the following Circular was sent to different branches of the Department in December 1914.

" The drain upon the resources of the Federal Government occasioned by the war costs demands the particular attention of Officers to the question of conserving public funds by the exercise of usually unnoticed economies in purely office expenditure, and with this object in view, I am seeking your co-operation, and shall be glad of any suggestion which may occur to you on the subject generally. Amongst matters which suggest themselves are the standardising and simplifying of office supplies under their various heads. For example, the adoption of letter paper similar to that upon which this memorandum is written, for correspondence between Departments and Branches, and Office memoranda, has resulted in saving expense in embossing and printing in the head office alone of upwards of £150 per annum, although the paper previously used was not expensive. Again, it should not be necessary to yield to the fancies of the staff by multiplying the varieties of pens, erasers, &c., but a few well chosen brands only should be used."

This action was responsible for economy and standardisation being brought about in this Department.

During the course of an address delivered at a Conference of Statisticians held in Melbourne in November 1906, the President said " I have submitted a series of forms which respond to the present requirements Before drafting them a comparative study was made of the forms of all States Some account was also taken of similar work in other parts of the world. The forms as submitted, may be regarded as an important step towards securing statistical uniformity."

STATIONERY

and

OFFICE REQUISITES

As regards the present method of obtaining supplies of Stationery and Office Requisites, certain rules and restrictions are in existence in some Departments. Their execution is often subject merely to cursory and spasmodic supervision by a responsible officer, the actual work being delegated to a Junior. The rules appear to be more honored in the breach than in the observance.

Throughout the course of their investigation, the Committee did not receive information which would point to any adequate safeguard having been instituted to modify or restrain individual preferences, and to distinguish between the necessary and fancied requirements of a Department's Officers.

z It did not appear that any record of the stock was ever made by responsible officers of the Departments.

As far as can be ascertained, the same remarks apply to consumption. Material is issued without any record being taken, These requirements represent an expenditure of £191,217.

SOURCE OF SUPPLY -The general methods of obtaining supplies are as follows:- (a) The Government Printer. (b) State Contracts. (c) Direct Departmental Contract. (d) Quotation. (e) Purchasing direct from private firms.

The different Departments are buying supplies now just as they require them. It is quite possible, however, to determine what the Departments will require over a given period.

A competent witness stated that he did not see any more difficulty in ascertaining the requirements of the Commonwealth for one, two or three years than is experienced in regard to the State, for whom contracts are generally entered into extending over the latter period.

The Government Printer is bound to supply on the sample of paper submitted to him. He however, cited many instances where at his suggestion economy had been effected by the Departments agreeing to accept a cheaper class of paper other than that which had been originally ordered, but which would be suitable for the purpose required.

The paper must be according to sample. A Board of Survey is appointed in the State Government Printing Office to judge the quality of ~~the~~ any paper. On the recommendation of this Board the paper is either received or rejected. Should there be any complaint made about the quality of paper received, the State Government Printer notifies the Tender Board of the objection, and the Tender Board may reject the paper, and buy at the Contractor's risk in the open market.

The Authorities of the State have also made an attempt to standardize to obtain as few varieties as possible.

The question of the extent of the safeguard instituted by the State of Victoria is only mentioned to show that Commonwealth purchases through State Contracts are afforded a measure of protection. The Departments purchasing direct from outside firms are not afforded any "specified" protection in the matter of quality and price.

OFFICE REQUISITES - Shortly after the Federation of the States, action was taken to secure a list of office requisites required by the Commonwealth Departments. This list was to be supplied ^{to} by the Victorian Tender Board for inclusion in their schedules. The Common-

-wealth failed to adhere to the arrangements made.

The supply of typewriting machines is an example of the confusion which results. The Postal Department made a contract for the supply of typewriting machines throughout the Commonwealth at £14 each. For the same machine the Prime Minister's Department has to pay £21/10/-, and efforts to secure an extension of the contract to this Department were not successful. This applies more or less in connection with all office requisites.

ANALYTICAL TESTS - The Commonwealth Analyst (Mr. Wilkinson) explained that analytical tests of Stationery "are constantly made in other countries". In the United States of America no paper is purchased for Government use that does not comply with certain tests of this kind. The same applies to the Inks. Mr. Wilkinson produced to the Committee a copy of the General Schedule of Supplies of the United States of America for Fiscal Year 1916, showing in detail the various standards.

Mr. Wilkinson informed the Committee that he had never been asked to report on any paper used for writing and printing. He makes many examinations of Oils and Paints, and in connection with practically everything that is imported, but not of stationery writing or printing inks.

The inks under the State Tender Board Contracts are analysed by the Victorian Analyst.

Mr. Wilkinson also said - "If the Commonwealth adopted the system in vogue in other Countries of the standardization of supplies we should be certain of getting the materials we contracted for. That standardization should embrace physical mechanical and wherever necessary microscopical tests of the materials".

Incidentally, evidence was given the Committee regarding the local manufacture of Stationery and inks. Considerable quantities of Ink are manufactured in the Commonwealth of most excellent

quality, comparing favorably with any imported ink, and also with the standard set up by the Government of United States of America. There is no reason why as good writing and printing inks cannot be made in Australia as in any other Country.

Certain classes of paper are manufactured here. There are numbers of fibre plants in Australia that might be used for the purpose.

The President of the Master Printers' Association (Mr. D. W. Paterson) said " to talk of the chemical analysis (of paper) is all bosh. The question at issue is - Is the stuff suitable for the job, or is it not?" To the practical man, a difference in the qualities of printing and writing papers can be detected without an analysis and in practice there are certain recognised and simple methods of procedure for a printer to determine the quality of the paper in his own way. In calling for tenders he favoured buying on samples submitted by Tenderers and selected by the Printer as most suitable for the purpose to which they were to be put, and were ordered from the Contractor as being nearest to requirements.

The State Government Printer (Mr. Mullett) said:-

" A chemical analysis is sometimes made for me, but such an occurrence is seldom. A man in the trade knows one paper from another. He can tell whether an article has the proper fibre, and he can easily ascertain whether it has clay in it by burning a piece of the paper and noting the character of the ash. Besides, there are certain recognised brands in the trade".

At the same time he considers that- "It is an advantage to have the services of the Government Analyst available if required, but does not think it necessary to submit every sample to him."

STATE CONTRACTS - The Secretary of the Victorian Tender Board (Mr. White) in explaining the methods adopted by the Board under their contracts said: " Contracts used to be let from year to year. Now they are

usually triennial, and the Government Printer submits the lines he has selected, together with the samples he has chosen, to the Tender Board which calls for Tenders. The Government Printer ~~now~~ orders as he requires from the bulk contracts, and supplies in detail to the various Departments. Every (Victorian) Department has to requisition its supplies through the Treasury; so that the Treasury has control over both the expenditure and the requisitions that are made upon the Government Printer." "If the Treasury did not consider a certain paper necessary, or another variety cheaper and as good, they would strike the item out, and refer it back to the Department concerned", so that in this way ^{no} there is a fairly complete check upon extravagance or waste. The Contracts extend over over "one, two and three years. Three years is the limit. Ever thing depends upon the condition of the market at the time tenders are called for. The materials are supplied " according to requirements. The Government Printer receives a three months' supply, and the contractor must keep another three months' supply in stock, so that it can be drawn upon at any time. The Contractor must be prepared to supply at any time one-twelfth of the quantity stipulated in his schedule. This latter condition applies to "paper, envelopes parchment, strawboards, and millboards, not to ordinary office stationery. Office stationery for the Departments is not supplied through the Government Printer. It is obtained by the Tender Board under contract, just in the same way as the Board obtains other supplies, pens pencils, and Office Requisites."

Participation in these mutual arrangements regarding tenders for any supplies where the requirements of both State and Commonwealth are identical, is necessarily covered by the provisions of the State Terms of Contract; Commonwealth Departments are not amenable as are State Departments for a breach of the Regulations, should they choose to disregard the State Contracts in whole or in part.

Mr. White recently suggested at a Conference that a Re-

representative of the Commonwealth should have a seat on the Victorian State Tender Board. This suggestion was concurred in by the Chairman and Deputy-Chairmen of the Board, but no definite action was taken.

Mr White is further of opinion that " dependent upon a departmental adjustment being made, advantage would be gained if instead of separate tenders being called for, the Commonwealth could incorporate its supplies with the State. I do not see why the two supplies could not be incorporated. Where the quantities are larger, the cost would be less."

Mr. D.W. Paterson, when reporting on the reorganisation of the Government Printing Office some two years ago made similar suggestions. He stated to the Committee that if this system were followed, the Commonwealth would buy to the best advantage.

The State Government Printer, (Mr. Mullett) who also occupies a seat on the present State Tender Board, concurs in the opinion that the Commonwealth should be represented and also that reliable data should be supplied by Commonwealth Departments for inclusion in State Contracts.

P R I N T I N G

Under the above heading the term Printing includes the whole cost of production of books, forms, and matter into which the process of printing enters.

REQUIREMENTS.

A large number of publications, gazettes, reports &c are issued by various Departments; some under Statutory regulations.

An instance might be cited of the large number of printed forms in use by some Departments, and the work entailed in their production. The Taxation Department for convenience in dealing with taxation matters have 220 different forms in use, the collection including a great many varieties in quality, size, color and class of paper .

The Committee do not suggest that unnecessary variation has occurred here, but point out the liability to abuse which such a system may create without the exercise of careful supervision.

METHOD OF SUPPLY AND COST OF WORK-

The majority of what might be termed "Standing" publications, such as the Commonwealth Gazette, Hansard &c. are printed by the Government Printer. The Year Book, Electoral Rolls (in part) etc. are printed by private firms.

Comparisons of costs between the work carried out by the Government Printer and that done by outside firms have at times been made and the consensus of opinion is that the Government Printer carries out the work entrusted to his care with a maximum of efficiency and due regard to economy.

The President of the Master Printers' Association (Mr. Paterson) told the Committee that the "Printing Office was

most efficient. Its costs are 10% less than those of outside employ-
ers. The Commonwealth is charged the nett cost for its work. It is
on a good wicket from the standpoint of the labor it employs. So
far as material is concerned, the Commonwealth supplies its own."

The Government Printer (Mr. Mullett) was more optimistic
in his estimate, and said- "You are getting a fair deal in regard
to printing, the ^{Commonwealth} Government is getting the work done, at least
25% less cost than outsiders can do it."

In some instances this was accounted for by "the regular
flow of work, reduction in trading expenses saved by non-employment
of travellers" and "the use of machinery specially adapted to par-
ticular requirements."

Depreciation and overhead expenses are charged^s on output.
The Printing Office does not aim at making any profit on the yearly
transactions.

Interest on capital invested is not a charge against the
value of the work produced, and is a factor which must be borne in
mind as partly accountable for the reduced cost of work in compari-
son with outside firms. It may be mentioned that this practice
has been adopted by the Authorities controlling the Printing Office
and does not come within the Committee's province of review.

In some instances contracts and orders have been given
to private firms.

Particular mention was made of the publication of the
Official "Year Book" issued by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census
and Statistics. Whilst this Branch satisfactorily obtains supplies
of stationery, envelopes etc. from the Government Printer, and
under State Contracts where possible, the witness informed the
Committee that :-

"The Printing for the Bureau is executed partly by the
firms which successfully tendered for the work,

(Messrs McCarron Bird and Company) and to a small extent by the ~~State~~ Government Printer. The annual publications relating to Population and Vital Statistics, Production, Finance, Transport, and Communication and Social are printed by the Government Printer, and the balance by the firm of McCarron Bird & Company. Forms for incorporating statistical details for tabulating &c. are generally speaking, obtained from the Government Printer, but in cases of urgency, such as in connection with the war census, posters, notices and tabulation forms, the work was given under Ministerial approval to McCarron, Bird & Company. Cards for the supply of vital statistics are out and printed annually by the Government Printer in each State. In regard to the Census of 1911, it was arranged that the cards, envelopes, and instructions used in each State were to be printed by the Government Printer of that State, the requisite paper for envelopes and cards being supplied by the Australian Paper Mills under a contract with the Commonwealth Government. Tabulation forms were printed by the Government Printer, Melbourne. The printing of census^s bulletins, report and detailed tables were given to McCarron, Bird and Company, their prices being lower than that of the Government Printer. In regard to the War Census printing in 1915, paper for envelopes and cards was ordered from the Australian Paper Mills after comparison of quotations with those of other leading mills in the Commonwealth. The work of making and printing the envelopes was carried out by Sands and McDougall after a comparison of quotations with other leading firms. The printing and cutting of "personal cards" was done by the Government Printer, Melbourne; while the Government Printer, Sydney, was entrusted with the printing and cutting of "wealth and income" cards. Posters notices and forms were done by McCarron Bird & Company. The Witness mentioned reasons why certain publications were not entrusted for printing to the Government Printer. Two prime essentials are involved in printing for a Statistical Bureau:-

(1) Speed of Supply, (2) Good quality of printing and general presentation of the work.

In both essentials the Government Printers' Work was unsatisfactory. The first work turned out for the Bureau was the Report of the Conference of Statisticians in 1906. The Commonwealth Statistician was so dissatisfied with the slowness of production and faulty printing of this report that, in view of his representations when the time came for producing the first Official Year Book, authority was given to him to obtain quotations from outside firms in order to ascertain if better arrangements could be made. In addition to pointing out the slowness of production and poor quality of work turned out by the Government Printing Office, attention was drawn to the fact that similar difficulties were experienced by the Victorian Government Statist, and that for two years the Victorian Official Year-book was printed by Sands and McDougall. Authority was given to call for quotations, and tenders were called for in the leading newspapers of the Commonwealth. The Government Printers in New South Wales and Victoria were specially asked to tender but the Victorian Printer declined, as he refused to be bound by a time limit. As the tender submitted by McCarron Bird & Company was the most satisfactory, the Minister was asked to sanction its adoption, and this was done. The whole of the Official Year Books have been printed by this firm, which has given complete satisfaction, both in regard to speed and excellence of work. It is also a very great convenience to have printing done by a firm in such close proximity to the Bureau. The reasons for this, are, of course, apparent.

In regard to the Trade and Customs' Returns, the 1906 and 1907 editions were printed by John Sands Limited, Sydney, arrangements having been made with this firm prior to the passing over of the work to this Bureau. When the Census and Statistics Bureau took over this work it was decided to keep on with this firm, as they had the type standing, and it was thought they might be able to produce at the desired speed. The trial was, however, very unsatisfactory, owing to loss of time etc. in sending proofs by post, inferior work, and slow rate at which work was done, and

and after the 1906 and 1907 issues it was taken away from them. The Government Printer, Melbourne, meanwhile had been asked for a quotation, and as this ^{was} favorable, the work was given to him, and he printed the 1908-9-10 issues. Owing to slowness of production and the more favorable price quoted by McCarron Bird & Company, all succeeding editions were given to that firm, and the result has proved entirely satisfactory. While it is of prime importance that all statistical publications should be issued with the greatest possible speed, early issue is imperatively necessary in the case of special publications, especially the Monthly Summary, those dealing with the cost of living, prices, employment &c. In view of the circumstances that such publications were likely to be blocked by what the Government Printer, or other Departments might consider more urgent work, the Commonwealth Statistician obtained authority to have these publications printed by an outside firm, and the work was given to McCarron Bird and Company. Examples of inferior work by the Government Printer are the report of Conference of Statisticians, the Victorian Year-Book 1912/13, and the bulletin of ~~the~~ Commonwealth Demography 1913.

The Official Year-Book costs about 6/- per copy to produce. It is sold at 3/6d to the public, and 2/6d to teachers. About 1,000 copies of No.7 have been sold. In the case of the Report of the Conference of Statisticians in regard to the unification of Australasian statistical methods, the general get-up is bad. The printing all through is not nearly up to what we consider the standard, and the work took a long time. The same remarks apply to the bulletin of ~~the~~ Commonwealth Demography. The printing is bad, the figures do not register properly, and the rules are put in badly. In the Victorian Year Book there are different kinds of paper under the one cover, and the printing is bad. It seems to me that some of the work has been done by incompetent men, and the linotypes are evidently badly managed, or are wearing out."

The Victorian Government Printer in a statement concerning this subject said:-

" I wish to refer to printing done for Government Departments by private firms. I refer particularly to the printing for the Federal Statistician's Department. There is an impression that the work is given to a private firm because in that way it is done cheaper. That is not so. When estimates were originally called for in connection with the printing of the Year Book, that of my office was slightly lower than the tenders of the outside firms. but Mr Knibbs said that he preferred not to ~~kind~~ be bound by the limitations of the Printing Office. For instance, when Parliament sits all night we have a very heavy pressure of work, and, as parliamentary printing takes precedence, other work must wait. In those circumstances, Mr. Knibbs thought it would be better to have the work done by private firms. The point I wish to make is that if work is to be given to an outside firm - and I think that sometimes such a course is desirable- it should be given out by somebody who understands the business. In this particular case, tenders were called for the printing of 1,000 copies, and a price for each additional 100. The estimate of the Government Printing Office was the same for 1,000 copies as the estimates of the other firm, but for the additional copies, our estimate was much less. When the job was put in hand, instead of 1,000 copies being printed, 12,000 were produced, and in one bill along, I think the Department paid the successful tenderer £1150 more than what would have been a fair price.

Regarding ^{any} ~~the~~ complaint made as to the quality of the work done by the Government Printer, it was admitted that "There was a complaint about ten years ago, when we had very defective machinery, and I think that there was some justification for it then. The Statistical Department made an impossible set of conditions for their contract. Tenders were put in by Sands and McDougall, and

McCarron Bird, and the Government Printing Office in this State. The Government Printers in other States would not tender. One of the conditions of the tenders was that no machine-set type was to be used. That was a most unbusinesslike provision to insert. McCarron Bird having once obtained the contract, are in a commanding position. If the contractors are charging so much per extra 100 after the first 1,000, and are printing off 12,000 of the book they are being paid too much. Sir John Forrest, when Treasurer, sent me one account in which the price of the first 1,000- the main contract - was £750, and the additions £3,146. By giving out printing work for Government Departments through my office, I have saved the Commonwealth thousands of pounds in one way and another. The last elections were brought on at short notice, and it was necessary to seek outside assistance for the printing of the rolls. In that case, I called the private printers together, and told them the price the Commonwealth would be prepared to pay"

In the Printing trade, the firm holding a contract occupies a commanding position in regard to tendering by other Firms, by reason of having certain of the type standing for the issue of annual or periodical publications. The Government Printer considers " That over a series of issues during which we should have an opportunity to take the initial handicap, we could do the work 30% cheaper than the price at present paid."

At the same time no difficulty would be experienced in carrying out the work as expeditiously as it is done now, and if necessary, more machines would be installed.

Regarding the printing of Reports, Returns, and various papers, the present practice is for the Departments to get whatever they wish printed. There is a tendency to print far too much, the reports being unnecessarily voluminous. This doubtless arises through the absence of any control being exercised, the Government Printer setting up any matter which a Department chooses to send him.

CONDENSATION OF OFFICIAL REPORTS -

Reference was made by a witness to a report which was recently published and which contained a "mass of interesting information obtained in detail with maps, photographs, and illustrations which had evidently been published without the slightest effort to edit it", this detracts from the value of the report, as the information would be infinitely more valuable if condensed and tabulated and would mean a considerable reduction in volume. In the annual report on Papus for the year 1913-14, there are six pages dealing with the number of coconuts planted in each district.

Several Witnesses expressed the opinion that a great deal of needless printing might be avoided, where, only a few copies of a document were required; the work could easily be done by greater use being made of typewriters and duplicator machines, more especially where they can be used in a subsidiary sense, or where the preparation of a synopsis of evidence would meet all demands.

Illustrations enhance the cost, having to be printed on special art paper by a "block" which costs about 10/- to make, and many seem to be needlessly inserted.

Dealing with the Parliamentary Papers of each of which 950 copies are printed, it was suggested to the Committee that considerable saving might be made if such of these papers as could be held over were printed during the period of Parliamentary recess, for the reason that 25% extra is paid for labour at night, which night work is increased by the printing of these papers.

EMBOSSEING -

Evidence was given the Committee of the additional cost of embossing over that of printing, but with the introduction of a Machine to carry out this work, the extra cost has been reduced by about 30%, and now amounts to about £350 per annum.

The large number of different dies used (which cost about £5 each) should be abolished, and seeing that an Australian "Coat of Arms has been registered, a uniform die for all Departments should ~~only~~ be used.

A D V E R T I S I N G

As a result of the decisions of a Conference representing the various Departments recently held to determine a uniform practice to be adopted for dealing with advertisements, some improvements were effected :-

PRESENT SYSTEM:-

A precis of the report of this Conference is contained in the following Circular :-

I am to inform you that a Committee representing the various Commonwealth Departments and the Government Printer, recently discussed the question of the adoption of a suitable practice by Commonwealth Departments in advertising their requirements in the press, and recommended, inter alia, that all advertisements for publication in the State of Victoria, be forwarded to the Government Printer, with advice as to the journals in which insertion is desired, and the number of insertions required.

2. The Prime Minister had approved of the Committee's recommendation, except that he desires that the selection of the newspapers in which advertisements are to be inserted be made by an officer connected with the Government Printer, as he considers that only in this way will uniformity be secured, and definite responsibility for making a prudent and economical choice of advertising media placed upon one individual.

3. The procedure to be followed by your office is the preparation of advertisements will be as hitherto, but the advertisements, after having been so prepared, are to be forwarded to the Government Printer with an intimation as to the number of insertions required. The Government Printer will select the newspapers in which the advertisements are to appear.

4. All accounts for advertisements will be certified by the Government Printer, and forwarded to you for payment, and no payment is to be made without such certificate.

5. The Government Printer will arrange for the immediate insertion of all advertisements submitted to him under conditions similar to those applying to State advertisements, and the adoption of such conditions will guard against any unnecessary and expensive display of type, spacing &c., which would have the effect of unwarrantably increasing the cost of advertising. Accounts for advertisements will be rendered to the Government Printer, who will check them as to the reasonableness of the charges fixed in uniform scales for metropolitan and country journals, and also as to the adherence to the conditions governing publication. When satisfied as to the correctness of the claim, the Government Printer will certify accordingly and forward the claim to your Office.

The need of advertising arises through Statutory regulation, Departmental requirements, or Public information and Notices.

The objects ~~held to be~~ desired in establishing a uniform system were the advantages to be derived from efficiency and economy and a discontinuance of the practice, where such existed, of utilising the services of Agents or middlemen not subject to administrative control.

One witness held the opinion that - "a lot of unnecessary advertising is done - It is a waste of time and money to advertise in the daily papers for supplies where the known supplies are limited. These cases could be covered by a Gazette Notice, of which the required number of slips could be printed off and posted to the known suppliers, costing a few shillings, as against pounds for advertising, or as an alternative "a short advertisement could be inserted saying that details would be sent on application", or that "full particulars may be obtained in the Commonwealth Gazette of (date) which is available at every post office".

In some isolated instances this has been done and "is the practice followed by some Departments in Victoria"

An opinion freely expressed was that an advertisement in the Commonwealth Gazette alone was of itself of little value from a publicity point of view .

The restrictions imposed by the Government Printer in the display of advertisements are comprehensive and stipulate that Government Advertisements are to be inserted under the following conditions :-

They are not to be "displayed"

They are not to be set in large type

They are not to be set in $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{3}{4}$ lines

They are not to be headed "Government Advertisements".

More than one Coat of Arms is not to be placed over the several advertisements in any one issue, and notices must follow consecutively under one Coat of Arms unless otherwise specified.

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S

S T A N D A R D I Z A T I O N

The Committee recommends the immediate creation of a Board consisting of a responsible officer from each Commonwealth Department, and the Government Printer of Victoria.

This Board to determine types, qualities, sizes etc. of Stationery and Office Requisites, keeping in view the necessity of reducing these to the fewest possible varieties, and avoiding unnecessary expense. No materials to be purchased other than those approved by the Board. The Permanent Head of each Department to be charged with the duty of giving effect to this.

The Government Printer of Victoria should be authorised to carry into effect decisions of this Board.

S T A T I O N E R Y.

The Board recommended by this Committee should be called together from time to time by the Government Printer - three to form a quorum.

The Board should have the supervision of all Contracts and purchases other than Contracts.

Departments should give estimates of their annual requirements as a basis for the making of contracts.

Bulk stock should be in charge of the Government Printer.

The issue of Stationery and Office Requisites to the Departments should be controlled by the Government Printer, upon whom requisitions should be made, and by whom a record should be kept of all supplies issued.

ANALYTICAL TESTS.

The services of the Government Analyst should be availed of by the Board, to establish definite standards of quality in stationery and office requisites.

He should be authorized to take and test samples from time to time in order to maintain these standards, which should only be modified by the Board.

P R I N T I N G.

The Committee are of opinion that in order to obtain the necessary expert assistance, all Contracts for printing should be referred by the Board to the Government Printer for advice as to conditions.

The Committee, while recognising the value of full distribution of Parliamentary papers are of opinion that the standing number viz:- 950, is not necessary in all cases. We therefore advise that discretionary power be vested in the Parliamentary Printing Committee as to whether the maximum number shall be printed.

The Committee has given consideration to the voluminous nature of Departmental and other reports increasing the cost of production, and the time demanded from members in their perusal. We are of opinion that many of such reports could with advantage be condensed by those responsible for their issue. In the matter of tabulated Statistics, and information contained in certain publications, considerable saving could be made by confining the matter printed, to such information as had not been supplied in previous issues.

V

ADVERTISING.

In the Committee's opinion the present system of dealing with advertisements is on the whole satisfactory, and we do not consider it necessary to recommend any change.

In conclusion, the Committee desire to express their appreciation of the information and assistance rendered by Officers of the Departments, and other Witnesses examined

M. Charlton

..... CHAIRMAN

8th May 1916