

1923.
(SECOND SESSION.)

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC WORKS.

R E P O R T

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE, APPENDICES,
AND PLANS

RELATING TO THE PROPOSED

ERECTION OF PROVISIONAL PARLIAMENT
HOUSE, CANBERRA.

Presented pursuant to Statute, 12th July, 1923; ordered to be printed, 19th July, 1923.

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MEMBERS OF THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

Fourth Committee.

The Honorable HENRY GREGORY, M.P., Chairman.

Senate.

Senator Hattil Spencer Foll.
 Senator John Newland
 Senator William Plain.

House of Representatives.

Arthur Blakeley, Esquire, M.P.
 Robert Cook, Esquire, M.P.
 David Sydney Jackson, Esquire, M.P.
 George Hugh Mackay, Esquire, M.P.
 James Mathews, Esquire, M.P.

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EXTRACT FROM THE VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

No. 6 OF 9TH MARCH, 1923.

12. PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE—REFERENCE OF WORK—PROVISIONAL PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA.—Mr. Stewart (Minister for Works and Railways) moved, by leave, That, in accordance with the provisions of the *Commonwealth Public Works Committee Act 1913-1921*, the following work be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for its investigation and report thereon, viz. :—Erection of Provisional Parliament House Buildings, Canberra.

Mr. Stewart having laid on the Table plans, &c., in connexion with the proposed work—

Question—put and passed.

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ERECTION OF PROVISIONAL PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA.

REPORT.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, to which the House of Representatives referred for investigation and report the question of the proposed erection of a Provisional Parliament House at Canberra, has the honor to report as follows :—

INTRODUCTORY.

1. On the 23rd May, 1912, as the result of a world-wide competition for a design of lay-out for the Federal Capital City of Australia, the design submitted by Mr. W. B. Griffin, of Chicago, was awarded the first prize.

2. On the 12th March, 1913, the ceremony of laying the foundation stone of the Commencement Column was performed and the city named Canberra.

3. On the 17th July, 1913, Cabinet decided to invite the author of the premiated design to visit Australia for the purpose of conferring with the departmental officials who had charge of the construction of the proposed city.

4. On the 30th June, 1914, the Commonwealth Government intimated that, having under construction the Federal Capital City at Canberra, it desired to secure the services of an architect, or architects, to design, in harmony with the objects and policies of the general plan of the city, the first of its important public buildings, and invited designs in international competition from all qualified architects for the construction of Parliament House.

The premiums offered were—

	£
To First in order of merit, the sum of	2,000
To Second in order of merit, the sum of	1,500
To Third in order of merit, the sum of	1,000
To Fourth in order of merit, the sum of	500
To Fifth in order of merit, the sum of	250
To Sixth in order of merit, the sum of	250
To Seventh in order of merit, the sum of	250
To Eighth in order of merit, the sum of	250
	<hr/>
	£6,000

5. In the published conditions of competition it was stated—“ The ultimate cost of the Parliament House shall be considered to be within the sum of £1,000,000, but provision shall be made in the designing to allow for an initial housing as an integral constructional feature of the completed building providing for the immediate necessary functions without internal embellishment, The cost of the first necessary portion should not exceed £250,000. Economy in obtaining a maximum effectiveness with direct means will be an important element in the ultimate design, while satisfying the fundamental necessities in an economic arrangement of a “ shell ” or “ core ” for immediate purposes will be an important factor.”

6. On the 25th September, 1914, in view of the condition of war obtaining in Great Britain, Russia, Belgium, Austria, and Germany, the then Minister for Home Affairs (The Hon. W. O. Archibald) directed that the competition be “ withdrawn for the present.”

7. In August, 1916, the competition was revived, but on the 24th November, 1916, was indefinitely postponed.

8. On 22nd January, 1921, an Order in Council was passed, intimating that, "With a view to enabling the Federal Parliament to meet and the Central Administration of the Commonwealth Government to be carried on as early as practicable at Canberra (and on the basis of the plan of lay-out of the Federal Capital City by Mr. W. B. Griffin), it was recommended to His Excellency the Governor-General in Council and approved that—

John Sulman, Esq., F.R.I.B.A., M.T.P.I., Consulting Architect,
 E. M. de Burgh, Esq., M. Inst. C.E., Chief Engineer for Water Supply and Sewerage, Department of Public Works, New South Wales
 Herbert E. Ross, Esq., Architect,
 Colonel P. T. Owen, Director-General of Works, Department of Commonwealth Works and Railways,
 J. T. H. Goodwin, Esq., Commonwealth Surveyor-General,

be appointed members of a Committee to inquire into and advise upon the following matters in relation to the construction of the said city :—

1. The existing data, plans, and works ;
2. The works, buildings, and city services that can be further proceeded with or commenced forthwith ;
3. A general scheme upon which to develop the buildings of the Capital City progressively, having regard to both official and civil occupation ;
4. Proposals for the design and construction of the necessary buildings, works, and services ;
5. The order in which essential surveys and construction of such works, buildings, services, shall be undertaken ;
6. Such matters as, in the opinion of the Committee, are expedient in regard to provision and manufacture of materials necessary for the purposes of construction ;

and to inquire and report upon any special matter in relation to the lay-out and construction of the Federal Capital City, as and when directed by the Minister for Works and Railways."

9. On the 18th July, 1921, the Federal Capital Advisory Committee submitted its First General Report, in which it stated, with regard to Parliament House—

"40. Parliament House.—The Committee regards the erection of the permanent Parliament House as a work which might be deferred for many years, or until the Commonwealth desires to proceed with it. In any case, it would not be possible to erect that building within the period assigned to the first stage.

At the Minister's request, the Committee furnished a Report upon a proposed Conference Hall, and, in submitting the plan of the building, it was stated that the design provided for extension, if desired, at a later date, to form a temporary Parliament House, with the necessary accessory accommodation. The Conference Hall has been designed, but the extensions have not yet been planned, although sufficient preliminary work has been done to permit of making a rough estimate of the probable cost. In the temporary building, the Legislative Chambers, Committee Rooms, Library, Dining Rooms, and other accessory accommodation would all afford the space and comfort necessary for legislative work, and due attention would be given to the question of acoustics and sound resistance between rooms. The Legislative Chambers and other apartments would be embellished internally with restraint, and the external architecture would be simple, but decorous.

The site selected for the temporary Parliamentary Buildings would afford a vista along the main governmental axis, overlooking the ornamental grounds. It would be clear of the site for the permanent Parliament House, which could be constructed in the future without disturbing Parliament.

If this suggestion for temporary Parliamentary Buildings be adopted, the Committee believes that the Commonwealth Government would save the expenditure that would be required for the monumental Parliament House for many years."

10. The report was tabled in Parliament on the 29th September, 1921, and the Committee was advised by the Minister for Works and Railways on the 15th December, 1921, that " Cabinet approves of the general principles of the scheme set out in the Advisory Committee's Report."

11. On the 31st July, 1922, the Federal Capital Advisory Committee submitted its Second General Report.

12. On the 9th March, 1923, the House of Representatives referred for investigation and report by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works the question of the erection of Provisional Parliament House Buildings, Canberra.

PROPOSAL NOW UNDER CONSIDERATION,

13. The proposal, as expressed in the sketch drawings submitted to the Committee, is for the erection of grouped buildings of light brick and concrete construction in accordance with views elicited from the President, the Speaker, and Officers of Parliament, in which the functions of legislation may be conducted until such time as it may become policy to proceed with the erection of the permanent monumental Parliamentary Building which was at one time contemplated. The buildings are designed on simple lines, but to meet the varied requirements of Parliament, are somewhat extensive, the accommodation proposed to be provided comprising :—

Reception Accommodation—	Sup. Feet.
Reception Hall	2,304
Reception Corridors surrounding Hall	5,760
	8,064

Legislative Accommodation—

				Sup. Feet.
Senate—				
Senate Chamber (80 members)	..	..	..	} 2,688
Public Gallery (86 persons)	..	..	..
Press Galleries (80 persons)	..	..	..	560
Press Rooms	..	..	..	801
Members' Lobbies (2)	..	..	..	552
Spare Room	..	..	..	84
				<hr/> 4,685 <hr/>
Representatives—				
Representatives Chamber (112 members)	..	..	..	} 2,688
Public Gallery (60 persons)	..	..	..
Public Gallery (45 persons)	..	..	..	372
Press Galleries (2) (80 persons)	..	..	..	672
Press Room	..	..	..	372
Members' Lobbies (2)	..	..	..	552
Spare Room	..	..	..	84
				<hr/> 4,740 <hr/>
Legislators' Official Accommodation—				
Senate—				
President (4 rooms and bathroom)	..	..	..	842
Chairman of Committees	..	..	..	252
Leader of Senate (3 rooms and bathroom)	..	..	..	705
Party Rooms (2)	..	..	..	966
Ministers' Rooms (2)	..	..	..	504
Senate Club	..	..	..	1,728
Committee Rooms (2)	..	..	..	396
Ante-rooms (2)	..	..	..	408
Strangers' Rooms (2)	..	..	..	362
				<hr/> 6,163 <hr/>
Representatives—				
Speaker (4 rooms and bathroom)	..	..	..	864
Chairman of Committees	..	..	..	234
Prime Minister (3 rooms and bathroom)	..	..	..	782
Ministers' Rooms (7)	..	..	..	1,524
Ante and Strangers' Rooms (2)	..	..	..	308
				<hr/> 3,712 <hr/>
Party Accommodation—				
Ministerial Party Rooms (4)	..	..	..	1,109
Opposition Rooms (3)	..	..	..	1,350
Country Party Rooms (3)	..	..	..	1,010
				<hr/> 3,469 <hr/>
Committee Accommodation—				
Committee Rooms (7)	..	..	..	4,155
Library Accommodation—				
Library and Reading Room	..	..	..	2,576
Newspapers and Periodicals	..	..	..	1,568
Cataloguing, Receiving, Binding and Store Rooms (5)	..	..	..	1,606
Newspaper Storage (6 rooms)	..	..	..	3,658
Book Storage (3 rooms)	..	..	..	8,652
Library Administrative Staff (3 rooms)	..	..	..	686
				<hr/> 18,746 <hr/>

Official Staff Accommodation—					
Senate—					
Clerk. Assistant Clerk, Clerk of Papers, Usher, Records,					Sup. Feet.
Typists (9 rooms)	..	..	..	..	4,145
Representatives—					
Clerk of House (2), Assistant Clerk, 2nd Assistant Clerk,					
Clerk of Papers, Sergeant-at Arms, Accountant, Records					
(5), Typists (3) (15 rooms)	..	..	..	..	4,796
Hansard Accommodation—					
Chief of Staff and Reporters (5 rooms)	..				1,132
Transcribing (6 rooms)	..	..	..	..	288
					<hr/>
					1,420
Post Office Accommodation—					
Post Office, Telegraph Office, and Telephone Exchange					
(3 rooms)	..	..	..	..	533
					<hr/>
					10,894
					<hr/>
Refection and Recreation Accommodation—					
Members—					
Dining Room (150 persons)	..	..	..	..	2,400
Private Dining Rooms (5)	..	..	..	..	1,170
Smoking Room and Lounge	..	..	..	..	1,280
Billiard Room	..	..	..	..	1,550
Bar and Cellarage	..	..	..	..	1,180
					<hr/>
					7,580
					<hr/>
Officers—					
Officers' Sitting and Dining Room	..	..	..	..	1,600
Typists' Sitting and Dining Rooms (2 rooms)	..	..	..	..	527
Messengers' Sitting and Changing Room	..	..	..	..	434
Kitchen and Waiting Staff (2 rooms)	..	..	..	..	322
Spare Rooms (3)	..	..	..	..	780
Service Room	..	..	..	..	180
					<hr/>
					3,843
					<hr/>
Kitchen and Offices—					
Kitchen and Servery	..	..	..	..	1,664
Offices (13 rooms)	..	..	..	..	1,006
General Store	..	..	..	..	532
Heating and Mechanical Appliances	..	..	..	..	1,560
					<hr/>
					4,762
					<hr/>
Two Cottages	..	..	..	..	2,360
					<hr/>
					83,173
					<hr/>

This Schedule does not include—

(a) Messengers' Accommodation, which is disposed in positions considered suitable in relation to the several Departments of the Houses—Total area	..	..	..	..	726
(b) Lavatory Accommodation disposed generally throughout the Houses—Total area	..	..	..	..	2,764
(c) Corridors, including Entrance Vestibule—Total area	..				11,780
(d) Terraces, Verandahs, and Loggias—Total area	..	..	..	..	8,850

N.B.—Total area of land covered by buildings and enclosed gardens, 342 feet x 455 feet, equal to 155,610 feet, equal to about 3 acres.

Convenient further extension of plan may be obtained by—	Sup. Feet.
(a) Two one-story wings flanking Kitchen	4,550
(b) Lower floors under <i>Hansard</i> and Ministerial Party Rooms flanking Library	4,275
(c) Upper stories on right and left outer centre pavilions ..	10,600
	<hr/>
	19,425
	<hr/>

SITE.

14. The site for which the buildings have been designed lies in front of that proposed in the approved city plan for the permanent Parliament building. On this site, it is claimed, the provisional building will enjoy, in considerable degree, the same central relationship to the general development works of Canberra as they progress as the original contemplated monumental Parliament House would have done. In this position, also, the Advisory Committee claims, the provisional buildings, after their occupation by Parliament, might, for a term of years, be conveniently used as departmental offices.

ESTIMATED COST.

15. The estimated cost of the proposal as submitted to the Committee, including all relative engineering services, but exclusive of furnishing and fittings, was set down at £174,000, and the time fixed for completion about two and a half years from the date of commencement.

COMMITTEE'S INVESTIGATIONS.

16. The Committee visited Canberra and viewed the site proposed for the provisional building, as well as other sites in the locality mentioned as likely to be suitable; took evidence from the Director-General of Works, the Chief Commonwealth Architect, the Chairman and members of the Federal Capital Advisory Committee, representatives of the Institutes of Architects, the President of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Victoria, and the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, representative Members of the Commonwealth Parliament, and senior Parliamentary Officials, Commonwealth and State. Visits were also paid to the State Parliament Houses in Sydney and Melbourne, inspections made of the plans of those buildings, and of the new Parliament House being erected at Wellington, New Zealand, and of sketches and photographs of the Parliamentary buildings at Washington, U.S.A., and Ottawa, Canada.

At the outset of the inquiry, the Committee sought to inform itself of the reasons which actuated the Federal Capital Advisory Committee in proposing to the Government the erection of a provisional Parliament House on a site other than that allocated for Parliament House in Mr. Griffin's accepted design for the lay-out of Canberra.

Permanent Building.

17. It was explained in evidence that the Cabinet had impressed upon the Advisory Committee the necessity for the Parliament to meet at Canberra as quickly as possible and at the minimum cost, and that it was considered this was the best means of complying with the request. The Advisory Committee considered that the time was not yet ripe for the erection of the permanent monumental Parliament House at Canberra, for the reasons that it might be expected to cost anything up to two or two and a half million pounds; that the actual construction of the building would take perhaps seven years or longer; and that a former Government of the Commonwealth had made a promise to the architects of the world that when the erection of the permanent building was contemplated the design of the building would be selected as the result of a world-wide competition.

If it is the wish of Parliament to meet at Canberra from the beginning in its permanent home, it is obvious that such a stipulation must necessarily delay the transfer of the seat of Government to Canberra for a more or less lengthy period.

Temporary Building.

18. Consideration was then given to the proposal to house Parliament in a cheaply built temporary structure, just sufficiently durable to serve its purpose while the permanent building was in course of erection, and be constructed of such materials as to have some residual value for removal directly the permanent Parliament House was ready for occupation. The function of legislation is, however, so complicated that if Parliament were to sit for even one month in a

temporary building, provision would be required in that building for necessary facilities for debate, for library reference, party and Committee meetings, and for the essential services of the officials of Parliament. There would also have to be accommodation for the clerical and *Hansard* staffs, Members' and staffs' refectation, press accommodation—and, speaking broadly, for the general administration of the functions of the Commonwealth Legislature. Again, it must be borne in mind that even the provision of a temporary building would not necessarily be a very speedy operation, because there are the essential services of heating, lighting, ventilation, and communication involved. Government and Members and staff would expect to be provided with reasonably comfortable accommodation, and this, with the essential services, could not be run up in a few months under a temporary roof.

19. Figures obtained from the Chief Commonwealth Architect showed that a frame building, plastered and weatherboarded, with tiled roof, and providing the same quantity of accommodation as proposed on the plans of the provisional building submitted, might be expected to cost about £148,090. If the accommodation to be provided were restricted in some directions, and Members were prepared to put up with some inconvenience for a period of years, it was estimated that the cost of the temporary structure might be reduced to £94,000, as follows :—

Preliminary estimate of cost if building is to be reduced in size and constructed framed building (at a reduced cost of 18 per cent. as compared with brick) :—

	£	£
Cost of brick building .. .. .	..	137,600
By omitting kitchen and dining rooms	28,250	
By reducing library accommodation	12,175	
By omitting four Committee rooms	2,685	
By reduced size of legislative chambers and reception hall	6,420	
	49,530	
Estimated cost of reduced brick building	88,070	
Deduct 18 per cent.	15,840	
	72,230	
Estimated cost of reduced and framed building	72,230	
Add reduced engineering services (£22,700, less 25 per cent.) omitting cooking and vacuum	17,020	
	89,250	
Add 5 per cent. (contingencies)	4,470	
	93,720	
Estimate of framed building to reduced size, including all engineering services, except cooking and vacuum, say	94,000	

20. If a building of the nature indicated could be provided for £94,000—which the Committee doubts—it is not considered that the functions of Parliament could be adequately carried out for perhaps ten years if deprived of the accommodation which it would be necessary to omit to bring the cost down to that figure. After its utility as a Parliament House had expired, it might have a recoverable value of possibly £18,500, which means that it would have cost the Commonwealth £7,550 per annum for inconvenient temporary accommodation.

21. After carefully considering this aspect, the Committee was unanimously of opinion that the lack of comfort and convenience inseparably associated with a purely temporary building entailing unproductive expenditure, would be uneconomical and most inadvisable; the idea was therefore abandoned, and attention concentrated on the alternatives of a provisional building as projected, or the nucleus of a permanent building.

Provisional Building.

22. Consideration was then given to the provisional building proposed. It was explained that the term provisional was adopted as indicating a class of building of rather better material than would be employed in a purely temporary structure, although not having the massive proportions or embellishment associated with a permanent monumental building. It was stated that such a building could serve as a Parliament House for 50 years or more, and after that be capable of use for other purposes for another 30 or 40 years.

23. The provisional building as planned provides for foundations of concrete, walls of Commonwealth bricks externally rough-casted or white-plastered above the floor line. Internally, the walls would be cement plastered and tinted in water paint above the dadoes; the roof would be of Commonwealth tiles; the floors of the Legislative chambers and of the library and reception halls of thin hardwood blocks over a layer of concrete. In the ordinary rooms, the proposal is for hardwood flooring boards on joists. The lavatories would be tiled, and the terraces and garden paths would have bricks or brick tiles; the outside steps would be of concrete, with granolithic or similar finish. The joinery is proposed to be of timbers which have been seasoning at Canberra for years, such as maple, blackwood, cedar and black bean, and of which there are sufficient quantities on hand to supply the needs of Parliament House and other important buildings.

Nucleus of Permanent Building.

24. Another suggestion placed before the Committee, and strongly supported in several quarters, was the proposal that any accommodation provided now should be located on the site of the permanent Parliament House, and take such a form that it might be incorporated in the eventual monumental building.

25. The idea of constructing the inner portions of the building first, and leaving to the future the outer construction of the extensive monumental façades and the like, was sustained in various departmental reports for years, and was the proposal actually contained in the conditions of competition issued in 1914. This proposal was strongly supported by the President of the Federal Council of the Australian Institutes of Architects, the ex-President of the Victorian Institute of Architects, and by architects such as Mr. B. J. Waterhouse and Professor Wilkinson, Sydney, and Mr. W. B. Griffin, Melbourne—but was opposed by the Chief Commonwealth Architect, and the Chairman and Members of the Federal Capital Advisory Committee. The main grounds of opposition were—greater time required to construct sufficient accommodation for present needs; unsatisfactory exterior architecture; more ample basements and heavier structural work; incentive to spend with little delay large sums in the direction of completion; and difficulty of completing without interruption of parliamentary business.

26. Those who favoured the nucleus of the permanent building argued that in any expenditure in that direction the Commonwealth would be getting permanent value for its money in the way of something which would be available to the people of Australia in the future, while money spent on a provisional building would be so much dead loss. It was claimed that a nucleus or shell would be the finest possible incentive to the people to aim at the fulfilment of an architectural monument, which would be the central feature of the Capital City, and that it could be built in approximately three years at a cost of about £250,000.

27. The opponents of the nucleus scheme, on the other hand, claim that the time is not yet ripe for the commencement of the permanent buildings; that the country should not be asked to enter upon the heavy expenditure involved in an undertaking of this description before it has had an opportunity of liquidating its war debts; that the transfer of the Seat of Government to Canberra has already been too long delayed, and, in fairness to the people of New South Wales, action in that direction should be expedited as much as possible. It was held that any steps now taken towards the erection of the nucleus of a permanent building would be productive of delay which is unwarranted; that after Parliament has been actually established at Canberra for some little time it could be more readily ascertained what the requirements of a permanent building are likely to be. In a word, the opponents of the nucleus scheme feel that the public mind is prepared for the early establishment of the Seat of Government at Canberra; that anything done at the present time to postpone such transfer will permit of the rallying of those interests—not only political or property interests, but vested interests of various kinds—which are opposed to the building of the Federal Capital. They advocate the building of Canberra now, believing delay to be dangerous, and fearing that if the city is not established now, it will never be done.

Sites.

28. In the accepted design for the lay-out of Canberra, the site for Parliament House is fixed on Camp Hill, practically at the apex of the triangle formed by Commonwealth-avenue, Federal-avenue, and the Molonglo River, within which triangle will be located the whole of the Government offices.

29. In proposing a provisional Parliament House, the Federal Capital Advisory Committee selected as a site for such building an area slightly below and to the north of the permanent site, holding that in such a position the provisional structure—assuming that the general scheme of development of the accepted plan is proceeded with—will front the Parliamentary gardens, which, in the course of time, will be beautified, so that the provisional building, placed as they suggest, will enjoy all the advantages of that amenity. It is also held that in such a position Parliament

House would be conveniently situated with regard to the proposed administrative offices, and that Parliamentary business will not be interfered with by the building operations when the time comes to proceed with the erection of the permanent structure on Camp Hill.

30. The site selected, approximately 480 feet by 450 feet, has a slope from south to north of about 15 feet, and, in accordance with the views of the Advisory Committee, will necessitate some excavation—with the result that the proposed building will, at the rear or southern end, be about 10 feet below surface level. It was explained that this setting back into the hill would have the effect of masking the rear portions of the building, providing a certain amount of shelter from the southerly winds, and permitting of the provisional building being kept sufficiently low so as not to interfere with the vista from the permanent building when later erected on Camp Hill. This latter statement raised in the minds of the Committee a suggestion that there would be a tendency to retain the provisional building for other purposes after the erection of the permanent building, and it was felt that if such structure should have a life of one hundred years, it would be a continued defect on the approved plan, and, as Mr. Griffin expressed it, “would be like filling a front yard full of outhouses.”

31. While considering the question of site, various ideas and suggestions were elicited by the Committee. Some witnesses were of opinion that the provisional building as now projected, having a life of possibly one hundred years or more, is sufficiently permanent to warrant its erection on the permanent Parliament House site, Camp Hill. Others, fearing the sentimental and historic interest likely to be associated with the site on which is located the building housing the first assembly of Parliament at Canberra, claimed that a provisional structure erected as suggested would remain there for all time, and as it occupies a position proposed by the designer to be kept free from buildings, form the first step in the ultimate destruction of the accepted plan. They, therefore, strongly advocated that if the idea of a provisional building be persisted in, it should be placed in some position from which, in the gradual development of the city, it must of necessity be removed.

Knoll Site.

32. Such a site, on a picturesque knoll on the 1,885 feet level, approximately 1,600 feet north of the proposed provisional site, within about 600 feet of the river, and commanding an extensive view in every direction, was advanced. The Committee inspected this area—called for purposes of identification the Knoll site—and was much impressed with its possibilities. It was stated that a suitable building erected on this site for the provisional Parliament House could enjoy to a large degree the benefit of the beautification of the area associated with the permanent Parliament House; that it was sufficiently far away from the permanent site to insure escape from any noise of building operations inseparably associated with the construction of the monumental House; that it was in a position intended to be occupied by a Government office in the design, but so situated that it would not interfere with the projected development of the city for at least 200 or 300 years, and if vacated in favour of a permanent Parliament House before the expiration of that time, could be readily utilized for some other Government office, university, library, or such like, for many years, until the expansion of Government activities reached, in the remote future, the vast dimensions provided for in the completed plan.

33. The Committee was, however, convinced that the Government triangle must achieve its ultimate beauty, as planned, by the simultaneous development of buildings in architectural harmony on each side of Prospect Parkway, which is the axial line from Camp Hill to Mount Ainslie, and as investigations showed that the erection of Government offices in architectural harmony on the eastern side of the parkway would necessitate very heavy earthworks, at considerable expense, this project was abandoned.

34. In the accepted plan of Canberra, the permanent Parliament House is designed to occupy Camp Hill at a level of approximately 1,922 feet, and the eminence of Kurrajong, to the south of it, is planned to carry, at a level of 2,000 feet, a monumental building, designated the “Capitol,” and conceived by the designer as

“a general administrative structure for popular reception and ceremonial, or for housing archives and commemorating Australian achievements, rather than for deliberation or counsel; at any rate, representing the sentimental and spiritual head if not the actual working mechanism of the Government of the Federation.”

He further states:—

“Kurrajong is deemed too large and too high for a convenient working organization of Parliament, but being the only conspicuous eminence that has a skyline visible from practically every portion of the city, it lends itself to an architectural treatment that need comprise little more than in the necessary ramps, stairs, and terraces, to make it by its natural bulk, the dominating architectural feature.”

35. There were not wanting, however, those who considered that as Canberra is to be essentially the legislative centre of the Commonwealth, the pivotal centre of the city should be the building housing the Legislature; and as most of the avenues on the southern or left bank of the Molonglo focus on Kurrajong, that that eminence would be the most suitable site for the permanent Parliament House.

36. With this view, even some members of the Federal Capital Advisory Committee are inclined to agree, and one of the arguments used by them in favour of the erection of the provisional building on the site they suggest, is that such action would leave free both Camp Hill and Kurrajong, so that in the course of years, the consensus of expert opinion could govern the establishment of the permanent building on either Kurrajong or Camp Hill.

37. The Chief Commonwealth Architect, who favored Kurrajong as the ultimate site of the permanent monumental Parliament House, flanked by certain Government offices and other buildings intended for the use of Senators and Members of the House of Representatives, submitted, at the request of the Committee, sketches illustrating his idea of its treatment for that purpose. (See attached plans Nos. 5, 6, 7, 8.)

38. The Committee by resolution declared itself in favour of substantial adherence to the general outline of Mr. Griffin's plan for the development of the Parliamentary and administrative areas at Canberra, and Mr. Griffin, in giving evidence, stated that the adoption of the site recommended for the provisional building would be an important departure from his plan, which provides for a water feature in that position.

39. After giving this matter careful and prolonged attention, the Committee decided that as opinions of experts and laymen were so divided on the question, it would be well, after setting out the facts as above, to leave the final decision to Parliament. It therefore submits two alternatives, either of which would, in the opinion of the Committee, meet all needs for many years:—

- (i) The erection of a nucleus of the permanent building on Camp Hill.
- (ii) The erection of the provisional building on the site below Camp Hill, as recommended by the Federal Capital Advisory Committee.

40. The decisions arrived at by the Committee in connexion with this matter are shown by the following extracts from its minutes of proceedings, namely:—

Mr. COOK moved: That in the opinion of the Committee, the general outline of Mr. Griffin's plan of Canberra as regards the Parliamentary and administrative areas be substantially adhered to.

Seconded by Mr. MACKAY.

Carried unanimously.

Mr. BLAKELEY moved: That a Provisional Parliament House be erected on the site below Camp Hill, as recommended by the Federal Capital Advisory Committee.

Seconded by Mr. COOK.

Mr. JACKSON moved as an amendment: That in the opinion of the Committee it is advisable to erect the nucleus of the permanent building on Camp Hill.

Seconded by Senator FOLL.

The Committee divided on the amendment—

Ayes (6).
 Senator Foll
 Senator Newland
 Senator Plain
 Mr. Gregory
 Mr. Jackson
 Mr. Mackay.

Noes (2).
 Mr. Blakeley
 Mr. Cook.

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

Mr. GREGORY moved: That should Parliament decide to reject the recommendation to proceed with the nucleus of the permanent building, the Committee recommend that a provisional Parliament House be erected on the site suggested by the Federal Capital Advisory Committee.

Seconded by Senator PLAIN.

Mr. MACKAY moved as an amendment: That any provisional Parliament House be erected on the site known as the Knoll.

Seconded by Senator FOLL.

The Committee divided on the amendment—

Ayes (3).
 Senator Foll
 Mr. Jackson
 Mr. Mackay.

Noes (4).
 Senator Newland
 Senator Plain
 Mr. Cook
 Mr. Gregory.

And so it passed in the negative.

The original motion was then put and carried unanimously.

41. When the competition for Parliament House was launched in 1914, it was the intention to spend a sum of £250,000 on the nucleus of the building—the structure to be completed later as circumstances and the financial position of the Commonwealth dictated.

42. In giving evidence before the Committee, Mr. Griffin stated that his then estimate of £250,000 for the nucleus still held good; other architects mentioned sums of £250,000, £300,000, £350,000 to £400,000 and even up to £520,000 as being necessary to provide the nucleus of the permanent building. After giving this matter consideration, the Committee decided to recommend that if the proposal to proceed with the erection of the nucleus be agreed upon, the portion to be erected should be arrived at by a Committee appointed by the Government, and the sum to be expended thereon should be restricted to £300,000 plus another £50,000 to cover any necessary temporary additions.

43. The decision arrived at by the Committee in connexion with this matter is shown by the following extract from its minutes of proceedings, namely:—

Senator NEWLAND moved: That the first expenditure on the nucleus of the permanent Parliament House be not more than £300,000, plus £50,000 to cover any necessary temporary additions; the permanent portion of the structure to be first erected to be determined on this basis of expenditure by a Committee to be appointed by the Government.

Seconded by Senator FOLL.

The Committee divided on the motion—

Ayes (5).	No (1).
Senator Foll	Mr. Blakeley.
Senator Newland	
Mr. Cook	
Mr. Gregory	
Mr. Jackson.	

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

Extra Time involved in Providing Nucleus.

44. In stating that a provisional Parliament House could be provided in approximately two and a half years from the date of commencement of work, it must be borne in mind that prior to actually commencing work a certain amount of time will be taken up in—

- (a) Preparation of working drawings, specifications and details on which to call tenders;
- (b) Calling for tenders; including preparation of quantities by quantity surveyors;
- (c) Accepting tenders and arranging a contract;
- (d) Installing equipment and fittings, and preparation for Parliament House to be used.

The arranging of these details will necessarily take some time, but in the opinion of the Committee, there should not be any difficulty, if no interruption occurs, in arranging for the completion of the building within three years from the date Parliament signifies its approval.

45. To call for a world-wide competition to construct the nucleus of a permanent Parliament House would, in the opinion of the Committee, take just so much longer as would be involved in arranging the competition, and, if necessary, bringing out the successful architect, if the winner be not found in Australia.

46. The time has been variously stated as from a minimum of six months if the original conditions are not altered to a maximum of one year and nine months if fresh conditions are drawn up.

47. Taking all things into consideration therefore, the Committee is of opinion that a provisional House could be constructed within three years from the time approval is conveyed to the constructing Department; while it would take approximately four to five years to provide the nucleus of a permanent building.

Competitive Designs.

48. It is pointed out in the Second General Report of the Federal Capital Advisory Committee that:—

“Several years ago, prior to the appointment of the Advisory Committee, the Minister for Works and Railways informed the representatives of the Institutes of Architects of Australia that the designs of the permanent Government buildings at Canberra would be the subject of public competitions. As a result of the recommendations contained in the First General Report, however, the Government agreed that the provision of the permanent Parliament House and the permanent official buildings be deferred indefinitely, and that structures of a provisional character be erected for the present. The Committee believes that these structures can be more satisfactorily developed by the Department of Works and Railways, in view of its intimate knowledge of requirements, and the fact that architectural schemes in connexion therewith have already been prepared, in touch with this Committee, for reference to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works. This action would also effect a considerable saving of time, which is an essential factor in connexion with these particular works.”

49. During the course of its inquiry, the Committee received from several quarters severe condemnation of the Government's decision not to proceed with the competition. It was stated in evidence that as a result of the first call for designs, a great many plans had been drawn up, and many architects in Australia and abroad had incurred large expense in the preparation of their competitive schemes, and it is now urged that the competition be re-opened and carried through. Several reasons are advanced as to why this action should be taken. In the first place, it is claimed, the architectural style of the dominating building would be settled, and the master mind which conceived the design would be available to direct the æsthetic side of the whole project. In the second place, it is contended, the expenditure of an amount reaching possibly £250,000 on provisional buildings would be ultimately saved to the nation, as for little more than that sum could be built something based on the fundamentals of the winning plan, to be façaded, colonnaded and domed at a later date. Thirdly, by carrying through the competition, the Government would escape the stigma of having broken faith with the architects of the world, who in 1914 started on this project, and took it up again in 1916.

50. Statements were made in evidence that the holding of an international competition might be expected to delay the assembly of Parliament at Canberra by only six or nine months, but the Committee declines to take so optimistic a view of the situation, and is more inclined to agree with other estimates submitted that it would take twelve to eighteen months. Even if the period were extended to two years, it was urged that such delay was inappreciable in the life of a nation, and in any case there are so many other works to be completed and buildings to be erected which should be finished before Parliament meets, that the longer period would be more likely to insure that they will be ready in time.

51. If the competition be gone on with, the work already carried out in the preparation of the sketches submitted to the Committee, and in the investigations made by it, will not have been wasted, but will more clearly indicate to competitors the amount of accommodation which must be provided.

52. The contention advanced by the Federal Capital Advisory Committee that, because a provisional building is contemplated, the competition should be deferred indefinitely, is not, in the opinion of this Committee, sufficient reason for the Commonwealth unduly delaying a world-wide arrangement. No effort should be made to shelter behind the fact that the architects may have no legal redress, but if, as is stated, a moral obligation exists, the Commonwealth should, in accordance with the proverbial British reputation for straight dealing, honour its promise.

53. The decision arrived at by the Committee in connexion with this matter is shown by the following extract from its minutes of proceedings, namely:—

Senator FOLL moved: That to enable the construction of the nucleus of the permanent Parliament House to be proceeded with, it is advisable that competitive designs be invited by the Commonwealth Government for the permanent Parliament House, returnable at the earliest possible time compatible with the undertaking, but not to exceed twelve months; the nucleus of the building to contain such portions as will be enumerated later—the remaining portions required to enable the business of Parliament to be carried on to be of a temporary nature.

Seconded by Mr. MACKAY.

Mr. BLAKELEY moved as an amendment: That this Committee is of opinion that competitive designs for a permanent Parliament House should be completed, and is further of opinion that the Commonwealth is under a moral obligation to complete such competition at the earliest possible date.

Failing to secure a seconder, the motion was put.

The Committee divided—

<p>Ayes (7).</p> <p>Senator Foll Senator Newland Senator Plain Mr. Cook Mr. Gregory Mr. Jackson Mr. Mackay.</p>	<p>No (1).</p> <p>Mr. Blakeley.</p>
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And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

Legislative Chambers.

54. In dealing with the Legislative Chambers, the Committee realizes that in the course of years there will be a greater number of Members, whether due to growth of population, increased representation, greater number of States, or other causes. After hearing expressions of opinion on the matter from a number of representative men, the Committee recommends that seating accommodation be provided in the House of Representatives for 112 Members, and in the Senate for 56.

Method of Seating.

55. After giving the matter considerable thought, the Committee considers that to bring all Members as near as practicable to the Chair, the Presiding Officer should be located in the centre of the longer side of the Chamber, and that Members' seats be arranged on a semi-circular plan. To provide for the comfort and convenience of Members, it is recommended that seating accommodation be arranged in benches of twos, with gangways between, and with a separate desk for each Member. To provide for ingress and egress without disturbing other Members, it is also suggested that there should be a passage-way at the back of the rear row of seats.

Rostrum.

56. In the course of its investigations, a suggestion was made to the Committee that the Commonwealth should adopt the principle of having Members address the House from a rostrum, and the matter was pursued throughout the inquiry. After hearing the opinions of many witnesses, the Committee is satisfied that, even if installed, the rostrum is likely to be but little used excepting in the delivery of second-reading speeches, and would be liable to lead to delay in the transaction of Parliamentary business. Further, if Members were to speak sometimes from the rostrum and sometimes from the floor of the Chamber, difficulty would probably be experienced with the acoustics of the Chamber. Moreover, the consensus of opinion is that the rostrum is scarcely applicable to the British system of a deliberate assembly, and the Committee therefore is unable to see that any good purpose would be served by its installation.

Ventilation.

57. Another matter to which the Committee devoted special attention was the question of ventilation of the Legislative Chambers. It was ascertained in evidence that considerable sums of money have from time to time been spent in an endeavour to insure that the Chambers of the Parliament House, Melbourne, shall be provided with a pure atmosphere, but inspection made by the Committee convinced it that the apparatus in existence was not of the type likely to produce the best results, while it is a matter of common knowledge that the quality of the air in the House is at times so bad as to be gravely inimical to health.

58. It was stated in evidence that the Chambers of the Parliament House projected for Canberra are so designed as to have direct access to the open air, and it was held that it is unlikely that there will be any need for artificial ventilation. The Committee is, however, aware of the climatic conditions likely to prevail at Canberra with its extremes of heat and cold, and fears that during the years of building operations following immediately upon the establishment of the Capital there will be a considerable amount of dust in the atmosphere, and probably times when the windows giving access to the open air must necessarily be kept shut. While unwilling to recommend anything which may increase the cost of the building, the Committee is convinced that it will not be possible to have the air in the Chambers always kept pure and at a reasonable temperature without resource to artificial ventilation, and recommends that provision be made for the installation of an up-to-date air conditioning plant capable of eliminating dust and regulating the temperature and humidity of the atmosphere in the Chambers. From the information placed before it on the subject, the Committee is satisfied that the most satisfactory system to install would be that where the fresh air is brought into the Chambers at a height of about eight feet above floor level, and the foul air extracted at floor level. To provide for efficient air space in other rooms of the House, the Committee recommends that no ceiling in any room shall be lower than twelve feet.

59. The Committee suggests that Members who take special interest in ventilation processes might, with advantage, make an inspection at the Automatic Telephone Exchange, Collingwood, of the plant there, which provides for the extraction of dust and the regulation of the temperature and humidity of the air fed into the switch-room.

Hansard.

60. Various opinions were expressed as to the best position in the Chamber for the *Hansard* reporters. It is essential that if the reports are to be accurate, reporters must be given a position from which they can hear and see well, and be free from interruption, whether caused by Members moving about the Chamber, conversation, &c.

61. The Second Reporter, on behalf of the *Hansard* staff, urged that they be provided with three seats at the table on the floor of the House.

62. After hearing all the views expressed, however, the Committee is of opinion that, to suit the reporters and Members best, *Hansard* should be accommodated in a separate portion of the Press Gallery at a height not exceeding 9 feet 6 inches, slightly to the left of the Presiding Officer, with separate means of access to the space reserved for them.

63. The accommodation provided in the plan for *Hansard* outside the Chambers, comprising one room for the Principal Reporter, one room for the Second Reporter, and three other rooms with six small typists' cubicles adjoining, to accommodate eleven reporters, eight typists, one clerk, and one messenger, was considered insufficient, and the Committee after inquiry is satisfied that some alteration should be made. It is suggested that the space shown on the original plan be provided, but that eight typists' cubicles, a typists' retiring room, a store, and lavatories for men and women be arranged for on a lower floor.

Press Accommodation.

64. In the plan submitted to the Committee, the accommodation provided for the press was confined to a single room approximately 31 feet by 12 feet on the first floor, adjoining the end of each chamber, and press galleries along two sides of each Chamber.

65. Inquiry convinced the Committee that this accommodation was inadequate to meet press requirements, and it was unanimously agreed to recommend :—

1. That for the purpose of performing their work in the Chambers the press be accommodated in a low gallery behind the Presiding Officer's chair, at a height not exceeding 9 feet 6 inches.
2. That, in addition, twelve small rooms, to accommodate four persons each, and one large common room be provided ;
3. That a dining-room be set aside for the use of the press.

Library.

66. Considerable attention was given to the question of library accommodation, in view of the statement made that the Commonwealth Library has been planned and developed not merely as a Parliamentary Library, but also as the National Library of Australia, to be established at Canberra.

67. At the present time, the library contains approximately 67,000 volumes and about 2,000 bound volumes of newspapers, and is increasing at the rate of 3,000 volumes a year. In the plan submitted to the Committee, it is proposed that there shall be a library and reading room 56 feet by 46 feet, and a newspaper and periodicals room 56 feet by 28 feet, between which will be located two cataloguing rooms 24 feet by 22 feet and 24 feet by 12 feet respectively. Steel shelving to a maximum height of 7 feet and all modern library conveniences will be included, and there will be room for approximately 90,500 volumes.

68. Parliament House, Melbourne, at the present time, contains not only the Parliamentary Library, but also the Petherick Collection and the Australian Section, which latter two together form the nucleus of a National Library. If this arrangement be continued, the accommodation proposed to be provided will be sufficient for a period of about eight and a half years, but if arrangements are made before the expiration of that time to establish a National Library, the space available for a Parliamentary Library will be sufficient for an indefinite period.

69. After due consideration, the Committee came to the conclusion that it would be an advantage if the cataloguing rooms were eliminated from the library proper, and accommodation provided for them elsewhere—thus leaving for library purposes a chamber approximately 98 feet by 56 feet. It is also suggested that, to avoid congestion, provision should be made in the near future for the establishment of a National Library apart from the Parliamentary Library, which will then have sufficient accommodation in the space provided in the plans to meet all requirements.

Housekeeper's Quarters.

70. The Committee observed that on the plan placed before it, provision had been made for two housekeepers' cottages in connexion with Parliament House. The Committee is of opinion that in a building of this description there is no necessity to have more than one housekeeper, and recommends accordingly.

Additions and Modifications Recommended.

71. After careful scrutiny of the accommodation proposed to be provided, and patient inquiry from all available sources as to the reasonable requirements of Members, officials, the press, and the public, the Committee is convinced that whether the nucleus scheme be adopted,

or the provisional House be decided upon, considerable alteration will be necessary in the plans submitted for consideration, and recommends that the following additions and modifications be made :—

1. That the Chambers be made of a size sufficient to seat 112 Members in the House of Representatives and 56 in the Senate.
2. That the Presiding Officer in each Chamber be located in the centre of the longer side of the Chamber.
3. That seating in the Chambers be arranged on the semi-circular plan, Members to be provided with benches for two and a separate desk for each Member ; also that a passage-way be arranged at the back of the rear row of seats.
4. That the rooms proposed on the south side of each Chamber be eliminated to provide for a Member's lounge, with direct access therefrom to the open air.
5. That provision be made for ventilation plant.
6. That *Hansard* be located in a separate portion of the Press Gallery, slightly to the left of the Presiding Officer, with separate means of access.
7. That room be provided in each Chamber for three officials on a bench at the back of Ministers.
8. That the press be accommodated in a low gallery behind the Presiding Officer's chair.
9. That the Public Gallery be located on the wall opposite the Presiding Officer's chair, extending back, if necessary, over the outside corridor.
10. That accommodation be provided on the Senate side for Senate club room approximately 1,440 square feet, Leader of Opposition in the Senate and his secretary, and two party rooms.
11. That accommodation be provided on the House of Representatives' side for Librarian, a Ministerial party room approximately 1,125 square feet, Opposition room approximately 800 square feet, and third party room approximately 720 square feet.
12. That billiard and smoking rooms be transferred to the eastern side of the refectory group.
13. That adequate lavatory and bath accommodation be provided for the staff, and three baths on each side of the building for the use of Members.
14. That the Clerks of the Senate and of the House of Representatives and small record rooms be located on the same floor as the Chambers, with remainder of staff on a separate floor.
15. That one large room on each side of the House be provided for Select Committees.
16. That cataloguing rooms be eliminated from the library, and that cataloguing cabinets be placed against the walls.
17. That a responsible officer of the library be located within the library itself, in an alcove formed by book stacks, and that the general library staff be accommodated in one large common room.
18. That three large rooms be provided for party typists, with cubicles for dictation purposes.
19. That one large room be provided for the use of Heads of Departments.
20. That the Public Works Committee be provided with a committee room approximately 30 x 24, Secretary's room and ante-room, and that similar accommodation be provided for the Joint Committee of Public Accounts.
21. That provision be included for three strangers' rooms on each side of the main entrance.
22. That the lower walls of the reception hall be eliminated.
23. That the Post Office and Telegraph Office be combined, and located on the Senate side.
24. That no ceiling in any room be lower than 12 feet.
25. That further locker and retiring room accommodation be provided for messengers.
26. That provision be made for one housekeeper's quarters only.
27. That provision be made for one ladies' reception room, with lavatory attached.
28. That twelve small rooms, to accommodate four persons each, and one large common room, be provided for the press.
29. That a press dining-room be provided.

72. These additions and modifications with the accommodation already proposed in the sketch plans submitted to the Committee will, it is thought, provide a Parliament House comfortable and convenient for Members, officials, the press, and the public, the estimated cost of which will be approximately £220,000.

73. A communication was addressed to the Chief Commonwealth Architect on the 8th June, 1923, setting out the additional accommodation considered necessary, and inviting him to furnish a revised sketch plan of a provisional Parliament House to include same.

74. Such plan, to which special attention is invited, has now been received, and is attached hereto, marked Plans Nos. 2, 3, 4.

Yass-Canberra Railway.

75. The Committee gave consideration to the fact that at the present time visitors to Canberra suffer considerable inconvenience in approaching the city by rail. From Melbourne, passengers alight at Yass Junction at 5.27 a.m., and have then to undertake a motor drive of 43 miles; while the train from Sydney to Queanbeyan reaches that township at 4.14 a.m., and a journey of about 7 miles is then necessary before reaching the city.

76. Under the provisions of the *Seat of Government Acceptance Act 1908* it is provided (First Schedule, Clause 9) that:—

In the event of the Commonwealth constructing a railway within the Territory to its northern boundary, the State shall construct a railway from a point near Yass on the Great Southern Railway to join with the said railway, and the Commonwealth and the State shall grant to each other such reciprocal running rights as may be agreed upon, or as in default of agreement may be determined by arbitration, over such portions of that railway as are owned by each.

77. It is therefore urged that negotiations be entered into with the State Government of New South Wales so that it may be possible to have the railway from Yass to Canberra completed concurrently with the opening of Parliament at Canberra.

Pollution of Molonglo River.

78. It is apparent to the Committee that the health of the community established at Canberra may to some extent be jeopardized if the Molonglo, which flows through the centre of the city, is allowed to become polluted. It is provided in the *Seat of Government Acceptance Act 1908* (First Schedule, Clause 4) that:—

The State shall not pollute and shall protect from pollution the waters of the Queanbeyan and Molonglo Rivers throughout their whole course above the Territory.

79. This was referred to by the Committee in its Report dealing with the proposed Construction of Dams for Ornamental Waters, Canberra, presented to Parliament on the 28th November, 1916, in which it was stated:—

It is realized that care must be taken to guard against the contamination of the ornamental waters by preventing storm-water or other city drainage from finding its way into the lakes. Furthermore, as the water supply for the lakes will be dependent upon a supply which receives the surface drainage of Queanbeyan, it is, in the opinion of the Committee, essential that prior to the formation of the lakes the Commonwealth should be satisfied that the sanitation of the town of Queanbeyan is properly controlled.

80. No information has reached the Committee as to any scheme having yet been adopted for taking care of the sewerage and storm-water drainage of Queanbeyan, and in the interests of the inhabitants of the future city it is urged that representations in regard to this matter be made to the State of New South Wales as soon as possible.

Report by Officials.

81. During the course of their examination before the Committee, the Chairman suggested to the Clerk of the Senate, and to the Clerk of the House of Representatives, on the 23rd March, 1923, that it would be of assistance to the Committee if the various responsible officials of Parliament met together and submitted to the Committee a joint Report embodying their ideas of accommodation, &c., which should be provided. This was agreed to, but it is regretted that the Report prepared did not reach the Committee until 5th June, by which time the Committee had arrived at its decisions; so that the Report did not serve the useful purpose intended. It was found, however, that most of the material recommendations of the officials had been anticipated and adopted.

Letter from Mr. Griffin.

82. When giving evidence before the Committee, Mr. Griffin asked for time to formulate considered replies to some of the questions put to him. This was granted, and a communication embodying his ideas on various questions was subsequently forwarded by Mr. Griffin, and is attached, Appendix "A."

Letter from Director-General of Works.

83. Following upon reports of evidence published in the press, the Director-General of Works subsequently to his examination favoured the Committee with a communication giving his estimate of the time involved in calling for competitions and putting in hand the work of erecting the nucleus of a permanent Parliament House. *Vide* Appendix "B."

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS.

84. Summarized, the recommendations of the Committee are as follow :—

1. The erection of the nucleus of the permanent building on Camp Hill. (p. xiii.)
Or, alternatively,
The erection of a provisional building on the site below Camp Hill. (p. xiii.)
2. That if the nucleus scheme be adopted, the first expenditure on same be not more than £300,000 plus £50,000 to cover any necessary temporary additions; the permanent portion of the structure to be first erected to be determined on this basis of expenditure by a Committee to be appointed by the Government. (p. xiv.)
3. That competitive designs be invited for the permanent Parliament House. (p. xv.)
4. That the Chambers be made of a size sufficient to seat 112 Members in the House of Representatives and 56 in the Senate. (p. xv.)
5. That the Presiding Officer in each Chamber be located in the centre of the longer side of the Chamber. (p. xvi.)
6. That seating in the Chambers be arranged on the semi-circular plan, Members to be provided with benches for two and a separate desk for each Member; also that a passage-way be arranged at the back of the rear row of seats. (p. xvi.)
7. That the rooms proposed on the south side of each Chamber be eliminated to provide for a Members' lounge, with direct access therefrom to the open air.
8. That provision be made for ventilation plant. (p. xvi.)
9. That *Hansard* be located in a separate portion of the Press Gallery slightly to the left of the Presiding Officer, and at a height not exceeding 9 feet 6 inches, with separate means of access. (p. xvi.)
10. That room be provided in each Chamber for three officials on a bench at the back of Ministers.
11. That the Press be located in a low gallery behind the Presiding Officer's chair, at a height not exceeding 9 feet 6 inches. (p. xvii.)
12. That the Public Gallery be located on the wall opposite the Presiding Officer's chair, extending back if necessary over the outside corridor.
13. That accommodation be provided on the Senate side for Senate Club Room approximately 1,440 square feet, Leader of Opposition in the Senate and his Secretary, and two Party Rooms.
14. That accommodation be provided on the House of Representatives' side for Librarian, a Ministerial Party Room approximately 1,125 square feet, Opposition Room approximately 800 square feet, and Third Party Room approximately 720 square feet.
15. That Billiard and Smoking Rooms be transferred to the eastern side of the refectory group.
16. That adequate lavatory and bath accommodation be provided for the staff, and three baths on each side of the building for the use of Members.
17. That the Clerks of the Senate and of the House of Representatives and small Record Rooms be located on the same floor as the Chambers, with remainder of staff on a separate floor.
18. That one large room on each side of the House be provided for Select Committees.
19. That Cataloguing Rooms be eliminated from the Library, and that cataloguing cabinets be placed against the walls. (p. xvii.)

20. That a responsible officer of the Library be located within the Library itself, in an alcove formed by book stacks, and that the general library staff be accommodated in one large common room.
21. That three large rooms be provided for Party Typists, with cubicles for dictation purposes.
22. That one large room be provided for the use of Heads of Departments.
23. That the Public Works Committee be provided with a Committee Room approximately 30 feet by 24 feet, Secretary's Room and ante-room, and that similar accommodation be provided for the Joint Committee of Public Accounts.
24. That provision be included for three Strangers' Rooms on each side of the main entrance.
25. That the lower walls of the Reception Hall be eliminated.
26. That the Post Office and Telegraph Office be combined, and located on the Senate side.
27. That no ceiling in any room be lower than 12 feet.
28. That further locker and retiring room accommodation be provided for Messengers.
29. That provision be made for one Housekeeper's quarters only.
30. That provision be made for one Ladies' Reception Room, with lavatory attached.
31. That 12 small rooms, to accommodate four persons each, and one large common room, be provided for the Press. (p. xvii.)
32. That a Press Dining Room be provided. (p. xvii.)

H. GREGORY,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Parliament House, Melbourne,
18th June, 1923.

APPENDIX A.

395 Collins-street, Melbourne, Victoria,
29th May, 1923.

The Secretary,
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Commonwealth Parliament House,
Melbourne, Victoria.

Dear Sir,

In accordance with the wish of the Committee expressed at the meeting on 22nd instant and my promise—I now subjoin my considered opinion of the Parliament House question as portion of my evidence given at said sitting.

Yours faithfully,
W. B. GRIFFIN.

The issue is whether a temporary or provisional Parliament House should be erected, the erection of the permanent structure to be indefinitely postponed.

There are two factors involved :—

- (a) Moral obligation which may have been incurred by the Commonwealth toward those invited to compete for the design of the permanent structure.
- (b) The advantage or otherwise of departing from the original intent and policy of erecting the Houses upon a basis of permanence.

In regard to (a) :—

It was decided that while every facility should be given to Australian and official architects to compete or submit designs, the matter was of such a special nature that an appeal to the world's best talent was indicated. To that end, before the war, a most completely elaborated scheme for a competition was formulated, circulated in Australia and abroad, and competitors invited to accept the conditions and register their acceptance. Two hundred and ten acceptances were received, the competitors entering upon the work. Thus a contract was entered into which it must be assumed to be the intention of the Government to give effect to or equitably to determine.

The war intervened, and after an interview between representatives of the Royal British Institute of Architects and the High Commissioner in London, the Government decided, in consequence of conditions arising out of the war, to postpone the completion of the competition until after the termination of the war. The competitors concerned were not consulted nor their acquiescence secured.

The present position is that it is proposed to erect, upon departmental designs, a provisional building in permanent material which would be, *de facto*, not a temporary Seat of Government, but a permanent location.

I am of opinion that it would not be equitable or expedient thus arbitrarily to terminate the contract entered into with competitors and eliminate from consideration the opportunity of securing a world-wide expression of view from the architectural profession.

In regard to (b) :—

It is officially stated that the cost of the proposed temporary structures would be £175,000. They are to be so located in the site of a lake in front of the permanent buildings that, eventually, their removal would be obligatory, when, substantially, their full value would disappear.

The cost of the nucleus of the permanent building, which would perform all that the temporary structures could perform, and more, was estimated at £250,000, and the estimate still holds. Afterward the building could be completed without disturbing the sittings of Parliament—of such completion there are numerous examples, Federal Parliament House, Melbourne, being one.

Thus, erection of the provisional buildings means an increased expenditure upon the housing of Parliament of £175,000.

Regarding the proposition to meet the difficulties by altering the site of the final buildings—such procedure could but result in placing them in a position of inferior suitability and subordinating the matter of a considered location and continued efficiency to a mere matter of a passing convenience for which I can find no adequate need nor justification. Such an act would, of necessity, destroy the homogeneity of the plan of accepted lay-out which is a crystallization about the site of Parliament House on Camp Hill as a pivotal centre.

In conclusion, I am of opinion that, in honour, there is an obligation to complete the contract with competitors for the plan of the permanent building. Further, that it would be wise to defer action until that larger advice is available, when the results will probably be found to be a full justification. Still further that, postulating such act, Parliament might be completely housed at Canberra within three years.

I am strongly of opinion that no money should be expended save upon a part of a permanent structure, that the others proposed to be utilized are ineligible, and that the original site and procedure should not be departed from.

(Sgd.) W. B. GRIFFIN.

APPENDIX B.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

FEDERAL CAPITAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

Department of Works and Railways,
Customs House (4th Floor), Sydney,
31st May, 1923.

Memorandum to

The Secretary,

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

I understand that evidence has been given to the Committee as to the time it would take to erect, at Canberra, the inner portion of a permanent Parliament House with temporary exterior accessory accommodation, and the whole to be subject to competitive designs.

Before making a forecast of the time involved, it is necessary to review what would be the necessary administrative action.

It would not be possible to proceed with the competition which has already been called, because the accommodation would have to be increased and further information regarding temporary accessory accommodation should be incorporated.

Any attempt to use the existing competition under the circumstances would, I am convinced, prove abortive and might involve the Commonwealth authorities in further difficulties with the Architectural profession. The only sure way to obtain a clear-cut competition would be to re-frame the conditions and promulgate them simultaneously in such countries as might be determined upon.

Before the competition can be held, it would be obligatory to obtain the concurrence of the Royal Institute of British Architects and come to an agreement as to adjudication. Such action takes a considerable time, even if accomplished by cablegram.

In the forecast of time stated below, it is assumed that such portions of the permanent building as will be occupied for the functions of Parliament would be constructed, finished, and equipped in the style compatible with the importance of a monumental building intended to last several hundred years and be a credit architecturally to the Commonwealth of Australia. The working drawings and details of construction, which would have to follow after the adjudication on the competition drawings, would be a heavy work, and the working drawings would necessarily extend to the entire future building.

It is assumed in the forecast that there will be a definite proposal to build on Camp Hill, because any proposal to build on Capitol Hill would involve much greater time, because the competition would have to take into consideration the provision of the administrative buildings in co-ordination with Parliament House. Every section of the following forecast has been put down on the absolute minimum. I consider, however, that it would not reasonably be expected, owing to one delay and another which would unavoidably occur, that the work could be accomplished in the total of six years mentioned in the forecast; thus I do not wish it to be assumed that if the permanent House is to be built it could be done in that time, but give it only as an absolute and irreducible minimum for each of the successive actions to be taken.

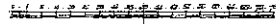
<i>Forecast of Time.</i>		Years.	Months.
Preparation of Report by the Parliamentary Works Committee submitted to Parliament and debated in House as from the present day	.. .. .	..	1
Drawing up conditions of competition and approval thereof, reference to the Architectural profession and approval by the R.I.B.A., finalizing conditions, and advertising them in Australia and England	.. .. .	..	5
Duration of the competition (working time for the competitors to prepare drawings)	.. .. .	1	..
Competition drawings to reach Australia and be opened for adjudication	.. .. .	..	2
Adjudication in Australia	.. .. .	..	1
Consideration by Government, and approval of adjudication	.. .. .	..	1
Preparation of working drawing, specifications, and details on which to call tenders	.. .. .	..	9
Calling for tenders throughout Australia, but not abroad, including preparation of quantities by Quantity Surveyors (for Builders' and Contractors' Associations)	.. .. .	..	4
Accepting tenders and arranging contract and to point of commencing construction	.. .. .	..	1
Time for construction under contract	.. .. .	2	6
Time for installing equipment, fittings, and preparation for Parliament House to be used	.. .. .	..	6
Total	.. .. .	6	0

(Signed) P. T. OWEN,
Director-General of Works.

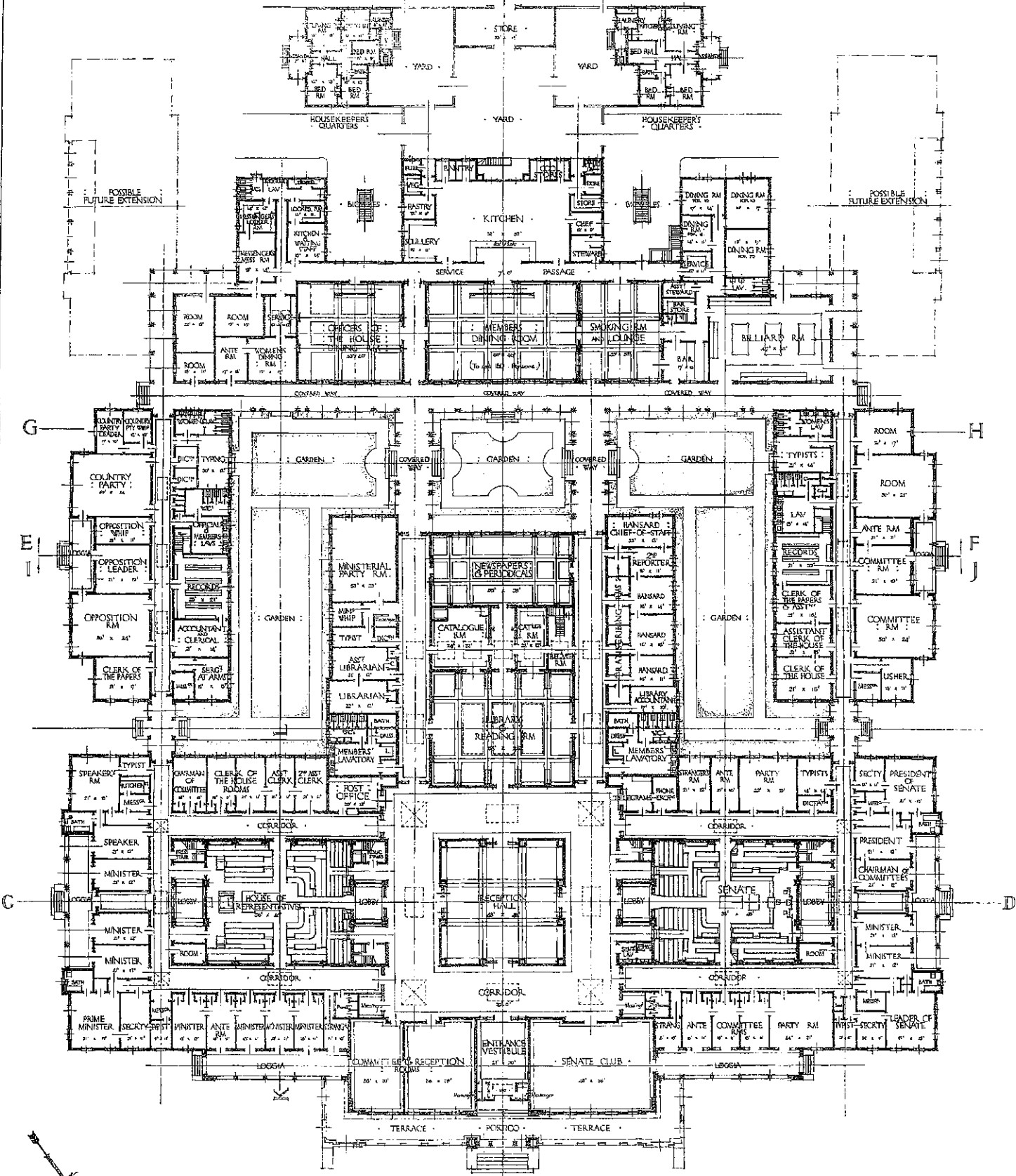
PROVISIONAL HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT
CANBERRA

As submitted
to the
Works Committee.

SCALE



ROAD

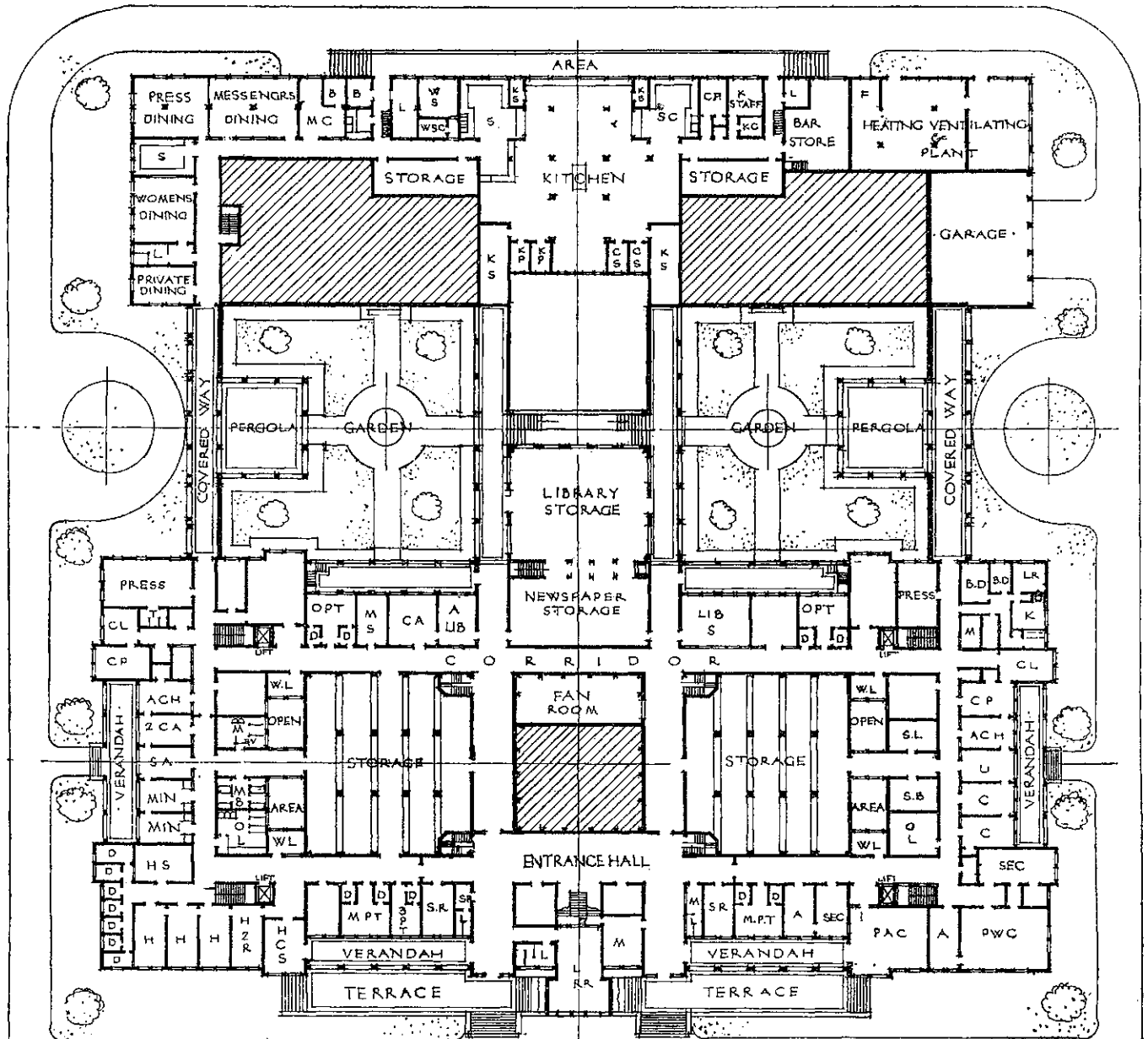


: GROUND FLOOR PLAN :

Prof. J. J. ...
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF WORKS
Jan. 26/1922

REVISED PLANS OF PROVISIONAL PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA.

Prepared at the request of the Commonwealth Public Works Committee to show re-arrangement and additional accommodation recommended.



10 5 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
: Scale of Feet.

LOWER FLOOR PLAN.

Abbreviations:

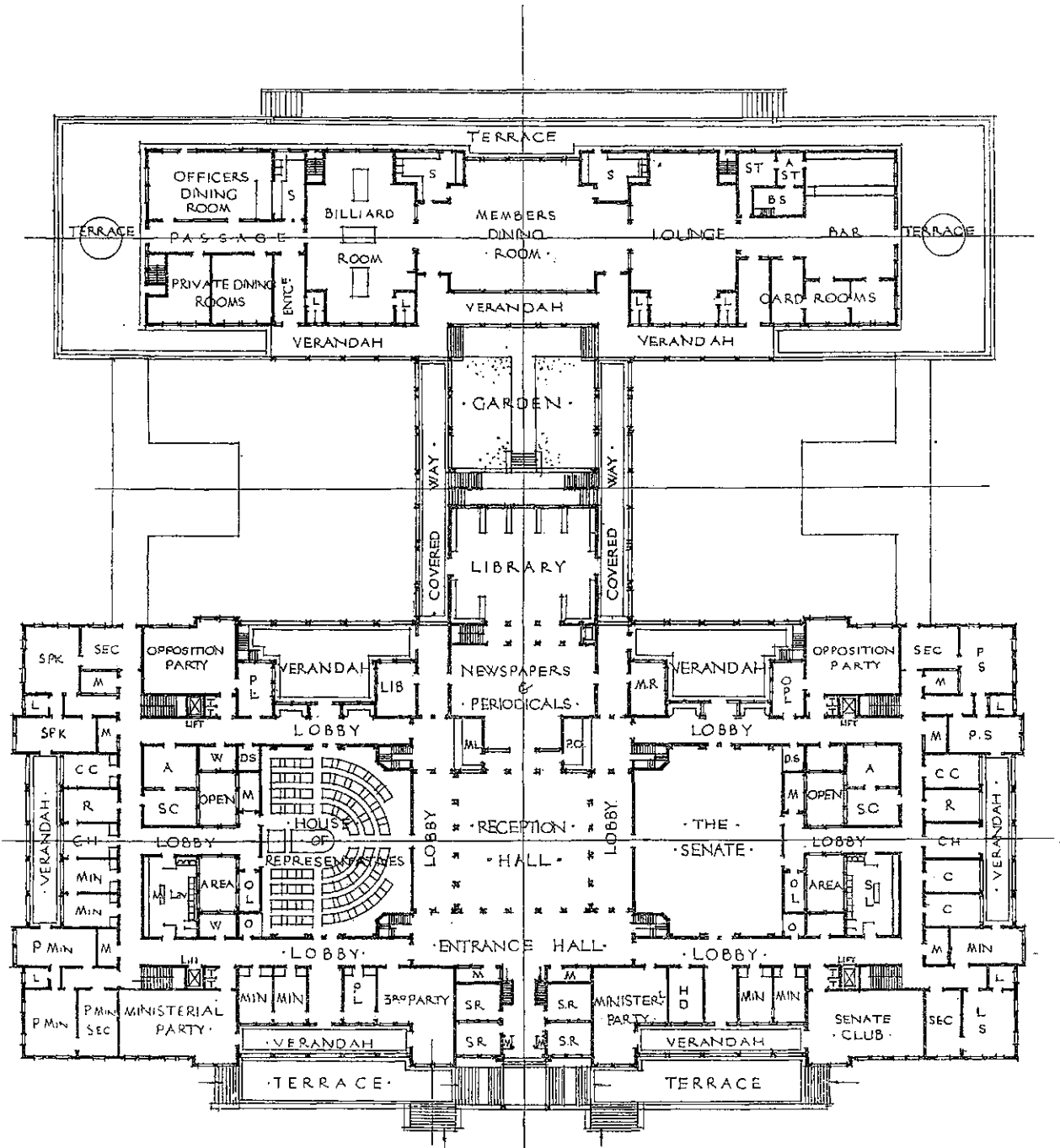
- A. .. Ante Room
- ACH. .. Assistant Clerk of the House
- A.LIB. .. Assistant Librarian
- B. .. Baths and Showers
- BD. .. Bedroom
- C. .. Committee
- CA. .. Catalogue Room
- CF. .. Chef
- CL. .. Clerical
- CS. .. Cool Store
- CP. .. Clerk of the Papers
- D. .. Dictation
- F. .. Fuel
- H. .. Hansard Reporters
- HCS. .. Chief of Staff
- H2R. .. 2nd Reporter
- HS. .. Store

- K. .. Kitchen
- KC. .. Kitchen Staff Changing Room
- KP. .. Pantry
- K.STAFF .. Staff Dining Room
- KS. .. Store
- L. .. Lavatory
- LR. .. Living Room
- LIB.S. .. Library Staff
- LRR. .. Ladies Reception Room
- M. .. Messenger
- MB. .. Members Bathrooms
- MC. .. Messengers Changing Room
- MIN. .. Minister
- M.LAV. .. Members Lavatory
- MPT. .. Ministerial Party Typing
- MS. .. Ministers Secretaries
- OL. .. Officers Lavatory

- OPT. .. Opposition Party Typing
- PAC. .. Public Accounts Committee
- PWC. .. Public Works Committee
- S. .. Service
- SA. .. Sergeant at Arms
- SB. .. Senators Bathrooms
- SC. .. Scullery
- SEC. .. Secretary
- SL. .. Senators Lavatory
- SR. .. Strangers Room
- U. .. Usher
- WL. .. Women's Lavatory
- WS. .. Waiting Staff Dining Room
- WSC. .. Changing Room
- 2CA. .. 2nd Clerk Assistant
- 3PT. .. 3rd Party Typing

REVISED PLANS OF PROVISIONAL PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA.

Prepared at the request of the Commonwealth Public Works Committee to show re-arrangement and additional accommodation recommended.



10 5 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
Scale of Feet

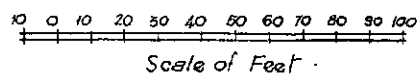
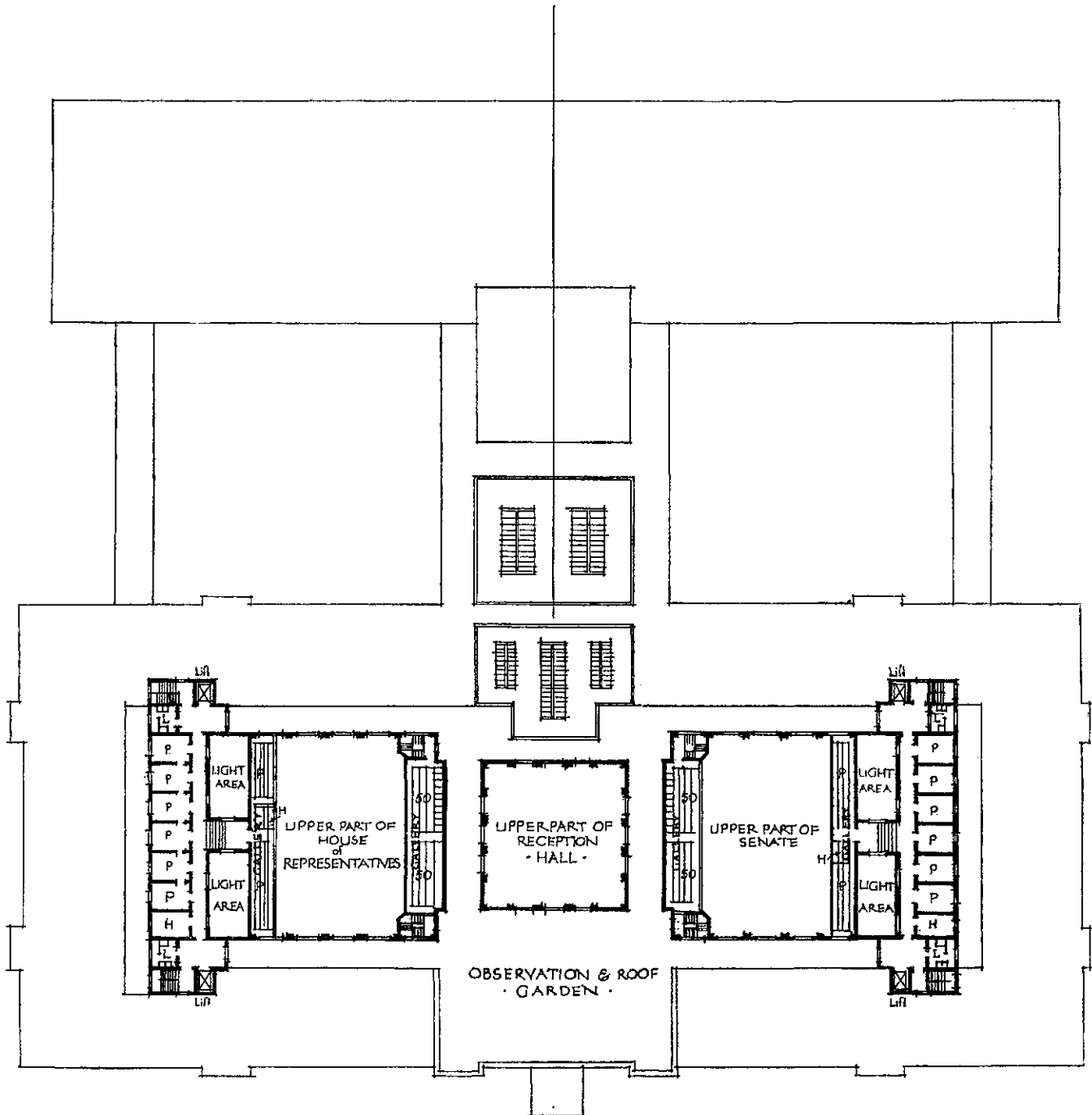
MAIN FLOOR PLAN.

Abbreviations:

A.	.. Ante Room	M.	.. Messenger	PS.	.. President of the Senate
AST.	.. Assistant Steward	MIN.	.. Minister	R.	.. Records
BS.	.. Bar Store	ML.	.. Members' Letters	S.	.. Service
C.	.. Committee	M.LAV.	.. Lavatory	SC.	.. Select Committee
CC.	.. Chairman of Committees	MR.	.. Reading Room	SEC.	.. Secretary
CH.	.. Clerk of the House	OL.	.. Officers' Lavatory	SL.	.. Senators' Lavatory
DS.	.. Distinguished Strangers	O.	.. Officers	SPK.	.. Speaker's
HD.	.. Heads of Departments	OPL.	.. Opposition Party Leader	SR.	.. Strangers' Room
L.	.. Lavatory	PL.	.. Party Leader	ST.	.. Steward
LIB.	.. Librarian	P.MIN.	.. Prime Minister	T.	.. Telephone
LS.	.. Leader of the Senate	PO.	.. Post Office	W.	.. Whip

REVISED PLANS OF PROVISIONAL PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA.

Prepared at the request of the Commonwealth Public Works Committee to show re-arrangement and additional accommodation recommended.



GALLERY PLAN.

Abbreviations:—H = Hansard. L = Lavatory. P = Press.

THE FOLLOWING SKETCHES ILLUSTRATE PROPOSAL FOR TREATMENT OF KURRAJONG HILL.

Mr. J. S. Murdoch, Chief Commonwealth Architect, considers that the permanent Parliament House might with advantage be placed on the summit of Kurrajong Hill, and supported by large surrounding buildings at varying lower levels to provide official accommodation for Members of Parliament as at Washington, and for use as offices for those Government Departments having close relationship with Parliament.

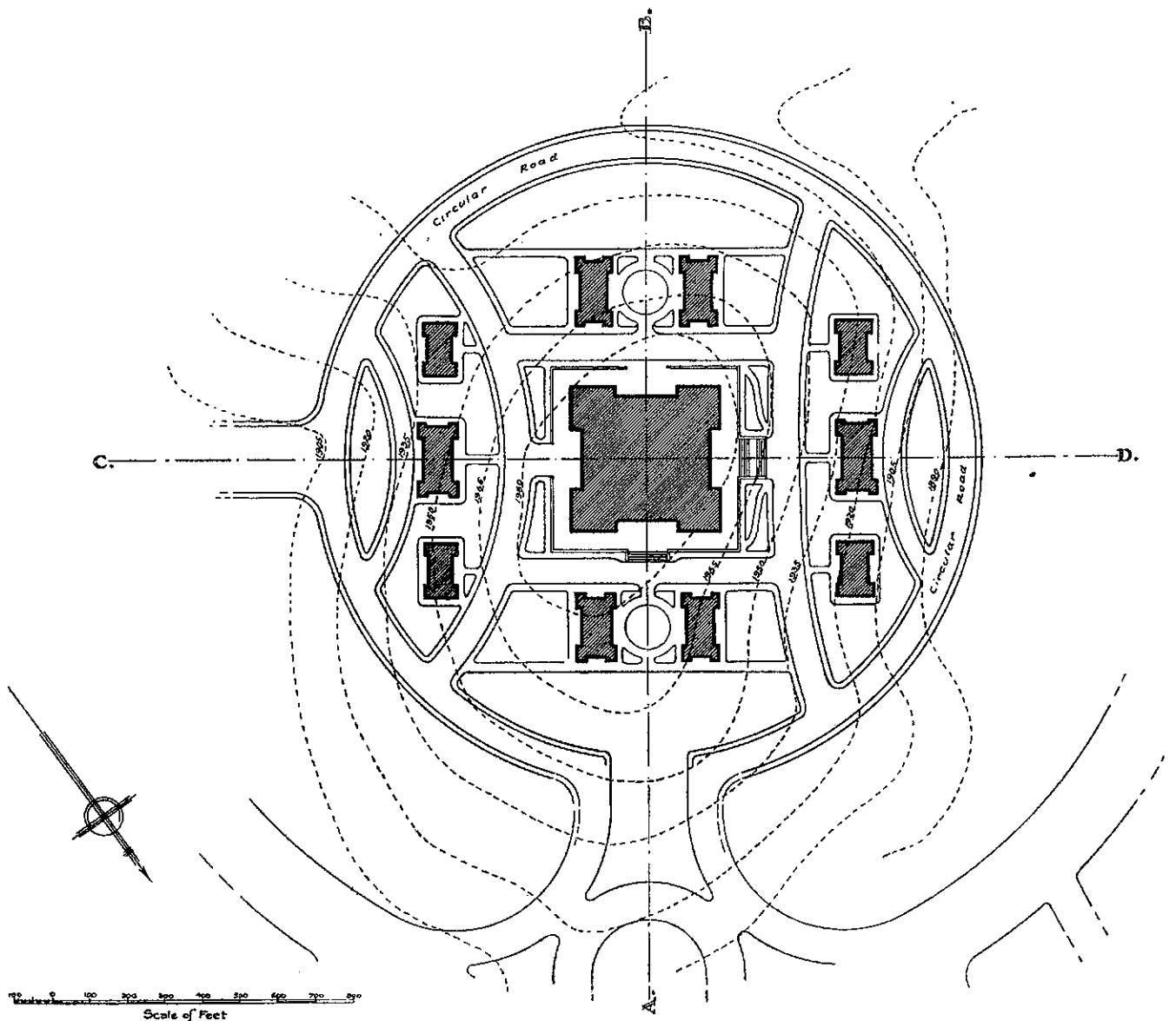
The Commonwealth Architect, in suggesting the location of Parliament House on Kurrajong Hill, claims that, without involving undue expense in earthworks, a more extensive group of buildings would be secured for this focussing centre of the town plan—a group, moreover, serving those functions which primarily constitute the necessity for the Federal Capital's existence.

Study of the City plan will reveal that the system of avenues and other arterial streets is focussed from all sides and from long distances on the summit of Kurrajong Hill, so that Houses of Parliament erected there would be far more extensively visible and, conversely, far better views would be afforded from the Houses themselves than if these buildings were placed on Camp Hill as provided for in the layout plan of the City.

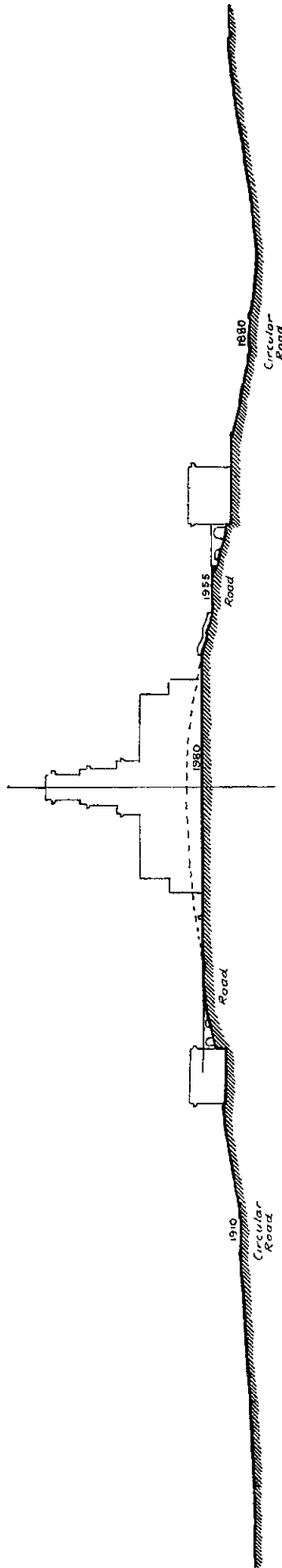
Mr. Murdoch holds the view that a long, low building—it might be the future "Capitol"—would be more suitable for Camp Hill, especially having in mind the advantage of allowing the central group of buildings on Kurrajong to be visible as much as possible from what he considers the admirably arranged departmental buildings on the area lying between Camp Hill and Molonglo Lake.

This suggested re-arrangement of building sites, he further claims, would not detrimentally affect, but, perhaps, rather assist, the expression of the spirit conceived in Mr. Griffin's City plan, no street of which would be altered by it.

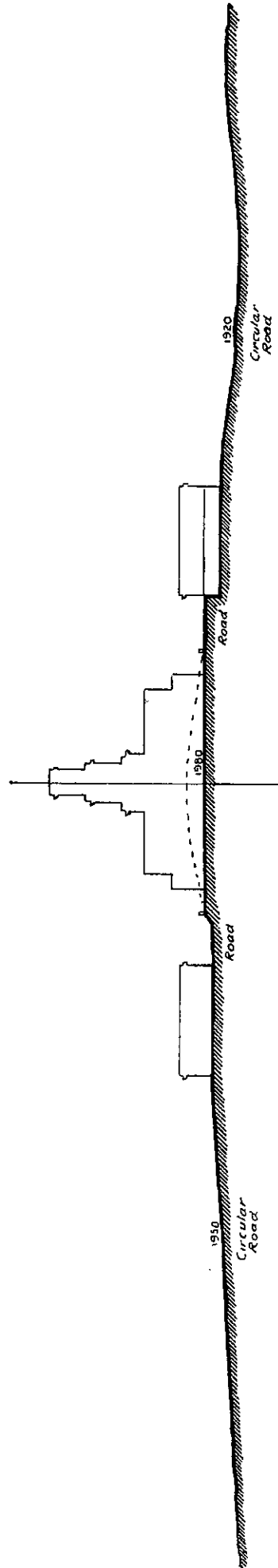
Plan No. 5.



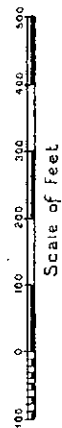
PLAN OF KURRAJONG HILL WITH SUGGESTED PARLIAMENT HOUSE ON SUMMIT supported by Official Buildings at lower levels.

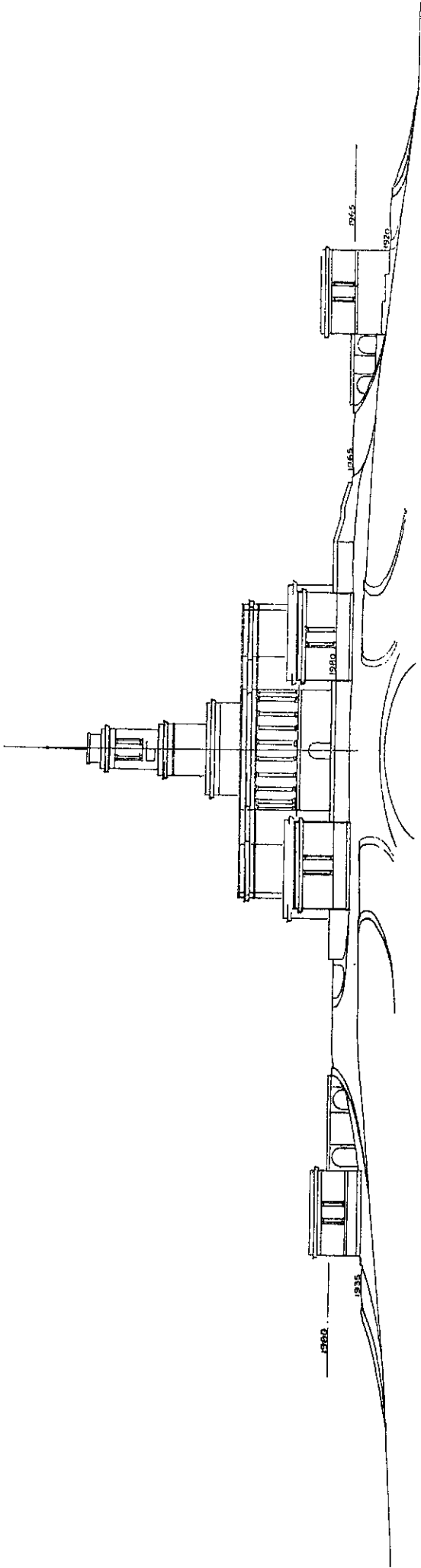


East and West Section of Kurrjong Hill showing Parliament House and supporting Official Buildings.

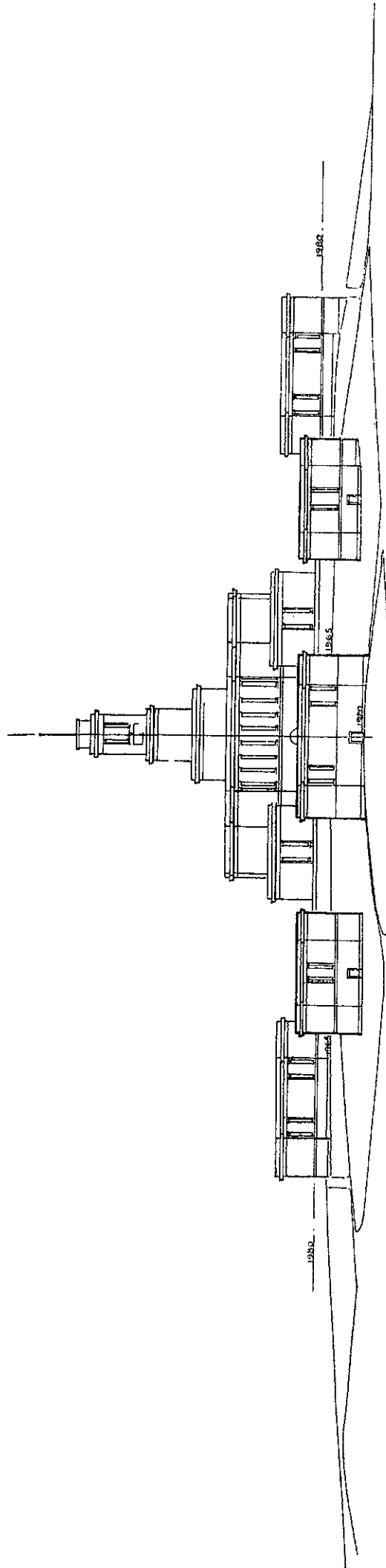


North and South Section of Kurrjong Hill showing Parliament House and supporting Official Buildings.

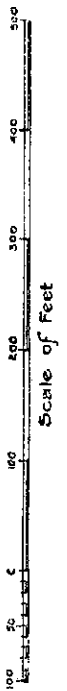


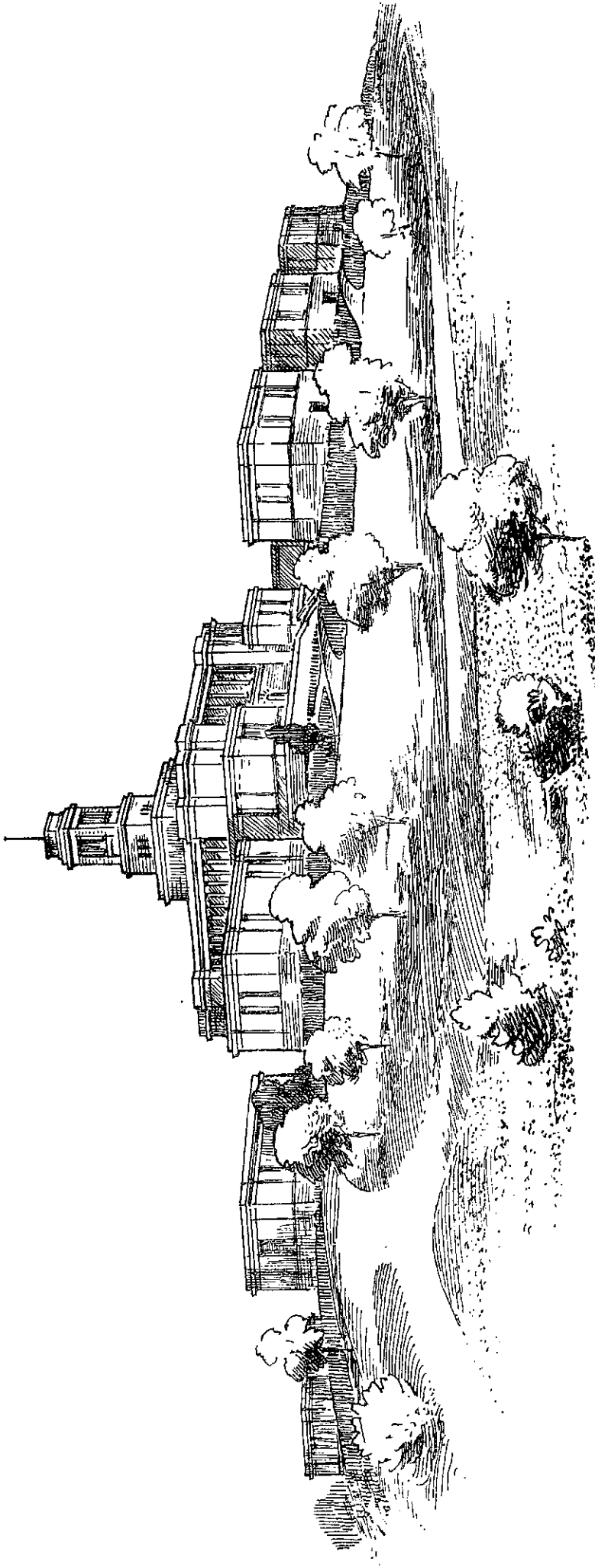


North Elevation of Parliament House on Kurrajong Hill with supporting Official Buildings.



West Elevation of Parliament House on Kurrajong Hill with supporting Official Buildings.





SKETCH ILLUSTRATING GENERAL EFFECT OF PARLIAMENT HOUSE ON KURRAJONG HILL,
supported by surrounding Official Buildings. The view is from Commonwealth Avenue near the Hostel.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

(Taken at Melbourne.)

WEDNESDAY, 21st MARCH, 1923.

Present:

Mr. GREGORY, Chairman;

Senator Newland
Mr. Jackson

Mr. Mackay
Mr. Mathews.

Senator the Right Hon. George Foster Pearce, Minister for Home and Territories, sworn and examined.

1. *To the Chairman.*—My parliamentary experience dates from 1901. I have seen the House of Commons and the House of Lords, the French Chamber of Deputies, the Congress Houses at Washington, Houses of Parliament at Ottawa, and the New Zealand Parliament Houses. I am aware that the Commonwealth is considering a reference for the erection of a Provisional Parliament House at Canberra. I should imagine, in view of the large expenditure and the possibilities of development at the Capital, that we should look ahead at least twenty years as regards the temporary building. I quite believe that by that time we shall have at least 200 members in the House of Representatives. I think that we are in for a great expansion of population, much greater than during the last twenty years; at least, all indications point that way. The buildings in Washington impressed me more than any other in the arrangements made for the convenience of the Government, members, the press, and the public. Perhaps it would be interesting for me just to give a sketch of what I saw. I have had experience as Minister and private member, and I know the difficulties under which both suffer in Melbourne. At Washington more attention seems to be paid to the convenience of members, in order to enable them to carry on their work, than in any Parliament House I have seen. The Capitol itself is very extensive, and possesses all the necessary committee rooms, and so forth. But on either flank is a large block of buildings entirely devoted to office accommodation for committees of either House and for members. Each committee has its own main meeting room, with adjoining office accommodation for the clerical work. At Washington, of course, a great deal more work is done by committees than in the case of the Australian Parliament. I am not, however, referring only to such committees as that very important one, the Foreign Affairs Committee, but also to special committees. I was invited, when in Washington, to attend a meeting of quite a large special committee known as the Agricultural Committee. In that committee room was accommodation for the press, and for those of the public interested in the proceedings, and there was also office accommodation for the secretary and his typists. Then, again, each member of the Senate, and each member of the House of Representatives, is provided with an office which is marked with his name as soon as he is elected. I should say that these offices are about 16 feet by 14 feet; and they are well lighted, and fitted with roll-top desks and other necessary furniture. Both the Senate block and the House of Representative block has a corps of typists at the call of members to assist them in their correspondence. Each room is connected with the main telephone exchanges, and also with a separate exchange for all the Congress buildings. A member is able to receive his constituents in privacy in his office. In the Commonwealth Parliament House—

and there is the same arrangement in other Parliament Houses I have seen—a private member has to do all his work in the meeting room of his party, where it is impossible to get the necessary quiet in order to settle down to the study of any particular subject or Bill. If an Australian member wishes to thoroughly dissect a measure, he has either to go into the Library or into the Club Room, and he may have just settled down when some members come in and start a conversation alongside, or, what is worse, with the member himself. Under the circumstances, unless a member chooses to be rude, he cannot get on with his work. There is no place in the Federal Parliament House where a member may receive his constituents in privacy. At Washington the Congressional Library occupies a position midway between the two blocks of buildings of which I have spoken. The Library is connected with both blocks by means of pneumatic tubes, so that a member in his room, who wishes to refer to some document or book, has only to telephone and the book is brought to him by an attendant. One or two members of Congress showed me the way in which this system operates. A member simply has to ring up the janitor, name the book or document he requires, and in a few minutes it has arrived by tube, and is handed to him, the exact quotation in some instances even being marked for him. These arrangements struck me as a tremendous advantage to honorable members in the performance of their duties, as compared with what we have to put up with here—and how much more efficiently these conveniences enable members to discharge their duties to the public. From the plan of the proposed temporary Parliament House, I see that the same mistake is being made as in the case of our own building here. There is no accommodation, so far as I can see, for members to do their work except in the party meeting room; so that some addition is required in order to provide for office accommodation for members and committees. At Washington, as elsewhere, the standing committees accumulate a large number of records, and provision is made in the committees' office itself for their tabulation, so as to make them always readily available. This to me was an illustration of the practical mind of the American in his efforts to make the legislative machinery effective. These offices, I may say, are at some little distance from the Senate chamber and the chamber of the House of Representatives, and one problem to be faced was the possible difficulty of members being able to reach either House in time for a division. As a solution, an underground tunnel, in which runs a little electric tramway, has been made, so that a member, when the division bells ring, has only to go down in the lift, and be conveyed to his place in ample time. I did not see anything like the same provision at Ottawa; but in the new building—the old temporary building was burned down—I was informed that more provision is being made in the way of office accommodation for members on the lines of those at Washington. When I was in New Zealand, the new Houses of Parliament were in course of construction, and I venture to say, from what I saw of them, that there is more such accommodation there than there is here. The Capitol of Washington is of modern design, erected, I should say, fifteen or twenty years ago, though I did not ascertain the date. I do not suggest that all the conveniences I have described should be provided in a temporary building at Canberra, but I do not see why we should not to a greater extent provide office accommodation for members. I have not had time to look

closely at the plan, but, so far as I can see, there is no more provision for the privacy of honorable members than there is in the Parliament House at Melbourne. A few more committee rooms are shown on the plan it is true, but, in my opinion, no honorable member can efficiently do his work under present conditions, and has to take much of it to where he lives. He cannot under the circumstances give proper attention to Bills and contemporary legislation, and it is certainly of advantage to the country that he should be able to do this. He cannot do it in the street, nor can he very well do it in his hotel, and he is left to rely on the common meeting room of his party. The expenditure of a few more thousands in this direction would be amply justified, and would repay the country by the opportunities thus afforded for the proper framing of legislation. I do not like the shape of the seating accommodation in the proposed temporary House of Representatives. The plan follows that of the House of Representatives in Melbourne. I consider the Chamber of Deputies, Paris, as the model for a deliberative assembly. Under the square system, a member in a corner speaks from a wedge of members, and this closing in leads to conversation amongst those around him. The horseshoe shape, in my opinion, is much the better; each member is equidistant, as it were, and altogether there is a much better distribution. Further, I think that the square shape must have its effect acoustically. The old Roman basilica was on that plan, and architects generally admit that it is the better one from an acoustic point of view. As to whether the rostrum should be adopted, I may say that when I was in France, Parliament was not sitting, but Jean Jures—the Socialist Deputy who was assassinated at the commencement of the war—showed us round, and for our benefit mounted the rostrum and delivered an oration on Australia. We did not understand what the gentleman said, but we were told that the oration was very fine. However, I should say that the rostrum adds to the dignity of debate. I cannot say whether the rostrum should be used in committee or only on second readings, but I suppose it might be rather an awkward innovation in committee. As I say, I think the rostrum is more dignified than our method of making a member speak from his place, and, further, I think it leads to a better hearing for the speaker. The rostrum is not in operation at Washington, and I may say I was not at all impressed with the way in which speakers were listened to there. I was given a seat on the floor of the Senate during the proceedings. Each senator has an independent swivel chair, and at the rear of the seats is a wide space which has been adopted as a general gathering place in which senators walk about and carry on conversation. I suggest that if the horseshoe method be adopted, there shall be left no space, or, at any rate, no wide space behind. While Senator Borah, one of the leading orators of the Chamber, was speaking, some twenty or thirty others in the space I have spoken of, were carrying on an animated conversation. The representatives of the press, as here, are accommodated in a gallery, but I think it is better that the *Hansard* reporters should be at the table, where they have a better chance of hearing. I am not satisfied with the provision made for the press in the Commonwealth Parliament House. I suggest that there should be a common meeting room for the press reporters, and that their offices and dining-rooms should be altogether separate from the other portions of the House. I think it is much better that the public galleries, as in the Senate here, should go around the Chamber. This plan tends to beautify the building, and it also serves to impress on the speaker the fact that he is addressing the Chamber and not the galleries, more than if the public galleries were on a level with him. I approve of low buildings, and do not think it necessary that the proposed temporary structures should be more than two stories; I do not like sky-scrapers or anything approaching them. The more floors there are, the greater difficulty there is in doing the work of Parliament efficiently: if we could get all on one floor,

so much the better, and in any case there should be no more than two. I should say that the dining-rooms, billiard-rooms, and rooms for the Speaker and the President, are those which might go on the second story, but members' and Ministers' rooms ought to be on the ground floor. In a temporary building we cannot equal the Congressional building at Washington in all its conveniences, and for that reason members' rooms should be as near to the party rooms and the chambers as possible. There is no reason, so far as I can see; why the rooms for officers of the House should not be on the second floor, it does not seem necessary for them to be contiguous to the party rooms or the chamber. It occurs to me that around the party rooms it might be possible to group a number of offices, each to be shared by four, or, perhaps, half-a-dozen members; at any rate, that would be better than having only the party rooms. The Government Printing Office ought to be fairly near to Parliament House, though not necessarily as close as it is to our present House, because with a good pneumatic tube system everything required could be done. In the case of some Departments it might be possible, compatible with efficiency, to establish secretariats at Canberra, instead of moving the whole of each Department to Canberra. That, in my opinion, would not be possible in the case of Departments which are more administrative. There might be a secretariat in the case of the Customs Department and the Attorney-General's Department, but not in the case of the Post Office. But in the administrative Departments, there is necessarily constant reference to files. Looking at the plan, I should say there is sufficient provision made for Ministers and their secretaries.

2. *To Mr. Jackson.*—I have not with me the figures showing the numbers of members of the two Houses at Washington; but, of course, there are many more than here. There may have been an increase in population of only about 2,000,000 in the last twenty years in Australia; but I think we are going to get population by compound interest during the next twenty years—that the tide is coming our way. As to a tendency in Tasmania and New South Wales in favour of fewer members of Parliament, I may point out that some of the State electorates are very small as compared with those of the Commonwealth, and that a feeling is growing that some of the Commonwealth electorates are far too large. Many of the Commonwealth electorates have too large an area, and I think a mandate will come from the people for more members. This might necessitate an alteration of the Constitution. The great increase in population that we are going to have will compel alteration, probably in the direction of new States, which would increase the number of senators. The fact that these are temporary buildings would, I think, somewhat cramp the architect. I think it would be possible for two or three members to share these rooms or offices I have mentioned. If a block were commenced on either wing it could be added to as time and money justified. I certainly would contemplate the commencement of a block on either side even of a temporary building. When members and the public realize how such accommodation would add to the efficiency of the parliamentary work, they will demand an extension. The proposed temporary buildings are estimated to cost £174,000, but we must remember that the Parliament House in which we are now cost £750,000—the maximum expenditure for the minimum amount of convenience. I think this House of Parliament was built for show and not for use. It is true that it has never been completed, but even as it stands, though a very fine-looking building, it gives the poorest accommodation of any House in Australia. We should aim at providing a House which, while beautiful, gives the necessary accommodation; we should consider accommodation first and erect a utilitarian House.

3. *To Senator Newland.*—I like the Senate chamber as well as any legislative chamber I have seen in Australia. It would, in my opinion, be an improvement if each member were furnished with a desk.

The South Australian chamber is too square and too high for its size, while, in my opinion, the acoustic properties are bad. Neither do I like the arrangement of the galleries. I prefer a chamber shaped something like the Senate, or, perhaps, more in the horseshoe form, with a desk for each member; an independent seat is better than a bench. I have seen the Parliament House in Brisbane, but it is so long since that I have not much recollection of it. Some of the square chambers are more rounded at the corners than others, but they are not sufficiently rounded, and the result, as I have said, is that members get crowded together, and the interruptions and inconvenience caused by members conversing and passing in and out are very great.

4. *To the Chairman.*—There should be a passageway so that members could leave without passing in front of the Speaker.

5. *To Senator Newland.*—I do not think that the passing of the *Hansard* reporters in and out to the table has any tendency to inconvenience members; so far as I see, the inconvenience is caused by fellow members crossing and re-crossing in front, and by the passing to and fro of the attendants with messages. I do not think that the *Hansard* reporter coming up the centre to the table constitutes any inconvenience or disturbance. The only alternative would be to place the *Hansard* reporters above or at the back of the presiding officer. At present a member speaking at the rear of the *Hansard* man is somewhat difficult to report. I should say that, as in South Australia, seats above the presiding officer would prove satisfactory, and there would be no going in and out of the chamber itself.

6. *To Mr. Mackay.*—My suggestions, if carried out, might mean an additional expenditure of £50,000, but I think it would be money well spent, even on an estimated period of twenty years, because these buildings, fitted as offices as they are, could be utilized. The present House of Representatives chamber, I think, is crowded; the seats are too close together for one thing, and if a member sitting in the centre of a long bench wishes to go out, he has to push past a whole lot of others to their and his inconvenience. I think there is a growing recognition of the fact that too many members mean an unworkable House; and with increased population, the tendency will be to increase the number of members and delegate much of the work to committees—a system which I think will have to be considered before long. Over 200 members is an unworkable number, and the House of Commons always seems to me to be unwieldy. I do not think that all members of the House of Commons can find seats at once.

7. *To Mr. Mathews.*—I am quite satisfied that members cannot do their work properly under present conditions. I think it is necessary for the officers of the House to be in close touch with members and the chamber while Parliament is sitting; but that does not mean that their offices need be alongside the chamber. I am of opinion that there should be rooms for the public. It is most inconvenient at the present Parliament House, for if a member of the public comes to see a Minister or member, the interview, in nine cases out of ten, has to be in the Queen's Hall or the corridor; and other people, who are strolling about, regard it as a social gathering, and join in. The plans for the press accommodation at the temporary House seem to be open to some objection. Apparently there is a press room where all have to work together. I should say it would be very inconvenient to have a common room like this, 30 feet by 12 feet; the space should be more broken up. It would cost more to provide rooms for members, the public, and the press; but I think the expenditure would be justified. The people of the country wish for efficient legislation; they want to know what their legislators are doing, and when they have occasion to go to Parliament House for an interview they desire privacy. Even if the proposed building has to be considerably extended,

this accommodation should be provided, for I believe it will result in the public getting better service. I cannot say that I noticed in any of the Parliament Houses I visited that special smoking provision was made close to the legislative chamber. I may say, however, that at Washington, immediately at the rear of the Senate chamber, there is a sort of smoking corridor.

8. *To the Chairman.*—I think it would be a good idea to have, as in Western Australia, near the dining-room, a corridor or something of the kind, where members may meet and smoke. The corridor at Washington is very similar to that in Western Australia. I am not advocating accommodation on the same scale as that at Washington, where the buildings are palatial, and one of them would cost more than the whole lot at Canberra. I recommend that in all these buildings the rooms be formed with partitions so that they may be taken down, and the place used as administrative offices. In all the office buildings in America the walls are so constructed that they can be easily moved, for the modern idea is not cubicles but big spaces for office work. The ventilation of the chambers in the Parliament House, Melbourne, is very bad, and large sums of money have been spent in endeavours to remedy the defect. The failure in this regard seems to point to some fundamental defect in the construction of the building. I noticed that in the Senate chamber at Washington the atmosphere was quite fresh and clear, and I can only hope that proper provision in this regard is being made at Canberra. Bad ventilation certainly tends to make members irritable, lowers their vitality, and affects their health; indeed, it may be that the bad conditions have a good deal to do with the high death rate amongst Federal politicians during the last few years. I cannot see why the proposed main hall at Canberra, 48 feet by 48 feet, is cut off by corridors which seem to be useless. If the walls were removed, there would then be a main hall of 90 feet by 90 feet. At Washington I noticed that the refreshment rooms were not very well provided for, and I was told that if there was a large attendance, members could not be accommodated. I think there is ample accommodation proposed at Canberra.

9. *To Senator Newland.*—Washington is "dry," with "wet" spots. There is no liquor in the Congressional refreshment room, and there were several functions without any.

10. *To Mr. Jackson.*—I do not know whether there is any likelihood of altering the present condition of affairs at Canberra in the matter of the sale of liquor; that is for the people to decide, I should say. While the present licensing laws exist, it is a question for Parliament. I prefer not to give my opinion just yet.

(Taken at Melbourne.)

THURSDAY, 22ND MARCH, 1923.

Present:

Mr. GREGORY, Chairman;

Senator Newland	Mr. Jackson
Senator Plain	Mr. Mackay
Mr. Blakeley	Mr. Mathews.
Mr. Cook	

Percy Thomas Owen, Director-General of Works, Department of Works and Railways, sworn and examined.

11. *To the Chairman.*—The proposal before the Committee is the erection of a provisional Parliament House at Canberra. That designation means something more than a temporary Parliament House. In 1921 there was a proposal to construct a Convention Hall, and to expand that building into a Parliament House, which would have been of an eminently temporary character. That project formed the basis of the Advisory Committee's original deliberations, but it came to the conclusion that a temporary house, even if it were intended to provide for the functions of Parliament for only a comparatively few days, must have all the accessories

and facilities necessary for legislation. Any shortage in accommodation for Ministers, legislators, and staffs would interfere with the functioning of Parliament more or less seriously. The Advisory Committee came to the conclusion that if Parliament were to sit for even a month, provision should be made for necessary facilities for debate, for library reference, for committee meetings, and for the essential services of the officials of Parliament. There would have to be accommodation for the clerical and *Hansard* staffs, for a reference library, for members and staffs refecton, and for press accommodation, and, speaking broadly, for the general administration of the functions of the Commonwealth Legislature. Unless these were provided there would be an *impasse*. The original idea of building a conference hall, with expansion into a temporary Parliament, went by the board. As soon as the Advisory Committee ascertained, after consultations with the dignitaries and officials of Parliament, what would be the requirements, it came to the conclusion that the idea of a temporary Parliament House, growing out of the original convention hall, could not function. Another temporary suggestion was to the effect that there should be used part of the Royal Military College at Duntroon—the drill hall and some of the accessory buildings. But, having ascertained what would be considered as essential, the Committee came to the conclusion that that idea would be equally impossible. As a matter of fact, it was never referred to the Advisory Committee as a concrete proposition. In either of these instances of a temporary Parliament House, large sums of money would have been required to be spent, and the Committee considered that it would have been practically wasted, for the reason that Parliament could not have carried on its functions, at any rate for long. There was another point of view. The Advisory Committee was asked to make recommendations to the Government for the establishment of Canberra as quickly as possible, and at the minimum of cost. That led to something midway between a temporary proposition and the construction of monumental buildings. It was borne in mind that even a temporary proposition would have occupied a long time, because there are the essential services such as lighting, heating, ventilation, and communication. Government, and members, and staffs would be bound to be provided with necessary accommodation, and all such equipment, and the essential services, could not have been rushed up in a few months under a temporary roof. Thus it appeared to the Committee that the time occupied in the provision of a temporary Parliament building would not have been very much less than would be required in constructing a provisional Parliament House. Another feature of the temporary proposition was that such a place, of a framework character, with wooden partitions, would not provide either acoustic properties or noise-proof conditions, both of which are essential in aiming at the construction of deliberative chambers. Altogether it was seen that a temporary structure would be unsuitable. So the Advisory Committee came to the conclusion set out on page 11 of its first general report, paragraph 40, as follows:—

The Committee regards the erection of the permanent Parliament House as a work which might be deferred for many years, or until the Commonwealth desires to proceed with it. In any case it would not be possible to erect that building within the period assigned to the first stage.

At the Minister's request the Committee furnished a report upon a proposed conference hall, and, in submitting the plan of the building, it was stated that the design provided for extension, if desired, at a later date, to form a temporary Parliament House with the requisite accessory accommodation. The conference hall has been designed, but the extensions have not yet been planned, although sufficient preliminary work has been done to permit of making a rough estimate of the probable cost. In the temporary building the legislative chambers, committee rooms, library, dining room,

and other accessory accommodation would all afford the space and comfort necessary for legislative work, and due attention would be given to the question of acoustics and sound-resistance between rooms. The legislative chambers and other apartments would be embellished internally with restraint, and the external architecture would be simple, but decorous.

That formed the estimate given to and by the Advisory Committee for the first provisional Parliament House. It was after getting into close touch with the officials of Parliament that the necessary accommodation had to be expanded until what is now shown on the drawings presented for the inspection of the Public Works Committee had been arrived at. On page 7 of the Advisory Committee's report, paragraph 17, the attitude of that body is disclosed in relation to the erection of buildings at Canberra, as follows:—

As the proposal to construct the Federal Capital was under consideration for a number of years prior to the war, it is very necessary to consider what effect the changed economic conditions that prevail must have upon it. The Committee believes that, in pre-war days, there existed a very general conception of the Capital as a city of immediate development upon ambitious architectural lines, with its governmental buildings on a monumental scale—in every way worthy of the seat of the Commonwealth Government—with a large initial population consequent upon the establishment therein of the whole of the central administrations of Departments, post-war problems of finance, and the unprecedented demands on the national resources, raise the question of the expediency of endeavouring to realize such a conception at the outset, and the Committee as a result of its first interview with the Minister, has endeavoured to frame proposals which, while providing for the execution of all essential services, will reduce the initial capital outlay as much as possible consistently with the accomplishment of the primary objective, as stated in the Order in Council, viz., to enable the "Federal Parliament to meet, and the central administration of the Commonwealth Government to be carried on as early as practicable at Canberra."

The site selected for the temporary parliamentary buildings would afford a vista along the main governmental axis, overlooking the ornamental grounds. It would be clear of the site for the permanent Parliament House, which could be constructed in the future without disturbing Parliament.

If this suggestion for temporary parliamentary buildings be adopted, the Committee believes that the Commonwealth Government would save the expenditure that would be required for the monumental Parliament House for many years.

There is another aspect which the proposal to erect a Parliament House took many years ago. When Mr. Watson was Prime Minister he sent for me. At that time there had been a proposal to erect a temporary Parliament House. I pointed out the grave disabilities which would be inseparable from the erection of a temporary Parliament House. I emphasized the fact that there must be also essential auxiliaries, and I further called attention to the difficulties as to a site. I suggested that if the building of the Parliament Houses were to be undertaken—the idea in mind being the erection of a monumental structure—we should build the inner portions, and leave to the future the outer construction of the expensive monumental facades and the like. That idea, namely, of constructing the inner portion of the monumental buildings was sustained in various reports which I put forward concerning Canberra up to the time of the war, and until post-war considerations and the state of finances developed so seriously. Thus, this idea of building first the inner portion of the permanent building has been held in mind for fully twenty years. It was abandoned by me

for the more mature proposition for a provisional Parliament House. As for the aspect of time, with the heavy expenditure which would have to be incurred in the construction of the lower portions of this inner shell of the permanent building, it would take actually longer to accomplish than the building of the whole of the provisional Parliament Houses as is now before the Works Committee. Thus, both in the matter of cost and time, the idea of putting up part of the eventual monumental work compared unfavorably. There is still another consideration, having to do with the erection of the inner portions of the permanent Legislature. The general plan would require the provision of a large amount of accommodation in respect of the legislative chambers. Thus, and altogether, it would be an unfinished production, and it is reasonable to suppose that in the circumstances the members of Parliament at that time would be constantly inclined to finish the work, even at a cost of £1,000,000 or more. With respect to the provisional Legislative House now planned, there will be a complete unit; and, provided that the accommodation which we suggest should be made available adequately and harmoniously in the matter of location, there should be no inclination on the part of the Parliament to hurriedly leave for a permanent monumental home. The attitude of the Advisory Committee was that instead of building a place which members of Parliament would want to get out of as soon as possible, they should be housed under conditions in which they would find both adequacy of accommodation and comfort. So the Legislature would be inclined to postpone the time when very large capital expenditure would be involved in the building of the permanent structure. My point is that on the one hand there would be an inevitable tendency to accelerate capital expenditure, while on the other there would be just as natural an inclination to postpone it. Briefly, the objections to the erection of this inner portion of a permanent structure may be summarized thus: Longer time; greater initial expense; unsatisfactory initial exterior architecture; incentive to spend, with little delay, very large sums in the direction of completion. Returning to the basis of the Advisory Committee's recommendation from which the plans before this Committee have been evolved, I emphasize that these are sketch plans. They really form a study which has been prepared in the light of information gleaned from various sources within the Parliament. We have not prepared working plans, and would not think of making official drawings until this Committee had deliberated and reported. It is possible, of course, that there may be some differences of opinion concerning basic points in the plans. The Advisory Committee's idea about Canberra, as disclosed in the excerpts from its report which I have quoted, is that there shall be a garden development. The Works Committee has had that view disclosed and propounded in relation to other matters which have come before it in respect of the Federal Capital. It is considered that the garden development will be very beautiful and as effective for the purpose as the monumental scheme. I have called attention to the desire of the Advisory Committee that the Parliament House shall be so situated, so built, and so arranged, that members and all concerned shall be satisfied, and will naturally desire to remain. The question of site is very important from that aspect. That which the Advisory Committee has now put forward is a site which—assuming that the general scheme of development of the accepted plan is proceeded with—will front the parliamentary gardens, which in the course of time will be beautified; so that the Parliament, as now placed, will be getting all the advantage of that amenity. We have considered other sites which would have been some distance from what will be the parliamentary gardens of the future. Other sites could have been found, but the idea which I have just indicated weighed with the Committee. Still another feature was the necessary juxtaposition of Parliament to the administrative groups of offices. These are eminently a temporary proposal, and they had to be kept

clear of such areas for the governmental group as had been designated on the plan of the Capital City for buildings. There was another necessity, namely, that the provisional Parliament House should not interfere with the erection of the permanent monumental Parliament; and that, in the site now located for it, it should be presentable from the future permanent building. That aim was carefully considered by the Advisory Committee, and the planning is such that either the whole group of provisional Parliament buildings would remain, or that the refectory group and the caretakers' houses, which are in themselves a unit, could be removed—still leaving a presentable vista from the back. The site for the monumental buildings is on Camp Hill, at the rear of the site planned for the provisional Legislature, and on a considerably higher level, in a direct line along the main axis of the city. The temporary site—that is for the provisional building—will derive the same outlook as that of the permanent structure, namely, to the dominating Mount Ainslie. All these factors were considered important in settling upon the provisional site. I have formed an opinion that aerial view is going to be a very important matter at Canberra, and, in fact, everywhere before very long. From the air, symmetry and the general laying out in plan become matters of much greater importance than that of the architecture observable from the earth level. The two points of view are obviously altogether different. Canberra itself will look very well from the air. There are many towns which have garden squares, recreation greens, and the like, but which, from their ground-level aspect, may not look very well. Seen from the air, however, they become actually beautiful. So far as has been possible, then, we have studied the aspect of Canberra from above. The proposed group of parliamentary buildings, with its garden courts, and not surrounded by other very high buildings, and with the general colour effect, will present quite a handsome picture, particularly bearing in mind the embellishment of roof gardens. In using the phrase "provisional Parliament House" I have in mind a structure which will be the home of the Commonwealth Parliament for fifty years or more. After that period it will lie with the Government of the day as to what use the place shall be put to. The group of buildings would be available as administrative quarters. I would suggest, for another thirty or forty years afterwards. Altogether, we should not look forward to the rearing of the monumental Parliament House for several generations to come. Even if it is not evolved before another hundred years have passed it may still have been built earlier than in the case of the parliamentary buildings in the United States of America. Some consideration has been given to the question whether certain parts of the provisional Parliament should be constructed of frame and plaster. We came to the conclusion, however, that brick would be the better proposition. When the time comes, many years hence, to remove this building, it would be almost as good an asset to move, if built of brick, as if it had been a frame building. On the other hand, it is significant to note what happens when a Legislature settles down into a building where there is adequate provision and general comfort, although quite an absence of architectural display. The New South Wales Parliament, for example, has met for many years in a building in Sydney, of which no one would take notice architecturally. With respect to these study plans of the proposed provisional structure, I shall now go into a brief description. On the matter of cost, no limit has been placed by the Government upon what we are to bear in mind. We were given the general instruction to build to enable the Parliament to meet at Canberra. The Advisory Committee gave the original estimate of £135,000 for the proposal to erect conference halls and expand them, in the first and second stage, up to the accommodation that would be required for a Parliament. That was an early estimate, and, quite apart from that, the accommodation now proposed is very much more extensive than when the matter was first presented to the Advisory Committee. The foundations

will be of concrete; the walls will be of Commonwealth bricks, externally rough-casted or white plastered above the floor line. Internally, the walls will be cement plastered and tinted in water paint above the level of dadoes. The roof will be of Commonwealth tiles. The floors of the legislative chambers and of the library and reception halls will be of thin hardwood blocks over a layer of concrete—this latter to provide for silence. In the ordinary rooms, there will be hardwood flooring boards on joists. The lavatories will be tiled; it is very probable that they will be Commonwealth tiles. For the paving of the terraces and garden paths, we propose to use bricks or brick tiles. The outside steps will be of concrete, with granolithic or similar finish. The joinery will be of timbers which we have had seasoning at Canberra, such as maple, blackwood, cedar, and black beau, of which we have sufficient quantities both for the Parliament and other important buildings. The aim of the whole design is to obtain effect with simple lines, and without expensive architectural embellishment, and not to provide any features purely for the gaining of effect. When my Department undertook the planning, the first step was to get into touch with the President and Speaker. Preliminary sketches were shown them, in a study of which they were able to point out certain disabilities. I then suggested to them that representatives of the branch concerned, in the Works and Railways Department, should be placed in direct touch with the various responsible officials of the Parliament; and that was done. I had a preliminary consultation with them, and with officers of the Works Branch, and subsequently the Chief Architect also had consultations with them; and the supervising architect, under the directions of the Chief Architect, prepared these drawings. The particulars which we gleaned from the dignitaries and officials of Parliament, beginning with the legislative chambers themselves, are briefly the following:—Senate chamber—56 feet by 48 feet, to seat 80 senators; a public gallery on the floor of the chamber, to seat 100. The present Senate chamber is 53 feet by 31 feet. House of Representatives—56 feet by 48 feet, providing seating for a maximum of 112 members; a public gallery on the floor level of the chamber to seat 56, and a balcony to seat 55 persons. The present House of Representatives is 53 feet by 40 feet, and the number of members is 75. Dealing next with the Library, we have made provision for a gross capacity of shelving 158,000 volumes. The question of the net capacity depends upon the percentage of spare shelving. If that is to be 25 per cent., there would be space for 129,000 volumes. If the spare space is to be 50 per cent., the accommodation would be for 90,000 volumes. I believe that 50 per cent. is the margin in the library of the United States Legislature. As time goes on, although 50 per cent. might be catered for, we might work up to 75 per cent., which would give us the 129,000 volumes space. In addition to the Library book space, there is to be a large reading room, to serve also as a writing room for members, with shelving arranged in alcoves 7 feet high to accommodate 10,000 to 15,000 volumes. There will be storage space for newspapers up to a capacity of 4,890 volumes, which—less 25 per cent.—gives a net capacity of 3,670 volumes. There will be no galleries. Some of the wall space will be made available, no doubt, for large pictures. There will be a periodical and newspaper room and a small dictating room. For the administration of the Library there are rooms for the librarian, assistant librarian, and accountant, a cataloguing room for five officers, a receiving room, and a binding room in the basement. Continuing with the proposed accommodation for legislators, the dining room and refectory form a complete block from a common kitchen. There will be a central dining room to accommodate 150 persons, or, with expansion for large dinners, up to 250 persons. There will also be four small dining rooms, one to accommodate twenty persons, two to take ten each, and another for six; these will be for private dinners or luncheons. In addition, there will be a smoking room, and lounge,

and a bar, with storage cellars. Also there will be a billiard room for three tables. In the same block there will be a dining room for officers of the House, to accommodate up to 150 people. There will also be a dining room for lady typists, to accommodate about fifteen persons, a mess room for messengers for about twenty-six persons, and a common and changing room for messengers. The whole of these rooms will be connected by passages with the servery and kitchen, and there will be serveries adjacent to each of the dining rooms. The common kitchen will have a separate scullery, and wash-up, and stores, and cool stores, and pantry; a small room for the *chef*, and another for the steward; a small dining room for the kitchen and waiting staff, to accommodate up to sixteen; a staff changing room, and a lavatory with bath and shower for the kitchen staff. There will also be a small room for the assistant steward. Dealing now with the accommodation for Ministers and officers of Parliament generally, it is proposed, on the Senate side, to have a President's room, bedroom, and lavatory, and a room for clerical staff and messengers. For senators there are to be two rooms for Ministerial senators, one room for the Chairman of Committees, one room for Ministerial party, one for the Opposition, two rooms for Committees, one ante-room to the committee rooms, two rooms for strangers, one dictating room, and one for typists. There will be space for the storage of records on a lower half-basement floor. The messengers will have a messengers' common room which will be available for those of the whole House; and there will be one lavatory for senators. For the Leader of the Senate there will be a separate room, and one for his secretary and typist. There will also be a Senate club room. For Senate officers, there will be a room for the Clerk, another for the Assistant Clerk, for the Clerk of Papers, and the assistant clerical and typing staff and the Usher; and an officers' lavatory and women's lavatory. One item which was set down as a requirement by the officers concerned, but which has not been provided on the plan, is a second dictating room. Two small dictating rooms were desired, but only one is provided for. That is the sole deviation from the proposals made in the consultations with our officers. For the House of Representatives, there will be a Speaker's room, a bedroom, lavatory, kitchenette, small clerical and typists' room, and room for messenger. Then there will be a room for the Prime Minister and for his secretary, a lavatory, a clerical and typists' room, and a room for a messenger. For the Ministry there was desired one room for the Cabinet, seven rooms for seven Ministers, one room for the Ministerial party, a room for the Ministerial Whip, with a small clerical room adjoining; one room for the Opposition party, one room for the Opposition Leader, and one for the Opposition Whip; similarly for the Country party Leader, and the Whip, and a clerical room adjoining. There were to be two rooms for committees, three for strangers, one for typists, three small rooms for dictating, and one room for the Chairman of Committees. In this latter schedule of requirements, the one room for Cabinet has been eliminated with the idea that Cabinet would use one of the front rooms which are described as committee rooms. Instead of having three rooms for strangers, there are designed two small ante-rooms to the chambers, one on the Senate side and one on the House of Representatives side. In addition, there is to be lavatory accommodation, which will be available for strangers. It is assumed that strangers visiting the Parliament will congregate and be met by honorable members in the main hall, just as is the case in this building. As for the officers of the House of Representatives, one room was proposed for the Clerk, one for the Assistant Clerk, which will be rather larger as it will be required to house the departmental *Hansard* volumes; one room for the second Clerk Assistant, one for the Clerk of Papers, one for the Accountant, one for the three or four clerical officers, one for the Serjeant-at-Arms, a small room for departmental typists—it is here that the deviation has been made, and

the House of Representatives' typists placed in a common room for the two chambers; a bedroom and lavatory for the Clerk of the House, and an officers' lavatory. There will be a lavatory for women, and one for the staff. Another deviation involves the accommodation for the three or four clerical officers. Instead of a separate room for the Accountant and clerical staff, the plan provides for one room for the Accountant and clerical officers. With respect to the accommodation for *Hansard*, we were informed that it was desirable that the staff should not be placed far to either one or other side of the building; that is, that they should be placed as closely as reasonably possible to the centre. If the *Hansard* staff were divided, it would entail the provision of more accommodation; but by placing them as nearly as possible to the centre, they would be enabled to perform their duties equally handily in respect of both Houses, we took that view into account while not disturbing the important rooms. The accommodation asked for the *Hansard* staff consisted of three rooms for reporters and eight transcribing rooms. That was deemed to be sufficient if the whole of the accommodation were placed centrally. We have not provided the eight transcribing rooms, but six only. The question of position was carefully examined. The Chief of the *Hansard* staff was consulted, with the result provided on the plan. Later there will be no difficulty in expanding this accommodation. For the press, we were asked to provide accommodation in the Parliament for ten to twenty pressmen. We consulted the officials of Parliament as to the press accommodation. The provision consists of one press gallery at the end of each chamber, and a spare press gallery over the Senate. The general accommodation for the press has not been included in the parliamentary building, except in respect of the actual taking of notes of the proceedings. Any accommodation for offices, for telephone or telegraph facilities, or for the reception of persons on press business, would be provided in a building close by, in the administrative group. Further press accommodation in the Parliament building could be provided by an extension of the plan. The idea was that accommodation should be provided for the actual reporting of parliamentary proceedings within the chambers themselves, but that the other press accommodation should be made available in the administrative buildings outside of Parliament, yet as close to Parliament as the administrative group would permit. Besides the accommodation already generally described, there will be a reception hall, and, inside of that again, what might be described as an audience hall. This latter, in fact, would be surrounded by corridors. The proposal is tentative, and one effect of it, at any rate, would be to provide a good deal of wall space for pictures and the like. Of course, the whole of this reception or audience space could be thrown into the one main hall, or the size of this chamber could be reduced by the building of a wall going across the whole width along the line of the rear wall of the inner audience chamber. As the plan shows, through the main reception hall and the inner chamber, there would be maintained the one vista. In addition to the reception hall there will be an entrance vestibule, with a reception room on one side and the Senate club room on the other. The main parliamentary block will contain gardens, which will afford both light and air, and, at the same time, beautify the precincts. From the members' dining-room and smoking-room, for example, there should be a very fine outlook into these gardens. With respect to the engineering services, it is proposed that there shall be a complete automatic telephone system for every department requiring it. The automatic system will probably be through a sub-exchange situated in the administrative group. It does not matter, of course, where the exchange is so long as the automatic picks up the sub-exchange, while connecting also with the administrative groups, and with the exchange network, and thus with the exchange network of the country at large. It is proposed that there shall be a direct telephone line to Sydney and to Melbourne. These will be for the

special service of the Commonwealth Administration. This is because of the anticipated load being altogether too much for the existing condition of overloading on the present trunk lines. It is proposed also to provide, for the administrative group and the Parliament, a telegraph operating room. It is considered that during times of great political interest, there will be a heavy load on the telegraph services. Therefore, the proposal is to have one postal, telegraphic, and telephone building, entirely apart from the Parliament building. The idea is that there should be, in the provisional Parliament, pneumatic sending and delivery tubes. Any one desiring to send a telegram would hand it in at the tube room, and within a few seconds it would be in the sending room at the telegraph office. The desire expressed has been to keep out of the Parliament building every person who is not necessary, or on business there. Thus, instead of having a large staff of telegraphists inside of the parliamentary buildings, they would be housed in a common operating room in the administrative block. For electric lighting, for all the larger apartments it will be semi-indirect, while for the smaller apartments there will be the ordinary direct lighting. The next important engineering service has to do with ventilation. It is proposed that there shall be a ventilating system for the chambers, or that provision should be made for it. It will probably be wise, in view of the fact that the two legislative chambers have a clerestory all round them, to see to what extent we can carry on without providing mechanical ventilation. If the natural ventilation is unsatisfactory, provision will have been made in the construction for induced ventilation. It might be necessary to put in a full air-treatment plant, both for temperature, humidity, and cleanliness. The only way to deal with ventilation in large chambers is by mechanical means if the conditions of natural ventilation are such that in bad weather one cannot get air movement. It is a moot point whether in cold and windy weather we would not have to resort here to mechanical ventilation. As to the ventilation of the legislative chambers in the present building, by the way, what has been done here is the same as that installed at Westminster and in other houses of legislature. The trouble with the local installation is that unless it is watched closely, and managed by capable and experienced mechanics satisfactory results cannot be secured. At Westminster there are several mechanics always on duty who do nothing but watch the ventilation of the chambers. The plant here installed is capable of doing its work adequately, but it should be constantly watched by some one of experience. No plant will successfully operate without careful scientific management. It must always be watched for temperature, relative humidity, and volume. I would like to have a representative of my own Department in this building, constantly employed for the purpose. The next important item of engineering is the vacuum cleaning. It is proposed to instal a plant for the entire building. The question whether the vacuum pumps will be in the House of Parliament itself or in an adjacent building, has not been finally determined; but, in any case, the vacuum ducts will be taken throughout the building. That will be a tremendous advantage in that it will get rid of the dust instead of merely moving it about. The general heating will be by means of hot water circulating, and radiators. On the general question of accommodation for honorable members, the Advisory Committee was asked to ascertain the minimum expenditure at which the Parliament could sit at Canberra. The erection of a provisional House, such as I have been describing, gives no room for the personal accommodation of honorable members. The Chief Architect and I have considered that this is a matter which will come in the future just as it did in the United States of America. But it may be a matter of 80 to 100 years. In the Capitol at Washington there is now complete accommodation, but I emphasize that it was not provided until very many years after the American Federal Capital had been established there. In the matter of

the Canberra parliamentary buildings, accommodation could be readily added quite close to the Parliament. Within easy access, Federal members generally could have their bedrooms and other necessary living accommodation; and we could assume that they would take their meals in the parliamentary refectory.

12. *To the Chairman.*—The proposed method of heating is by induced circulation by means of a centrifugal pump, but a calorifier will be adopted for providing hot water for wash basins, baths, and for washing up. For cooking direct boiler heating will be used. In this large, flat building we could not use gravity circulation; the water must be forced through it; otherwise we should require much larger pipes and would get an inferior circulation. Calorifiers would not be suitable for the ordinary heating of the chambers. I shall supply the Committee with a statement and a diagrammatic illustration of the methods by which the heating is accomplished, for (1) kitchen purposes, (2) lavatory and bath purposes, and (3) heating the building. The proposal for this building is only in the sketch stage, and no detailed estimates have been worked out, but we estimate that the construction will cost, approximately, £135,000, and the engineering services, including electrical engineering, heating, hot water, vacuum cleaning, kitchen equipment, storm-water drainage, paths, and streets, and contingencies, £39,000, or a total of £174,000, exclusive of furnishings and fittings. The principal items in the engineering services will be—electrical services (lighting and power), £10,000; heat and hot water, £6,200; vacuum cleaning, £2,500; kitchen equipment, £3,000; storm-water drainage, paths, and roads, £7,000. The Advisory Committee estimated £10,000 for the removal from Melbourne to Canberra of official furniture in use in the present Parliament House and the purchase of new furniture. It is not known whether it will be feasible to use fittings of the present building. The State Parliament of Victoria is temporarily occupying premises in the Melbourne Exhibition Building, and it is possible that arrangements might be made to use at Canberra some of the furniture now contained in one of the two Parliament Houses in Melbourne. The details which I have furnished the Committee totalled £184,000. I think we may say that the total cost of Parliament House will be under £200,000. The building will be mostly of brick. I do not think the designer has gone into the detail of providing for the removal of partitions from the temporary Parliament House, so that when the permanent building is completed it may be used for administrative offices. We are proposing to use a lot of oregon for the rafters and ceilings, but it is possible that the building might last for 100 years—certainly 80 years. It was the intention of the Advisory Committee that the temporary Parliament House should be eventually used for some administrative function. At the entrance approach the height from the ground to the top of the parapet is 21 feet, and at the wings 15 feet. The horizontal is the dominating line in the design, and I personally think that it will look well. I have no fear that the building will have a dwarfed or stunted appearance, especially as the ground in front will be inclined. I do not think that it will be proposed to roof the central hall with one span; columnar supports will be necessary, and they will not spoil the architectural effect of the hall. The internal arrangement of the chambers follows the pattern of the House of Commons, reproducing the British type of legislative chamber for party government. A modification of the design from oblong to horseshoe shape would involve some re-arrangement of the whole design. If it be desired to have the seating in horseshoe form, that can be effected, but I do not think the alteration will necessarily improve the acoustics. Consideration has not been given to the provision of a rostrum in the chamber. Both circular seating and the rostrum are capable of adoption when the sketch drawings are being remodelled. No portions of the corridors have been reserved exclusively for honorable members, but the press can have access

to their rooms by side stairs, and need not enter the central corridors. There is no need for the press or the public to enter the two corridors on either side of the Library, and the press can be admitted to or excluded from, as may be decided, the corridors in which Ministers' rooms are located. The provision of a separate approach for the press is contingent upon some other consideration.

13. *To Mr. Mathews.*—I have read a newspaper report of evidence in which it was stated that twenty years hence there may be 200 honorable members in the House of Representatives. If that is likely to happen the legislative chamber should be designed immediately to accommodate that number, and that will effect an alteration in the disposal of the offices adjacent to the chambers. An increase in the accommodation could be accomplished by doing away with the central part of the main hall, and extending the rooms associated with the chambers further into the hall; but I think it would be a mistake to do that, for the Commonwealth Parliament House should have a hall which, without being elaborate, would be dignified. The larger hall surrounding the inner central hall would be very useful in connexion with receptions. More space would be got from the legislative chambers, but that is dependent upon a decision as to whether the design of the seating is to be horseshoe or rectangular. I think it would be a mistake to curtail the area of the sunken garden. It will be an advantage to honorable members to have this area of light and fresh air inside the parliamentary grounds. There is a possibility of setting the two wings on either side of the Library deeper into the ground. The general scheme is for a sunken garden, and to ramp down from it with grass banks, getting light from the garden for a lower story at window-sill height. That has been designed on the two sides to be occupied by the records and clerks of the House of Representatives and Senate respectively. It is proposed to remodel the contour of the ground to provide a bank in front of the building and an upward slope on the eastern side, whereas the ground on the western side will slope away from the building. There is no doubt, however, that in the course of time the eastern side will be further remodelled so as to provide a uniform slope from Parliament House on both sides. The extension of the two wings to two stories would be practicable, but would interfere with the cumulative effect for which the architect has striven in his design. We have endeavoured to produce as cheaply as possible a building and accessories representing the actual requirements of Parliament at its first meeting in Canberra, and we relied on statements supplied to us as to the probable requirements of Parliament during the probable use of this temporary building. During the twenty-two years of Federation the number of members of the Federal Parliament has not increased, and I understand that an amendment of the Constitution must precede any increase. With all due deference, it does not seem probable that Australia, with a population of 5,000,000 will require a Federal Parliament of more than 112 members, bearing in mind that the House of Representatives in the United States of America, which has a population of 110,000,000 has only 410 members. Of course, the more we enlarge the building to provide for ultimate developments the more we increase the cost of what is designed as a provisional structure. Already the cost has been increased from £135,000 to £174,000. The design includes lounge accommodation for honorable members, but no room in which a member or official, who felt indisposed, might rest. The general tendency is to provide that sort of accommodation for manual workers, but it is not customary in ordinary offices except for women, when there are special reasons why they should have a place where they can lie down. The provision of such accommodation, however, is well worthy of consideration. We did not think it would be necessary to provide a room for each honorable member in this building, because we thought that sooner or later, and probably sooner than it has happened at Washington, there would be a

Senate Club and a House of Representatives' Club in which each member would have a room. We have planned to meet the requirements of 150 parliamentarians and officials, and the press as far as we could ascertain them. I would not say emphatically that the accommodation might not, in some respects, be increased with advantage, but the problem before us was to design a building for the next twenty to fifty years that would give the minimum reasonable accommodation. I do not see how the design could be reduced, for I believe that on the day when Parliament meets there it will require every bit of accommodation that has been provided. I do not think it would have been any advantage to have stored quantities of hardwood years ago in anticipation of the commencement of the parliamentary building. We shall use oregon for ceiling joists and rafters. Hardwood after being sawn for some years warps and twists, and becomes very hard to work. Oregon is best for ceiling joists because it does not warp, and does not crack the plaster. There is hardwood in the forests near Bungendore which is good enough for building purposes, and we could season it sufficiently for the job if we commenced to store it as soon as the final plans were prepared. There will be plenty of opportunities for utilizing hardwood, but unless Tasmanian stringybark were utilized, hardwood ceilings would not appeal to me. Charming effects could be got with Tasmanian oak, especially in panelled dados, but it has its disadvantages. I think that the building would be better finished in plastering material, except where it was necessary to introduce wood for finish. The amount of imported timber to be used in the ceiling joists will not be large, and no tradesman would willingly use hardwood for ceiling joists that were to be plastered. Of course, celery-top, Huon, and some of the Queensland pines could be used for internal finishing.

14. *To Mr. Blakeley.*—The approximate cost of raising the two wings to two stories would be £8,000. The plan shows two possible extensions about 32 yards from the legislative chambers, duplicating the wings, and balancing the western facade. Accommodation for the press is provided in two galleries in each chamber, and nearby is a general room 31 feet by 12 feet. Our idea was that each big newspaper would hire an office with telephone or telegraph accommodation in the administrative group, but I understand from a conversation I had with representatives of the press this morning that more accommodation will be required in the parliamentary building itself. The telegraph operators will be in the Postmaster-General's building, which, however, will be connected with Parliament House by pneumatic tubes. The telegraph office will probably be in a building at the eastern end of the administrative group. The modern idea of artificial ventilation is to change the total contents of a chamber three times per hour. Any mechanical plant installed should have the capacity to do that, and, normally, in order to carry out that contract, a plant is installed that is capable of changing the air contents of the chamber five times per hour. That is what the plant in the Federal Parliament House can do. The temperature, varying with climate and conditions, should be between 60 and 70 degrees, and the relative humidity should be only 60 per cent. Another important consideration is to rid the air of dust, and a plant may be necessary to do that in the early years of the occupation of Canberra, although eventually there will not be as much dust as in any other big city. During the winter time the hot air should be arranged to come, if possible, through the risers of the benches. In summer cool air should be brought in at a higher level and allowed to gravitate to the floor. In very large chambers there is a big volume of air high above the floor that must be removed. If that is not done the carbonic acid gas emanating from the lungs rises until it reaches an altitude where the atmosphere is at about the same temperature, and then the carbonic acid gas, being heavier, falls. Therefore, in order to avoid having an inverted pit of air, which has become more or less contaminated,

provision should be made to remove it from above instead of attempting to get it down and extracting it from the floor level. There are two schools of thought on this matter, one advocating the removal of the air at the floor level, and the other removal at the upper levels. Personally, I would be averse from allowing the air to stagnate in the upper levels. The problem of ventilation is complicated by the fact that people, failing to appreciate the ventilation system as mechanical, will insist upon opening windows and doors, and thus disturb the whole draught system.

15. *To Mr. Cook.*—The accommodation proposed in the sketch plans now before the Committee will be very much greater than is provided in the building which the Commonwealth Parliament now occupies.

16. *To Mr. Jackson.*—The legislative chambers will have clerestory light, which I think will be ample, but, if necessary, the window space could be increased. My own conviction is that for both health and optical reasons, it is desirable to have as much natural light as possible. Natural ventilation also is provided for as far as is practicable. There is a continuous row of windows on each side of the building to induce a draught, but I am not sanguine that natural ventilation will ever be completely satisfactory in legislative chambers of this kind. Parliament will sit in the mornings and afternoons, and at nights, in different seasons and in different temperatures, and in those circumstances it will be impossible to rely entirely on natural ventilation. For instance, in the existing Senate chamber honorable members experienced a draught on the top of their heads, and I found that, during winter time, there was a stream of cold air from outside into the warm chamber. I apprehend that in any chamber of the size of those proposed, where there is artificial warming, currents of air will be set up which will not be wanted in cold weather, but I have not much doubt that in the summer time the chambers can be ventilated naturally. During winter there must be some method of regulating the temperature of the air that is brought into the chamber, and also the off-take. Such provision is being made.

17. *To the Chairman.*—The cost of altering the contours has been included in the estimate which I have given to the Committee. The ground has been examined, and it will be easy to remove the soil with a steam shovel. The Advisory Committee estimated for telephones, a trunk line costing £45,000; exchange equipment, £15,000; subscribers' lines and equipment, £54,000; and for telegraphs, trunk lines costing £26,000; and equipment, £8,000. That estimate included telegraph trunk lines from Canberra to Sydney, Canberra to Melbourne, and Melbourne to Adelaide. In the last report we considered that the line from Melbourne to Adelaide would not be required for the present, and we reduced the estimated cost accordingly. There would not be much difficulty in installing pneumatic tubes from the Library to the principal rooms in the building, but if the tubes are to be used for the delivery of books as well as papers some consideration of the practicability and cost will be necessary. An area of land beyond Brisbane-avenue and north of Waratah Park has been reserved for residences for honorable members. It is closer to Parliament House than the area allotted to the civil servants, the distance from the centre of the area being about 1,000 yards. We have recommended the erection of ten buildings for members of Parliament, assuming that for the first Parliament a considerable proportion of the members will stay at the official hostel. We have not assumed that many honorable members will erect their own homes, but some may do so. Canberra at its inception will have a population of 6,000, and, as in every other city, private enterprise will provide accommodation for the floating population, which will include honorable members. I assume that honorable members will be at Canberra for only four or five months in the year, and that they will use principally the hostel; secondly, private cottages; and, thirdly, accommodation provided by private enterprise. From the time that we know what plan is

recommended by the Committee, and approved by Parliament, the preparation of the drawings, even employing several draughtsmen, will occupy at least six months. Assuming that the erection of the building will be thrown open to tender, quantities and specifications must be prepared. From the time that we get the word "Go," about two years and a half must elapse before the building is completed and furnished. An expectation of occupying the building in less time would be over sanguine. A big Sydney builder whom I consulted estimated that the actual construction would take eighteen months. Prior to that there must be the preparation of drawings, and finally the installation of services in co-ordination with the city services. The Government have approved of a continuation of the second section of the sewer, which, therefore, will be available to receive the drainage from Parliament House before the building is ready. The water supply can be completed quickly.

18. *To Mr. Cook.*—In the next twelve months the tendency will be for the cost of materials to decrease; but it is difficult to predict what will happen in regard to labour. The demand for labour in the building trades is greater than the supply at the present time. I understand that in Sydney 20,000 houses have been planned, and will be built when labour is available. In Melbourne a large number of houses are on paper and awaiting construction. Last year Sydney built 10,000 houses. The indications are that the shortage of labour will not be very much decreased. I think it probable that Canberra will be very much in the eye of the building world, and I am hoping that we shall get some stimulus from that fact. On the other hand, the responses to our calls for tenders in New South Wales have been most disappointing. Generally speaking, I cannot see that there will be much gained or lost by delaying construction at Canberra.

19. *To Mr. Mackay.*—The supply of bricks for Commonwealth works at Canberra is ample. We have already a reserve sufficient to supply the requirements of the two hostels and Parliament House, and then we shall have to start building up the reserves, or, alternatively, we may utilize the supplies coming direct from the kilns and keep our reserves intact. The railway will pass close to Parliament building, and a contractors' spur line will be run direct to the brick-yards.

20. *To Mr. Blakeley.*—When I spoke of the possibility of manufacturing tiles other than roof tiles, I had in mind a very simple terra-cotta paving tile. I think we could get quite a good finish with it instead of using introduced glazed tiles for the floors. I believe the local tile will look very well, and its durability is beyond all doubt. The manager of the brickyards has been experimenting with a view to producing a tile of lighter colour, and is hopeful of success. We can, of course, always darken a tile.

(Taken at Melbourne.)

FRIDAY, 23RD MARCH, 1923.

Present:

Mr. GREGORY, Chairman;	
Senator Newland	Mr. Jackson
Senator Plain	Mr. Mackay
Mr. Blakeley	Mr. Mathews.
Mr. Cook	

The Honorable Thomas Givens, President of the Senate, sworn and examined.

21. *To the Chairman.*—I have been in political life since early in 1899, and have a knowledge of other Parliament Houses besides the present Federal Parliament House. I had experience in the Queensland Parliament House, and have made casual visits to the Parliament Houses in all of the other States. I saw a preliminary sketch plan of the proposed provisional Parliament House at Canberra. It was submitted to Mr. Speaker and myself for suggestions. I think the plan has been altered since. My conception of a temporary building

is one erected to provide temporary accommodation for Parliament whilst the permanent building is in course of erection. In considering the accommodation to be provided by a temporary building, everything must depend on the time it is intended to serve, and how long it will take to complete the permanent structure. I think the plans submitted are far too elaborate and costly for a temporary building. The building proposed will probably cost £200,000 or more. In my experience of public buildings all original estimates of cost are greatly exceeded. If such an amount is spent on this building, I believe that much of the money will be wasted, as it would be difficult to convert the building for occupation for other purposes. It is doubtful whether it could be utilized for administrative offices. We have here in Melbourne an instance of a temporary building occupied by the State Parliament of Victoria. It is quite a comfortable building, and satisfactory for the purpose for which it was intended. I venture to say that it did not cost one-half as much as the building proposed by these plans will cost. The State Parliament has been in occupation of it for over twenty years. The State Parliament House here is a temporary wooden building. I have been through it several times, and members of the State Parliament are as comfortable in it as we are in this very expensive building. It does not perhaps provide all the accommodation for which we might reasonably look in the permanent abode of the members of a Parliament, but it is quite good enough for a temporary Parliament House. I would personally limit the time for which a temporary building would be required to the time it would take to erect the permanent Houses of Parliament. I think the wisest course to pursue would be to erect a temporary building close to the site upon which the permanent building is to be erected, and as each section of the permanent building was completed, it could be occupied, and the Parliament given the advantage of the increased accommodation. One great advantage of the erection of a temporary building on a much less pretentious scale than that provided for in these plans would be that it would be possible for the Federal Parliament to assemble in its own building within half the time that must be anticipated if these plans are carried out. The temporary building occupied by the Victorian Parliament is not half as elaborate as that proposed by these plans, and members of the State Parliament are quite comfortable in it. I am not so sure that they have outside facilities which will not be available at Canberra. If building sites are thrown open at Canberra, and a considerable population there is assured, many facilities will be afforded in a very short time. I was in Kalgoorlie very soon after the discovery of the field, and almost every necessary facility was provided there in the course of a year. I have been at other places where provision for a considerable population has been made within a very short time. If my ideas with regard to Canberra had been given effect long ago, there would be a big population there now. I would have established every Commonwealth activity there in our own Territory. Instead of starting a Clothing Factory here and a Small Arms Factory somewhere else on other people's property, I would have established them on our own property, and there would have been a big population in the Federal Territory by this time. Coal and iron would be as easily obtainable for a Woollen Factory established at Canberra as they are for the factory at Geelong. I am not suggesting that we should continue these establishments in competition with private enterprises. I am not arguing that question now. That is a question of policy which I do not desire to discuss. I am concerned only with the fact that we did start those establishments, and that if they had been started at Canberra one result would have been that we would have had a considerable population there now. A private individual possessed of property of his own would establish his industries on that property, and not on the property of other people. That is what the Commonwealth should have done, but every one seems to have been actuated by a desire to make the

Federal Capital City the Cinderella of Australia. It is all a matter of policy, and if what is required is a building that will be expected to serve the purpose for over fifty years it is possible that even a more elaborate building than is provided for by these plans should be constructed; but if a merely temporary building, sufficient to provide essential accommodation whilst the permanent Houses of Parliament are in course of construction is desired, a building that would not cost one-half of what the building proposed by these plans will cost would be quite sufficient. My idea is that a temporary building should be erected close to the site of the permanent structure. It is true that according to the plans there is a street between the site of the permanent building and the site proposed for the provisional building, but that difficulty might be overcome by an underground passage between the two buildings. You all know that in Smith-street, Collingwood, the firm of Foy and Gibson have establishments on both sides of the street that are connected by a sub-way under the street. It would, of course, be better to have the temporary building erected on the same side of the street as the permanent building. The value of my evidence is dependent on the question whether a temporary building is erected or one in accordance with these plans, which it is anticipated will serve for the next fifty years, and, perhaps, I had better proceed in my comment upon the proposals on the latter assumption. If I am to give my opinion on that assumption, the plans submitted are, with a few minor alterations, fairly suitable. They provide for fairly good accommodation, but there are a few points to which I should like to direct your attention. For instance, with regard to the accommodation provided for the representatives of the press, I think in the first instance they should have exclusive quarters to which there should be an entirely separate entrance. In the Queensland Parliament, a member never saw a pressman unless he went to the press gallery or to the press room. Honorable members were secured absolute privacy from the press. Pressmen there were not all over the building as they are here. Some time ago before some restrictions were placed upon members of the press, that was more evident than it is now. In the Queensland Parliament House pressmen had their own gallery, and a separate room, to which access was gained by a separate staircase. I think that is a very good idea. I believe the press should be provided with a separate room conveniently situated to their reporting gallery. They should be given ample accommodation and a private entrance of their own. When I am informed that it is the practice for leader writers on the *Age* and *Argus* to sit in the press gallery, and to write their leaders in the accommodation provided for the press here, I must say that I fail to see why we should provide such facilities for representatives of the press. If Parliament provides representatives of the press with adequate facilities for fully and accurately reporting its proceedings, that is all it is called upon to do. We provide such facilities here, but so far as I can see, the press representatives do not fulfil their obligation to provide full and accurate reports of our proceedings. I am strongly an advocate for providing the representatives of the press with ample accommodation, but it should be exclusive to themselves. They should have a separate entrance to their quarters, and should be confined to them. They should not be at liberty to roam over the whole building as they do here. The question of provision for deputations desiring to wait upon Ministers has cropped up here more than once, with the result that whilst Mr. Speaker and I can exercise no censorship over the persons admitted to any room in the occupation of Ministers or officers of the House, deputations in Parliament House are forbidden. If any one person or group of persons in Parliament may receive deputations in Parliament House, the result is to destroy that freedom from outside influence or coercion which the Parliament ought to enjoy. On one occasion here about 2,000 people invaded Parliament House as a deputation. It was because of that that deputations in Parliament

House were forbidden. Honorable members are now forbidden by Mr. Speaker and myself to receive deputations of any kind in this building. I have said that we can exercise no censorship over the persons they admit to the rooms allotted to them, but the receiving of public deputations in this building is forbidden. If one section in Parliament may receive an enormous deputation, every other section must have the same right, and Parliament will be no longer free from coercive influences. We have adopted the practice followed in the House of Commons, and it is a perfectly sound practice. Parliament must be absolutely free from any possibility of terrorism, coercion, or coercive tactics. Ministers have their own offices in the administrative buildings at which they can receive deputations. It must be recognised that Parliament House is a place for the legislative, and not the administrative, function. That being so, the legislative function of Parliament is the only one for which facilities should be provided. If when Parliament is sitting it is convenient for a Minister to receive four or five persons in the room allotted to him, that is his own business, and Mr. Speaker and I can exercise no censorship or control. In such a case I have always advocated that there should be a part of Parliament House in which honorable members should have the same privacy as they would have in a club or in their own homes. That they should be subjected to all sorts of scrutiny by outside persons assembling in every part of the building, as is done here, is quite improper. I suggest that there should be corridors in front of each of the chambers which should be absolutely private to members of the Parliament. I should not think of preventing representatives of the press being admitted to parts of the building open to the public. In my view, outside their own rooms representatives of the press should have the same rights, no more and no less, as members of the general public. I think that at Canberra provision might be made for thirty representatives of the press; but I strongly urge upon the Committee the necessity of providing the press representatives with a separate entrance to their own room, and separate access to the press gallery. They should be confined to the use of the accommodation provided for them, except in regard to the public hall or other parts of the building to which the general public would have access, and in respect to which they should have the same rights, as members of the general public, and no more. I have noticed that according to the plans one room in front of the proposed building is intended to be a committee room. I suggest that offices for the Public Works Committee and the Public Accounts Committee should be provided on the side of the building where the examination of witnesses and other work of the committees might be carried on conveniently without interfering with the general work of Parliament. Their offices should be as separate and self-contained as possible. I do not think the number of parliamentary committees will be increased very much. Select Committees are frequently appointed, but their work is only of a temporary character, and separate accommodation is not required for them. Our Select Committees, for instance, ordinarily make use of the Senate Club Room. If the provisional Parliament House is to be a place to serve the purpose of the Federal Parliament for the next fifty years, I think some of the rooms provided for are not big enough, especially if it is anticipated that there will be an increase in the number of members of the Parliament. I submit the following statement showing the dimensions of rooms, &c., now available for the Senate and Joint House as an indication of what, in my view, would be satisfactory provision at Canberra for the existing membership of the Federal Parliament:—

SENATE AND JOINT HOUSE.

DIMENSIONS OF ROOMS, ETC.

First Floor—

Vestibule—47 ft. x 47 ft.

Queen's Hall—76 ft. 6 in. x 46 ft. 6 in.

Senate Chamber—72 ft. x 46 ft.

Large Lavatory—24 ft. 6 in. x 19 ft. 6 in.

Inter-State Press Room—19 ft. 6 in. x 11 ft. 6 in.
 President's Rooms—30 ft. x 15 ft. and 20 ft. 6 in. x 15 ft.
 Chairman's Room—24 ft. 6 in. x 12 ft.
 Club Room—42 ft. x 20 ft. 6 in.
 Ministers' Room (next Club Room)—25 ft. 6 in. x 16 ft. 6 in.
 Ministers' Room (behind Chamber)—22 ft. x 14 ft. 6 in.
 Usher's Room—23 ft. x 13 ft.
 Waiting Room—30 ft. x 12 ft.

Second Floor—

Committee Room—63 ft. x 20 ft. 6 in.
 Clerk of the Senate's Room—25 ft. 6 in. x 16 ft. 6 in.
 Clerk Assistant's Room—24 ft. 6 in. x 11 ft. 6 in.
 Members' Room—24 ft. 6 in. x 19 ft. 6 in.
 Members' Room—30 ft. x 12 ft.

Third Floor—

Clerk of Papers' Room—30 ft. x 12 ft. 6 in.

Refreshment Rooms—

Dining Room—49 ft. x 23 ft. 6 in.
 Billiard Room—49 ft. x 23 ft. 6 in.
 Corridor (including Bar)—105 ft. x 13 ft.
 Balcony—46 ft. 6 in. x 11 ft.
 Strangers' Room—12 ft. 6 in. x 9 ft. 6 in.

I do not pose as a political prophet, and it is very hard to form an opinion as to what the future membership of the Federal Parliament will be. Still an increase in the membership is a contingency that must be faced, and it is bound to increase if the New States movement is going to succeed. I would like to see some of the corridors provided around the main hall cut out. I do not think a hall 90 feet by 90 feet would be too large. My view of a provisional building which is to serve the purpose of the Federal Parliament for the next fifty years is that it is very likely to be a permanent building. The Sydney Parliament House was erected as a temporary building, and it is in occupation by the State Parliament yet. I think the main hall should be as large as provided for if the general public are to be admitted to it, and may stroll around as they do in the Queen's Hall in this building. If honorable members are to enjoy any privacy for conversation, the hall should be a very large one. To reduce the size of the hall proposed in order to increase the accommodation of the surrounding rooms would materially alter the plan of the architect. It is very important for the economic working of Parliament that we should have our own refreshment room, and while the accommodation provided in this regard by the plans under consideration is to a certain extent satisfactory, it has been suggested, and there is no doubt that it would be very convenient—that it should be possible to utilize the members' dining-room for public functions. At such functions here, we have had to seat 250, and in some cases 300 people. It is obvious that it would be much less expensive to serve dinner in a room close to the kitchen than to serve it as is done here for instance on public occasions in the Queen's Hall, or in one of the club rooms. I suggest in this connexion that the main dining hall should be nearly double the size provided for in these plans. A comparatively small members' dining-room might also be provided for honorable members who do not care to be disturbed by being asked to take meals in the larger room. I do not think it would be possible to increase the size of the dining-room, according to these plans, by reducing the size of the main hall, because they are in different parts of the building. The greatest cost involved in the holding of banquets in the main hall as at present is due to its distance from the kitchen. If it were proposed to continue in the provisional building the practice of giving public banquets in the main hall, a very considerable cost would be involved for waiting. It would probably be necessary also to install heating appliances in the main hall to keep food warm. It would probably double the cost of carrying out such functions in the members' dining-room if that were made sufficiently large for the purpose. For a provisional building to serve for the period which has been mentioned, the members' dining-room should, in my opinion, be nearly double the size provided for if it is intended to continue the practice adopted here of utilizing Parliament House for public functions, such as State dinners. We are supposed to provide accommodation for visiting members of other Parliaments and ex-members of the Commonwealth Parliament in our dining-room, and the room we have here is not

sufficiently large to provide for the accommodation even of the members of the Federal Parliament, if they all desired to be present at the same meal. We are greatly handicapped at present, by having to convey meals along corridors; this involves great expense, and is one reason why our refreshment rooms do not pay as they ought to do. I have had no experience of speaking from a rostrum, and, personally, I think that honorable members would feel more at home if, as under the present system, they could rise in their places when they desired to speak. In the Senate chamber honorable senators speaking from their places can be heard in every part of the chamber, and members of the *Hansard* staff and representatives of the press, so far as I know, have no difficulty in reporting them accurately. I think it would be better if the legislative chambers were arranged in the semi-circular form instead of the square form of the House of Representatives in this building. Instead of the long lounge seats which are provided here, I think that each member of Parliament should be provided with a separate seat and a desk in which to keep his papers in front of him. That should be recognised as his place in the chamber for the time being. This would give each honorable member privacy for his papers. Under existing circumstances here an honorable member has to put his papers down beside him where other honorable members may see them. Passageways should be provided at the back of the separate desks in order that honorable members might enter or leave the Chamber without having to pass in front of the Chair or before an honorable member who may be speaking. That would be conducive to the proper conduct of the business of the Chamber. It is not the invariable practice in Australian Parliament Houses for members of the *Hansard* staff to sit at the table. I am not sure that I approve of the practice. I think the *Hansard* staff should be provided with a small gallery at the back of the Chair, slightly raised above the floor of the chamber. In the Queensland Parliament, members of the *Hansard* staff were never seen on the floor of the House. No person has a right to enter a legislative chamber except members or officers of the Chamber. If the *Hansard* staff were provided with a raised gallery, such as I suggest, at the back of the Chair, they could hear quite well everything that was said. In this building no difficulty has been experienced by reason of the fact that officers of the staff of both Houses are accommodated on the second story at some distance from the chamber. Mr. Speaker and the President require to have rooms as convenient as possible to their respective chambers, and the Chairmen of Committees should also be provided with rooms convenient to the chambers, as they may be sent for at a moment's notice. I do not consider the provision made for the President in these plans satisfactory. The space provided should, I think, be divided into two rooms. The messenger could be accommodated in a box outside. There is no necessity for a room 28 feet by 12 feet, for instance. That could be reduced to 15 feet by 13 feet, and the writing room proportionately increased in size. The writing room provided for by these plans is only a little box of a room 12 feet by 11 feet. I find that in the provision made for Mr. Speaker there is a kitchenette. I offer no opinion as to the provision to be made on the House of Representatives side, but I personally do not want a kitchenette. I do not believe in Parliament House being converted into a boardinghouse. The accommodation to be provided for honorable members generally depends again on the question whether the building is to be a temporary building or a semi-permanent building. If the proposed building is to serve the purpose for the next fifty years, I think a greater number of rooms should be provided in which honorable members could interview their constituents. Apart from the question of cost it would not be at all a bad idea if every member of the Parliament were provided with a small room for himself. Failing that, in addition to the general rooms, there should be at least half-a-dozen writing rooms provided for members of the House of Representatives, and one-half the number provided for members of the

Senate. If there are too many in one room, there is too much conversation, and it is impossible for honorable members to do any writing at all. The rooms in occupation in this building at the present time are of a convenient size, and might accommodate even a few more honorable members than we have. With respect to the main hall provided by these plans, I do not see the utility of having a building within a building as the plans propose. When it is suggested that the corridor surrounding the main hall might be hung with pictures of honorable members, I can only say that in my view it would not be suitable for a picture gallery, nor is the Queen's Hall in this building. The dimensions of the Senate chamber are 72 feet by 40 feet, but that includes the passages at each side of the chamber. I think the Senate and House of Representatives chambers are the same size; but as there are no passages down the sides of the House of Representatives chamber, the Senate chamber appears smaller in comparison. The dimensions of the dining-room in this building are 49 feet by 23 ft. 6 in. We should not require a dining-room as large as I have suggested unless it is to be used for State functions. I have explained that it would be more economical if it were so used than to make provision for the holding of such functions in a different part of the building. I think the suggestion that the back part of the proposed building should be made two stories high is a good one. The front elevation would look better, in my opinion, if there were a continuous roof instead of separate roofs covering three blocks of buildings. My objection is met by the explanation that the object of having a space between each block is to provide natural lighting and ventilation. In my opinion the provision made for a space of 10 feet between floor and ceiling in the rooms is not sufficient, as the air in an occupied room soon becomes vitiated. With all respect for Mr. Murdoch's knowledge of the subject, I do not regard high walls as useless. I have worked underground for many years, and I know that vitiated air rises, and there must be ventilation to remove it. In my opinion, the height of a wall is a very important consideration in providing good ventilation. The Health Committee in Melbourne are insisting upon keepers of lodging-houses and hotels providing not less than 800 cubic feet of air space for each occupant of a room. I was under the impression that not less than 1,000 cubic feet of air space were necessary. I believe that in the construction of private dwellings, 12 feet clear from floor to ceiling is a proper specification. I think that the walls of the rooms should be at least 12 feet high. This would give a very much better appearance. Cheapness of construction is the only aim in lowering the ceiling. Until building construction became so dear, we never heard of lowering ceilings to reduce cost. I suppose that the height of the walls in the room in which we are now is about 16 feet. If a number of people were assembled in a room of this size, and the walls were only 10 feet from floor to ceiling, the air would become vitiated in a very short time. Unless there were a continuous draught through the room, those occupying it would be breathing the poison of their own breath over and over again. The lavatory accommodation proposed by the plans appears to me to be satisfactory.

22. *To Senator Newland.*—Speaking generally, my opinion is that if what is required is a purely temporary building, the plans submitted are too elaborate. Sufficient accommodation is proposed if, as a contradiction in terms, the building may be described as a semi-permanent building to serve for the next fifty or sixty years. If the building is to serve for fifty years, it would be cheaper and better, in my opinion, to make the side wings two stories high rather than to spread out the building. To appoint parliamentary Committees instead of outside Boards to control Government activities such as the Customs and Taxation offices, would involve an almost complete change in policy and methods at present adopted. It would destroy Ministerial responsibility. I think that no Minister would accept control by a Committee and at the same time

accept responsibility. The Committees appointed in the House of Commons are established in connexion with legislative rather than with administrative work. Nearly all the legislative work of the House of Commons is done by a Grand Committee. Very little actual legislation is done in the House itself. When a Bill has passed its first reading it is sent to a Grand Committee. The members of the Committee thrash out the points in dispute, discuss its various provisions and their probable effect, and return the Bill to the House with their recommendations. Its passage subsequently through the House is very largely a formal matter. The appointment of Under-Secretaries in the House of Commons has been found essential there to relieve Ministers of the drudgery of detail work. The interests and importance of the work there are greater than here, and the appointment of Under-Secretaries has been resorted to as a device to relieve Ministers of a great deal of detail work. With respect to the consequence of the removal of the Seat of Government to Canberra, I may point out that the removal of the chief offices to the Federal Capital will not be any more inconvenient to any of the States, with the exception of Victoria, than is the existing condition of affairs. The chief offices are now as far removed from the State capitals, with the exception of Melbourne, as they would be if established at Canberra. The existing condition of affairs is only a greater convenience to the people of Melbourne. If the chief offices are removed to the Federal Capital, the only difference will be that the various heads of Departments will be less convenient of access to the people of Melbourne than they are at present. As a consequence of the removal of the Seat of Government, I do not think that additional staffs will be required at Canberra. I believe that the big newspapers will have special representatives at the Federal Capital. The others, I think, will combine, as they do now, to appoint a representative. I believe that the Western Australian newspapers, the Queensland newspapers, and the Tasmanian newspapers have combined to secure representation in this Parliament for each group. I think that the big newspapers, such as the *Argus*, *Age*, *Sydney Morning Herald*, *Sydney Daily Telegraph*, and perhaps the *Brisbane Courier* and an Adelaide newspaper, will appoint special representatives. The big newspapers are specially represented here now, and the removal of the Parliament to Canberra will make no difference in that respect. I think the housekeepers could perform their duties as efficiently without accommodation on the parliamentary premises at all. They open the rooms in the morning, and close them at night, and they supervise their staffs, but it is not necessary that they should be provided with living accommodation in the Parliament building itself. Of late years we have had a watchman on duty in this building at night. I might mention that here the members of the Fire Brigade keep watch on the watchman. He is required to touch buttons in various parts of the building at various hours. If he does not do so, the Fire Brigade report the matter immediately, and we would know of any dereliction of duty on his part next morning. We may have an efficient Fire Brigade established at Canberra that will be able to provide a similar check. Here the housekeepers are provided for in the basement, but, excepting between the hour of opening and of closing, they do not need to be in the building at all. I think it would be an advantage to provide for the *Hansard* staff in a small gallery over the Chair. If such provision were made, there would be more accommodation for honorable members at the table. At present there is very little accommodation for honorable members at the table either in the Senate or in the House of Representatives. If the *Hansard* staff were accommodated in a gallery slightly elevated, as I suggest, they would hear what was said better than they do now, because sound rises. It is a great convenience for members of Parliament, and also members of Committees, to be able to carry out their work in one place. The work of a member of a parliamentary Committee does not end when his work as a committeeman has

ended, and the committee-room should be so located as to make it convenient for him to resume his ordinary parliamentary work. Some of the best halls in which I have spoken have been wooden halls. I do not think there will be much trouble in Canberra with outside noises; certainly not to the same extent as here. I would have no objection to the erection of a timber building. The State Parliament House in Victoria is a timber building. It is quite good, and I am not sure that it is not even more comfortable than is this grand building. To increase the proposed height of the walls would no doubt greatly increase the estimated cost of the building, just as to decrease the height by a couple of feet would reduce the cost. I have given my evidence on the assumption that the proposed building is to serve for at least fifty years. I would not approve of spending anything like the money which this building will cost on a merely temporary building. To add 4 feet to the height of the walls would make the cost of the proposed building greater than is anticipated, but that would be better than to ruin the health of every one who had business to do in the building. It is absurd to ask honorable members to sit and work in rooms the walls of which are only 10 feet high. I do not care what the architects may say on the subject. I have had considerable experience, and, in my opinion, the proposal to reduce the height of the walls is all a matter of cheapness. We could get good ventilation with walls only 5 feet high, but we should in that case have to work in a continuous draught. In my opinion, the first thing to be done is for the Government or Parliament to determine whether the proposed building is to be a temporary, a provisional, or a permanent building. If it is to be merely temporary, it should not cost one-half the building proposed by these plans will cost, and we should be able to get to Canberra in half the time. That is one reason why I favour the erection of a temporary rather than of a provisional building.

22A. *To Mr. Cook.*—The proposed building will cost from £200,000 to £250,000 by the time it is finished, and that is far too much to spend on a temporary building. In my view, a temporary building to last as long as it will take to erect the permanent Parliament House would be sufficient, and, approximately, that would take from ten to twelve years. If it were erected alongside of the site for the permanent building, as each section of the permanent building was completed, it could be occupied for the purpose for which it was constructed, and we could continue the occupation of the temporary building as additional accommodation until the permanent building was completed. A temporary building, such as I would favour, would not cost more than one-third of what the building proposed by these plans will cost. The Victorian Parliament has been occupying temporary premises now for over twenty years. They are convenient and comfortable, and I am sure they did not cost anything like half what this provisional building will cost. It is unwise and unsafe to prophesy, and I am not disposed to act as a prophet, but I do not think that in the course of ten years there will be very much alteration in construction prices.

23. *To Mr. Mathews.*—I believe that the cost of the conversion of the building proposed by these plans in order to utilize it for other purposes would be very great. If this building is to serve for fifty years, our ideas with respect to proper office accommodation may be entirely changed, and it might be found that this building would be quite useless for that purpose. I am not sure that we would get the cost of the building out of it in fifty or sixty years. I know something of the cost of Government buildings, and I think this would cost about £250,000, and for double that price we might erect the permanent building. The ridiculous 10-ft. walls proposed I would cut out altogether. The building which we now occupy has ruined the health of many honorable members, and I do not know how honorable members are to be expected to live and work in rooms the walls of which are only 10 feet high. They can only be sufficiently ventilated if there is a continuous draught blowing through them. I should like

one of these architects to be called upon to ventilate a mine underground.

24. *To the Chairman.*—We have had considerable trouble with the ventilation of the legislative chambers in this building. It is almost impossible to keep them properly ventilated. When you have what is practically a house within a house, the ventilation must be artificial. There is no direct connexion with the outside air. We have adopted a system of exhaust. We exhaust the vitiated air by means of a fan in the roof, and the pure air is admitted through the little tower in the parliamentary gardens. Every work done in connexion with this building has to be done with the concurrence and under the supervision of the State Works Department of Victoria. Our own Works Department can supply us with plans, but the State Works Department must concur before we can act. The terms of the agreement for our occupancy of the building provide that even the smallest alteration proposed must secure the concurrence of the State Public Works Department, and be carried out under its supervision. The only privilege we have is to find the money to pay for it. We have sometimes had to take a high hand, and say that if our ideas were not carried out we would do nothing. The plans of the proposed provisional building provide for natural ventilation. We have two classes of typists employed in this building—the *Hansard* typists and the typists at the service of members of the Parliament. In connexion with the provision made for the *Hansard* staff, there should be sufficient accommodation provided for their typists staff, and it should be provided in association with the rooms allotted to the *Hansard* staff. Lavatory accommodation should, of course, be provided for females. There should be at least two baths provided for members of the Senate, and four for members of the House of Representatives. There is not much to complain of in regard to the bath accommodation provided in this building. Railway communication should be provided as direct as possible from all the States. It is not direct as regards this building, except, perhaps, from Queensland and New South Wales. Honorable members coming from the other States have to go a long way round. The communication with Parliament House by rail, by telephone, and by telegraph should be as direct as possible. The chief difficulty we have in connexion with the refreshment room is that whereas we have to make provision for 150 people, the House may suddenly adjourn, and we may have only five to cater for. I have already expressed the opinion that the only duty we owe to the press is to provide press representatives with adequate accommodation, and facilities to enable them to conveniently supply full and accurate reports of the proceedings of Parliament. When we have accomplished that, we owe the representatives of the press no other duty. It is not the duty of Parliament to provide them with refreshments.

25. *To Mr. Mackay.*—The question whether the accommodation proposed by the plans is sufficient raises again the question whether the building erected should be a temporary building or a semi-permanent building. I think that rooms should be provided in which honorable members may interview their constituents, and with respect to the provision for the public, I do not expect that at Canberra there will be anything like the number of the public desiring to watch the proceedings of Parliament as there is in Melbourne.

The witness withdrew.

George Henry Monahan, Clerk of the Senate, sworn and examined.

26. *To the Chairman.*—I have been consulted by officers of the Works Department in reference to the requirements of the Senate in the proposed Parliament House at Canberra. A sketch plan very much on the lines of the present plan was submitted to me and other leading officials. I have not yet had the opportunity of examining in detail the present plan. I think it would be a good idea for the principal officers of the Senate and the House of Representatives to go carefully

through the plans and submit representations regarding the accommodation required by each. The only other Parliament of which I have any knowledge is that in New South Wales, where I had ten years' service. I did not spend the whole of my time in the chamber. I think the present Senate design is satisfactory; there is a back entrance as well as a front entrance to the Chamber. By having a number of entrances you add considerably to the cost of administration, because you require to have an attendant at each. I think that certain portions of the building should be absolutely reserved to the use of honorable members. Our endeavour is to do that as far as possible. It would be rather difficult to have one entrance for honorable members only and another for the public only. You would require a very large staff to enable you to regulate that. I think it would necessitate having a man on almost every door. Even with our present staff of messengers strangers occasionally find their way into the chamber. To enable them to get to the galleries the public are shown in at the front of the building. After entering Queen's Hall, an attendant shows them to the entrance to the Senate. There they are supposed to be picked up by the Senate attendant, but if he happens to be away on a message they continue on unaccompanied, pushing open the different doors they encounter in their desire to locate the galleries. A chamber arranged on the lines of the present Senate chamber would be suitable, except that the seats should not be continued on behind the chair of the presiding officer. At present the presiding officer is apt to overlook an honorable member occupying a position at the end of these rows of seats. The whole of the seating accommodation should, as far as possible, be kept in front of the chair of the presiding officer. *Hansard* at present is accommodated at the table in the Senate. In the New South Wales Parliament they have a special balcony connecting directly with the rooms which they occupy. For the convenient working of the House I think that is a better method than that which we have here. I cannot express an opinion in relation to note-taking facilities. Being on the floor of the chamber, the chairs which they occupy take up a certain amount of room, and people are continually passing between them and the honorable member who is speaking. Honorable members sometimes like to talk amongst themselves while a debate is going on, and this conversation is apt to interfere with the *Hansard* staff. I think they would be able to follow the speeches with less effort if they were raised a little above the floor. I have not had experience of honorable members speaking from a rostrum. Honorable members naturally desire to have their books and papers handy to them when speaking, and if they had to gather all these up, and carry them to a rostrum, it would result in delay, especially in Committee. As I have not specially considered this matter, I would prefer not to express any definite opinion at this stage. I think it would be much preferable if, instead of having continuous seats as we have at present, each honorable member were provided with a chair and desk, with a small space between each. Our experience in the Senate has been that many honorable members like to occupy a seat where there is a desk. We have had six or seven desks put in, and requests have been made for additional provision. They are handy in that they enable honorable members to keep their notes together while speaking, and make notes during the course of a debate. The ventilation of the Senate chamber is not at all good. A system has been installed in the building, but the Senate is far removed from its centre, and derives very little benefit from it. It was supposed to provide cool air in the hot weather and warm air in the winter. It has not fulfilled that object as far as the Senate is concerned. The ventilating plant is looked after by engineers, who are common to both Houses, under the administration of the Clerk of the Joint House Committee. It would be wise, I think, if the Public Works Department had control of the plant,

so that it could be thoroughly tested before they were asked to install a plant at Canberra. I consider that the present system will not prove satisfactory, no matter who runs it. The conduits which take the cool and warm air are too long. I suppose they are 200 feet or 300 feet in length in the case of the Senate. We have not any method of testing the moisture in the atmosphere; something of that sort ought to be done. To some extent the men in charge of the system are doing other work. It does not require a man's whole time. The acoustic properties of the Senate chamber are quite good—better, I think, than in the House of Representatives. I have been in the back gallery of the House of Representatives while a debate has been proceeding, and have experienced great difficulty in hearing what was being said. To some extent that might be due to the squareness of the chamber. Of course, ours is a smaller chamber, and the sound seems to carry better. The provision on the plan for the Senate end is fairly satisfactory, but there are some changes which I should like to see made. The room intended for the President's bedroom should not be larger than that intended for his office. I notice that provision is made for a secretary to the President. At present the President uses one of the staff for secretarial work, and I think that that room should be made available for a messenger. The room provided for the Usher is too small for his requirements. He also is accountant and clerk of committees, and should have a sufficient amount of space for keeping his books of account and records. Having to change his clothes into official dress, it is necessary that he should have extra furniture, and be able to keep private one portion of his room. Generally speaking, there is sufficient room for the staff. I think that a separate entrance should be provided for the press to have access to the galleries and their rooms. The present arrangement is that they come through the main corridor, which runs down behind the Senate chamber, and go upstairs at a corner of the Senate chamber. That means that they go right along the passage which has to be used by the President and honorable members. The control of the press traffic is fairly difficult; boys are continually coming in and going out, and once they get in the trouble is to know where they go to. According to this plan no communication is to be provided for the press between the Senate side and that of the House of Representatives, except by going down to the ground floor, along the main corridor past the Senate chamber, and up the stairs at the other end. That will greatly hinder them in their work.

27. *To Mr. Mackay.*—In the Senate, on the present plan, the gallery accommodation for the public is not satisfactory. According to the plan, as it was explained to me, the press were to be given galleries along two lengths and one end of the Senate chamber. That would leave no accommodation for the public excepting at one end. All public ceremonies in connexion with Parliament are held in the Senate chamber. If that continues to be the practice the accommodation proposed for the public will be too limited. The natural lighting of the Senate chamber here is not satisfactory. It is necessary to have the artificial lights going the whole of the time the Senate is sitting. I think we are worse in that respect than the House of Representatives, which has a greater amount of glass space in the ceilings.

28. *To Mr. Mathews.*—I do not think sufficient space is being provided in the proposed building to meet all requirements. In regard to committee rooms the arrangements have been altered slightly since the plan was submitted to us first. In the front of the building they have put in two committee rooms which, I understand, are designed for the meeting of Committees of the Senate. In the previous plan those rooms were allotted to visitors, and the rooms on the back wing were marked committee rooms. I took those to be designed for the use of the Committees of the Senate. I now understand, after going through the plan with Mr.

Whiteford, that those rooms are to be allotted to the Public Works and Accounts Committees. If that is so, I think that the committee-room accommodation for the Senate is altogether inadequate. There are two rooms measuring 18 feet by 11 feet. They would not be wide enough; once you put in a 6-ft. table with chairs on each side you would be blocked right up. I should think it would be desirable that each newspaper should have a separate room. Of course, it is very hard to say how many representatives of each newspaper will be at Canberra. If each newspaper has only two representatives, a room each would be too much. On the Senate side the officers of the House are catered for fairly well at present, but the arrangement of the rooms is very bad. The messengers have a common room, which has been used as a clubroom ever since I have been here. They have their lunch in it; there is a fireplace where they can boil a kettle if they so desire, or they may obtain hot water from the refreshment room. I do not think sufficient provision has been made in regard to rooms in which honorable members can meet and talk with their constituents and others. A greater number of retiring rooms—not necessarily large—ought to be provided in which two or three people could meet and talk together. At one time the refreshment rooms were immediately under my supervision. The present dining-room will not accommodate with comfort more than eighty persons; at least double that accommodation is required. The present accommodation for officials and strangers is altogether inadequate. I notice that provision is made for a large Senate clubroom. That is a necessity. I think that two party rooms are provided for. We have already been asked to make provision in this building for three parties. The question of what provision should be made to meet the requirements of numerous parties is one for honorable members and not the House staff to answer.

29. *To Mr. Jackson.*—I think it is very desirable that honorable members should be provided with the means of having a little recreation. The hours they are required to sit in the House are fairly long. Some people prefer to spend their leisure hours in the open air, and it is desirable that they should be provided with a pleasant way of putting in their spare time. I think that that is the practice in a majority of Houses of Parliament. Attached to the Houses of Parliament in Sydney are a bowling green and grass tennis courts. They are fortunately situated in Sydney, in that they have at their back door the Domain, in which they can seek recreation whenever they so desire.

30. *To Mr. Blakeley.*—Ten messengers are employed on the Senate side. I understood that provision was to be made for them in one wing of the building, but nothing of that nature is shown on the plan. At present members' correspondence is handled by a special messenger, who occupies a room about 10 feet by 8 feet in size along the corridor opposite the room occupied by the Chairman of Committees. He places honorable members' correspondence in their private boxes in a common clubroom, and attends to any re-mailing which has to be done. The quantity of correspondence on the Senate side would be less than that of members of the House of Representatives. It appears to me that on this plan there is provision for only one messenger, who is more a doorkeeper than a messenger. If that is all it is intended to provide it will be totally inadequate. A room should be provided in which messengers can change their clothes, and it should contain locker accommodation. To some extent I was consulted regarding the laying out of the rooms for the officers of the Senate. We had a working plan explained to us by one of the officers of the Architects Branch, and we were invited to make suggestions on that plan. The only other officer on the Senate side who would be consulted directly would be the secretary of the Joint House Committee, in connexion with the Joint House requirements. Of course, we conferred amongst ourselves afterwards.

31. *To Mr. Cook.*—The committee-room accommodation is not sufficiently large, and the plan requires to be altered in that respect.

32. *To the Chairman.*—It ought to be quite feasible for the whole of the officers to meet together, go through the plan, and submit a report embodying their ideas as to what provision should be made. It is very desirable to have some of the staff rooms fairly close to the Chamber. Our present arrangement is most unsatisfactory in some respects. The room in which the papers are kept is away at the top of the building, and considerable delay is caused when a paper is asked for hurriedly. The main stock room could be situated in the basement, but the current papers should be readily accessible.

The witness withdrew.

Walter Augustus Gale, Clerk of the House of Representatives, sworn and examined.

33. *To the Chairman.*—This plan of the proposed new Parliament House has been altered slightly since I last saw it. Apart from those alterations I have been through it very carefully with two or three officers of the Works Department. I should like to emphasize the necessity for having certain rooms close to the Chamber. It is essential that those of the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees should be handy, as either officer is frequently required at a moment's notice. Very often when a Minister is addressing the House he will ask to be supplied with a certain paper, and it is necessary that we should be able to put our hands on it quickly. Under present conditions some one has to run out of the Chamber and call upstairs to a messenger, who informs the clerk in charge of the papers some distance away. If we had an office near the Chamber we would keep the records and certain of the papers there. The bulk of the stock need not be stored close to the Chamber. When I was first spoken to about this building it was to be a temporary structure to last for twenty years. Now I understand it is proposed that it shall do duty for fifty years. All the rooms are very small, and less accommodation is provided for our staff than we have at present—and we are crowded now. I suggested to the architect that another story should be put on the two wings. I was informed that the funds would not permit of that being done. If the building is to last for fifty years there will not be sufficient accommodation for members. I suggested that the two Chambers should be on the outside of the building—the House of Representatives on the east, and the Senate on the west—which would enable them to get plenty of fresh air and natural light. I made this suggestion to the Minister at the time the plan was first drawn up. He said he would see what could be done. Apparently this plan as regards the position of the Chambers was determined on as a matter of policy. In Australia, a land of sunshine, it ought not to be necessary to turn on the electric light at 11 a.m. That is what frequently has to be done in our present Chamber. I drew the attention of the architect to that point in connexion with this plan. He told me that the method of top lighting and ventilation proposed would obviate any trouble in reference to light and air. In the old Legislative Assembly Chamber of Western Australia there were plenty of top windows, giving any amount of ventilation, the result being that the Chamber was always cool, even on a very hot day. I think it would be a very good plan for the heads of the various staffs to confer and make general recommendations. I shall be pleased to do anything I can in that direction. I have seen the Parliament Houses of New South Wales, South Australia, and Tasmania. That in Sydney is far behind the times. A book has been published recently containing photographs of the New Zealand House, which is one of the latest buildings erected. Members of the Committee are aware of the difficulty experienced by honorable members in getting to or leaving their places. In the New Zealand House benches to seat two members are provided, with a gangway between each bench; thus every member has a corner seat, and no one has any difficulty in getting in or out. It seems

to me to be a very good plan, insuring the comfort of members. It would be a great advantage if honorable members could leave their seats from the outside instead of from the centre. I favour the suggestion that honorable members should each be provided with a desk containing a drawer. The *Hansard* staff would be the best judges of whether they could perform their duties as efficiently from a raised platform as from the floor of the Chamber. In Western Australia, in the old Legislative Chamber, the members of the *Hansard* staff were accommodated on the floor of the Chamber, but behind Mr. Speaker, in a position corresponding to that occupied here by an Under-Secretary attending on a Minister in charge of a Bill. The trouble is that often an honorable member does not face Mr. Speaker, and in such a case he would be speaking away from where the *Hansard* staff were situated. The semi-circular Chamber seems to have proved satisfactory where it has been adopted. I notice that Senator Pearce said that the Senate was a very good sounding Chamber. I was under the impression that the acoustic properties of the House of Representatives were better. It would cause some little delay if honorable members were required to speak from a rostrum, but it would have the advantage that the member speaking would always be facing honorable members. I would not like to say that I have any objection to that idea. I have not studied the question of press accommodation. The press gallery is controlled by a Committee subject to the approval of Mr. Speaker. I suggested to one of the architects that he should have a conversation with the Chairman of that Committee. I should think that the press would be represented to about the same extent at Canberra as they are in Melbourne. We have experienced difficulty in providing sufficient accommodation here. A number of applicants have been refused. During an important debate the galleries are very full, and I should think that a greater amount of accommodation than is at present provided will be necessary. I would like also to see more accommodation provided for the public. It would be a very good idea to have galleries for the public running the whole length of the Chamber. As long as it was raised gradually, the seating accommodation could go back a considerable distance, on the principle that has been adopted in the Princess Theatre in this city. Under present conditions the public are turned away in numbers during the course of an important debate. I am hopeful of the future of Canberra, and I think that the population will increase very rapidly. I notice on the plan that there is a room in the large central hall with a corridor running round it. I should think that would be rather a disadvantage.

34. *To Mr. Mathews.*—I have always considered that the space provided is insufficient, but I have been told, "It is no use your saying you have not sufficient space, as we cannot give you any greater amount for the money available." I was very anxious that a top story should be placed on to the two wings. It would not cost very much more, but it would provide a lot of extra accommodation which is very badly needed. I think that greater accommodation ought to be provided for those who look after honorable members' correspondence. In one of our rooms upstairs—the largest we have—we have to put four officers, and the office contains only one window and one door. It is necessary to keep in stock a reasonable number of all printed papers to obviate the necessity of having to reprint if any particular paper should be required. The passages upstairs contain cupboards that are used for storing papers which have to be readily available. The second story which I advocate could be used by typists and officers of the clerical staff. If the number of honorable members increases it will mean an increased number of typists and clerical workers. I have heard complaints that honorable members are not provided with rooms to which they can take those of their constituents who desire to interview them. The trouble is that we have not the space. We have had to spoil the corridor which stretches across from the Senate

to the House of Representatives, making an office at one end for the Senate and one at the other end for the House of Representatives. The demands made upon the time of honorable members by their constituents are always increasing, and they will continue to increase as the people realize the great use that honorable members are to them. Now-a-days the applications made to honorable members must be very much greater than they were when Federation was brought about. The population is increasing rapidly, and that means that each honorable member has to look after a greater number of constituents.

35. *To Mr. Blakeley.*—The plan does not provide half enough accommodation for messengers. The typists attached to each party ought to have a room of their own. It looks as though that could easily be provided.

36. *To Senator Newland.*—I do not think sufficient accommodation is provided even for twenty years. I would like to see better accommodation for honorable members, officers, public, and press. It would do equally well if the two Chambers were placed in the front of the building instead of at the sides as I have suggested. I would like to see that done. My idea was to secure plenty of natural light and fresh air. A different design would have to be made if that idea were adopted. I have often wondered why the Chambers which we at present occupy were built as they are. I have been informed that the architects were apprehensive of possible public riots, and the Chambers were put well away from the streets in order that people could not throw stones through the windows.

37. *To Mr. Mackay.*—I think it would be an improvement to have double seats instead of long benches for the accommodation of honorable members. It would give a corner seat to each occupant, and he would have a gangway by which he could enter or leave without interfering with other honorable members.

(Taken at Melbourne.)

SATURDAY, 24TH MARCH, 1923.

Present:

Mr. GREGORY (Chairman);	
Senator Newland	Mr. Jackson
Senator Plain	Mr. Mackay.

Frederick Steward, engineer, Parliament House, sworn and examined.

38. *To the Chairman.*—I am in charge of the air-conditioning plant at Parliament House, and on the 1st April next I shall have been in charge of it for two years. I have had no previous experience in maintaining air-conditioning plants, but I understand the principles involved, also the operation of electric fans, and lighting and power plants. At Newport there is an air plant for cooling generators. I would not class myself as a specialist in ventilating. I have not specially studied the question of air-conditioning in regard to automatic telephone exchanges. Air is admitted to the legislative chambers in Parliament House from the dome of the rotunda in the Parliamentary Gardens, and it is taken by tunnel into the channels below the House. There is an electric motor and fans for the purpose of forcing the fresh air from the tunnel to the chambers. The air passes first through a water screen, which is designed to remove dust, and then the air is heated, in winter, by means of hot water radiators. The plant itself is efficient, in that it removes the dust as the air passes through the water screen, but before the air reaches the chamber it probably becomes dusty again. Owing to the architectural design of the building it would be impossible, except probably

(Taken at Melbourne.)

MONDAY, 26TH MARCH, 1922.

Present:

Mr. GREGORY, Chairman;	
Senator Newland	Mr. Jackson
Senator Plain	Mr. Mackay
Mr. Blakeley	Mr. Mathews.
Mr. Cook	

Arthur Wadsworth, Librarian, Commonwealth Parliamentary Library, Melbourne, sworn and examined.

at considerable cost, to thoroughly cleanse the passages leading from the plant to the chambers. Dust accumulates in places from which it cannot reasonably be removed. Readings are taken by messengers at least hourly from the wet and dry bulbs in the chamber. These readings are invariably obtained by myself or my assistant while Parliament is in session. I dare say it would be an improvement if it could be ascertained, before the air was forced into the chamber, whether it contained an undue amount of moisture. I do not think the existing hot water radiators would remove undue moisture to any appreciable extent. They raise the temperature of the air, and in summer they would, if used, make the conditions in the chamber more uncomfortable than at present. The plant that I have seen at Newport is provided with a series of baffle plates. Here, however, we have nothing in the shape of baffle-plate equipment for the purpose of drying the air in the summer. I could offer some suggestions for improving the present arrangements, but I doubt whether they would be practicable owing to the lay-out of the building. When the air is too hot I cannot cool it without a refrigerator, and in summer I cannot reduce the moisture. I have every duty that can possibly be placed upon an electrical and mechanical man. I am responsible for the care of the electric and hydraulic lifts, the house bells, telephones, water service, gas, locks, door-closers, &c. I have one assistant. The dry and wet bulb records have been kept in the chamber since July, 1922. Whether any records were made prior to that I cannot say. I have never seen any. When I took over my present duties I was not instructed as to what I had to do. I had simply to follow a common-sense procedure, and do the best I could. In the Senate chamber the vents leading to the roof are practically sealed. The impure air has to filter away between the ceiling and the roof.

39. *To Senator Newland.*—At present we have no special means of drying the air after it leaves the water screen except the resistance it meets with on its course. A certain amount of moisture is absorbed by the wooden lining of the air channels. The plant at Newport extracts the moisture without heating the air. In installing an air-conditioning plant for machinery or electrical apparatus, there are set conditions to be studied, whereas, of course, the personal element is bound to enter into the consideration in the case of a parliamentary chamber. It was decidedly a bad plan to have the air entering the chamber underneath the seats, for the simple reason that it is impossible to clean the air passages. If the ducts were lined with galvanized iron instead of wood, and baffle-plates were introduced, I believe an improvement would be effected. This, however, might necessitate the removal of a considerable amount of masonry, and I do not know whether the idea is practicable. We have no means of maintaining the temperature of the air in winter as it passes from the hot-water radiators to the chambers, and the use of electric radiators in the chamber has been necessary.

40. *To Mr. Mackay.*—We find time to give the plant all the attention necessary, without neglecting other matters. If in the winter a man were told off to keep the fire going all night the radiators would not get cold. Then we could provide greater warmth in the chamber by the time Parliament assembled than if we began with cold radiators at 9 a.m. I do not think it would be an improvement to draw the fresh air into the building at a higher level than the present tunnel, because dust would be more likely to be collected from various parts of the building than if the air comes directly from the gardens. In my opinion the present ventilating arrangements are inadequate.

41. *To Senator Plain.*—In the coldest weather we cannot warm the air sufficiently, even with the assistance of the electric radiators in the chamber. At 11 o'clock one morning we had the hot-water radiators as heated as possible without boiling the water, and the ex-Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) complained bitterly of the cold.

42. *To the Chairman.*—I have not had any experience in designing the construction of libraries; but I have been associated with library work all my life. I have been in the Library in this building since I was sixteen years of age, and have, of course, given close attention to internal construction, and have formed certain opinions as to the accommodation which would be necessary in establishing a new library. In connexion with the proposed new parliamentary buildings at Canberra, I am of the opinion that provision should be made for a parliamentary library within the parliamentary building, and for a national library in another structure quite apart from the parliamentary building. I do not see how accommodation can be provided in the parliamentary buildings as at present designed for a national library. It is not suggested that there should be two separate libraries, under different control, but that accommodation should be provided in the parliamentary building for what would essentially be a parliamentary library, and for a national library such as the Congressional library in the United States of America, where there is an extensive library within easy reach, and connexion is made by means of a pneumatic tube. By this means a volume in the national library can be conveyed to the parliamentary library within two and a half minutes, and some such means could be provided whereby books could readily be conveyed from one building to another. The two libraries would, of course, be under the one administration, and would be controlled by the Parliamentary Library Committee. The public would have access to the national library, and the parliamentary library would be available only to members of Parliament. Ever since the time of the late Sir Frederick Holder, the object of establishing a national library has been kept in view. The national library at Washington is conducted by a very large staff, and is directed by Congress. The national library there is not under the control of the city commissioners. At the end of this year we will have, approximately, 70,000 volumes, and included in that number are the parliamentary records. We have records of all the States of the Commonwealth, including parliamentary papers, Statutes, and Votes and Proceedings. We have just made a large purchase in London of certain parliamentary papers, and we have the Congressional papers of the United States of America. In fact, we have most of the records of the English-speaking countries. Of the 70,000 volumes mentioned, approximately 50,000 belong to the national section. We have always made a close study of the methods adopted in other libraries, and I am very conversant with the system adopted in the Melbourne Public Library, which we have largely followed, and which is based on the American system, because the libraries of the Old World have been established for so long that they have found it necessary to adhere largely to the system originally adopted. The American systems, however, are more up to date. We have been consulted in connexion with the plan of the proposed building, and from the stand-point of a parliamentary library it is fairly satisfactory, and will, I think, meet our requirements for perhaps 50 years. If, however, the national library has to be accommodated within the parliamentary building the accommodation is inadequate. I notice from the plan that the accountant's office is on one side of the building, and the offices of

the Chief Librarian and his assistant are on the other; but the architects have explained that that is the most convenient arrangement they can make. I do not think it will cause any great inconvenience, and I believe the officers have done their best to meet us in the allotment of space. There is not a great distance from my room and that of the assistant librarian to the accountant's room, and the cataloguing room is readily available to officers. Considering the limitations under which the architects have worked I do not think there is much of which we can complain. It is, however, not all we would like, as it would be preferable to have the accountant's office adjoining the librarian's. The principal officials should have separate rooms, and there must be accommodation for those engaged in receiving and cataloguing. In the present library that work has to be done in the presence of members and others, which is inconvenient. Although the offices of the librarian and his assistant are not within the library proper, attendants and clerical officers will always be available, and can summon the principal officers should they be required in the main library. The librarian's office is also readily accessible to members should they desire to interview him. At present we have a staff of eleven, including the officers in the Australian collection. The lavatory appears to be fairly conveniently situated. As I have stated, we estimate to have approximately 70,000 volumes in the library at the end of this year, in addition to the newspapers, which take up a great deal of room; they are always requiring additional space. We require 50 per cent. free space for expansion. The upstairs room shown on the plan will be used for the storage of books, which will be readily accessible to those requiring them. Only a small percentage of the books in other public libraries are within reach of the public; but others can readily be obtained. I do not think the space provided for the reading-room, which is 56 feet by 28 feet, is quite as much as members have at present; but it must be remembered that departmental officers and others who use the present library a great deal may be able to secure what they require in another building. I believe the national library should be available at the time Parliament is opened at Canberra. The object of establishing a national library has been in view since a few years after Federation, and that object has been steadily pursued ever since. Last week the manuscript of the late Captain Cook was acquired in London, and this and other documents of interest to the nation will be housed in the national library. The possession of such documents gives distinction to any collection. I am not in a position to say where the building in which the national library could be housed is likely to be situated, but the assistant librarian was informed, I believe by Colonel Owen, that there was a possibility of a building in the administrative block, which is not very far distant from the parliamentary building being made available, and from which members could just as readily obtain volumes they required as they now can from the room downstairs in which the Australian collection is stored. I am not in a position to state definitely the size of the building that would be required for housing the national collection; but I believe the building mentioned would accommodate about 250,000 books. The proposed parliamentary library would serve for about 50 years, and by that time ample provision could be made for meeting our requirements in the permanent building to be erected. If we are compelled to accommodate both libraries in the parliamentary building, we would be in a state of congestion at the end of eight and a half years. It would be possible for us to accommodate both sections in the space proposed to be allotted to us, but I have been informed that the other building will be available six months before Parliament House shall have been completed, and, if such be the case, it will be an enormous advantage to us in transferring the 70,000 volumes. The possible provision of a separate building in the administrative block was mentioned only in the course of conversation,

and I have not sought any information on the point from the President or Speaker. Assuming the figures supplied by the Department of Works and Railways are correct, which are to the effect that we will be allowed space for 90,500 volumes, we can carry on with the accommodation proposed for about eight years. Apart from that, storage will be required elsewhere for newspapers, probably in the basement, as we would not have room for them in the main library. A good deal of space is taken up by newspapers, as we have bound volumes of the *Sydney Morning Herald* for 70 years, the *London Times* for a similar period, and the *Argus* and *Age* from the date of their first publication. These publications are increased at the rate of four volumes a year. Ample room appears to have been allowed for current newspapers, but requests are continually being made by members for the addition of others. Space could be utilized by having racks on the walls. Bound volumes of newspapers could be stored in the basement, and although they may not be frequently required, they must be readily available. There are certain matters of administration in connexion with which improvements could be made, but that is more a matter for the Library Committee.

43. *To Mr. Mathews.*—The national library would be a general one, embracing every branch of knowledge, and would be the nucleus of a great public library similar to the Congressional Library. It would be on similar lines to the Melbourne Public Library, with the exception that particular attention would be given to parliamentary records and Statutes. The Melbourne Public Library is, I believe, under the control of the Chief Secretary's Department. The Canadian Parliamentary Library is a very fine one, and is, I believe, available to the public. Certain historical records should be readily accessible to the public; but they should not be accommodated within the parliamentary building. Some of the volumes in our present library belong to the State. Approximately, 66,000 books belong to the Commonwealth. The volumes in the national library would be readily available to members of Parliament, if required. We constantly have members of the public visiting our library to peruse records which are not available elsewhere. It would be an advantage if these could be housed in a separate building so that strangers would not inconvenience members of Parliament by using the library within the building. The reading-room space proposed is, I think, sufficient, as it is only on rare occasions that there are more than half-a-dozen members in the present reading room at one time.

44. *To Mr. Jackson.*—I have not received any complaints from members concerning the interruption to members caused by visitors to the reading-room; but it is inconvenient at times, because the inspection of certain records of national interest may at times make a library a "show place." In a modern library less space would be required than at present, because, under the latest system, a greater number of books can be stored in a given space. This building was constructed in 1856, and we have had to utilize the space between the archways with shelves. The library, if cleared of these obstructions, would be beautiful. The provision of a separate national library is, of course, a matter of policy; but it has always been kept in view since the late Sir Frederick Holder was Speaker. I know the pneumatic tube system is operating satisfactorily in other parts, and the late Mr. G. B. Edwards informed me that, when he visited the Capitol at Washington, he requested a certain publication, which was conveyed to him by this means within two and a half minutes.

45. *To Mr. Blakeley.*—I do not know of any modern library in which the principal officers are not accommodated with separate rooms. Members of the staff are always in attendance in the library, and are in direct communication with the Chief Librarian and his assistant. The chief officers in any public library do not come into direct contact with the public, and if we are situated as proposed we will be readily available to members. The principal officers have to interview

members of the public, and both from the point of view of the members' convenience and the officers', separate rooms should be provided. Offices within or opening off the library would be preferable; but I understand that such an arrangement could not be made by the architects without seriously interfering with the design. If the principal officers' rooms were placed opposite the main entrance hall, or where the newspaper room is now suggested, it would involve recasting the whole plan, and the officers would not be as conveniently placed to the main library as is now proposed.

46. *To Mr. Cook.*—I do not think I can offer any suggestions for improvements in the plan of the parliamentary library. We went into the matter with the officers of the Works and Railways Department, who met us as far as possible. We, of course, expect to have full control in recommending the type of shelving to be installed.

47. *To Senator Newland.*—Fifty per cent. of additional space is provided in the plan on the basis of eight and a half books per lineal foot for general literature. I do not wish it to be thought that there will be any radical distinction between the two libraries, as the volumes will comprise one Commonwealth Library. Those most required by members will be housed in the parliamentary building, and those that belong more to the general library should be accommodated in an adjacent building. Assuming that the present rate of increase be maintained, the 50 per cent. additional space provided would be absorbed in eight years if all the books were placed within the parliamentary building.

48. *To Mr. Mackay.*—The establishment of a national library would not mean the duplication of many books, because the means of intercommunication would be rapid. If the national section were in a separate building it would mean that the staff would have to be somewhat larger than at present. The inconvenience of having both sections in the parliamentary building could be overcome for a period by making the national section available to members of the public by providing a door from the outside of the building. The newspapers, which are bound from time to time, and which take up a good deal of room, include the *Argus*, *Age*, *Sydney Morning Herald*, *Daily Telegraph*, several Labour papers, the *Sydney Bulletin*, *London Times*, *Melbourne Punch*, and others. The binding of these publications is warranted because they are frequently required for reference. Our copies of the *London Times* date back to 1817, and we have had people coming to refer to the happenings in the 'thirties. Now that the *Argus* is indexed it is more valuable than ever. The inquiries made by members of Parliament and others, during an important debate, are numerous, and reference to old numbers of daily newspapers has frequently to be made.

49. *To Senator Plain.*—The site on which a building, to accommodate the national library, could be placed, would have to be decided by the officers of the Works and Railways Department. The provision of another story to the present structure would perhaps meet the situation; but I understand it would destroy the architectural beauty of the building. The fire risk, too, is of paramount importance, and that aspect should not be overlooked.

The witness withdrew.

Kenneth Binns, Assistant Librarian and Librarian in Charge of the Australian Section, Commonwealth Parliamentary Library, Melbourne, sworn and examined.

50. *To the Chairman.*—I was for eleven years employed in the Fisher Library, of the Sydney University, and the new Fisher Library building was erected during the time I was there. The structure cost £76,000, and it is claimed that it is the finest and most modern library building in the Commonwealth. I am also fully acquainted with the design and equipment of the Mitchell Library, which was erected

at about the same time, and I am conversant with the details of the construction of the Melbourne Public Library. I have been eleven years associated with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Library, and have given close attention and study to the plans of other important libraries, particularly to those of the Congressional Library in the United States. That library has been copied most closely in the development of our library here, and it is the one we have had more directly before us in connexion with the plans of the new parliamentary, and the national library, to be established at Canberra. I have not had any experience in connexion with British libraries; but have read a good deal concerning them, and have studied very closely the systems adopted. I have heard the evidence tendered by Mr. Wadsworth concerning the desirability of having a separate national library at the Federal Capital. I have been in consultation with the officers of the Works and Railways Department concerning the proposed new parliamentary building at Canberra, the plans of which I have studied. Generally speaking, they meet with our approval in the matter of a parliamentary library only; but consideration has not been taken of our functions as a national library. If the two libraries are to be accommodated in the parliamentary building we could carry on, as Mr. Wadsworth has explained, for about eight years; but the work could not be done as efficiently as if the libraries were separated. At Canberra the national library will also have to serve as a public library, as it will have to meet the requirements of governmental Departments, and be available to scholars from schools and colleges, as well as to students of Australian history. Our collection of books relating to Australia is the second best available, and is quite comparable to the Mitchell Library. The requirements of the Library at Canberra have not been placed before the members of the Library Committee, but before the architect and Colonel Owen. The ex-Speaker of the House of Representatives, Sir Elliot Johnson, was in consultation, I believe, with Colonel Owen, but he left the matter largely in the hands of Mr. Wadsworth and myself. The proposal is that the works usually required by members shall be accommodated in the parliamentary building, and the bulk of our library, which comprises the Petherick collection and Australian section, should be accommodated in a separate building. In these circumstances the works in the Australian section would still be readily available to members when required, and at the same time would be more conveniently accessible to members of the public. The accommodation proposed in the parliamentary building is really inadequate, for consideration has apparently not been given to the fact that the library is the only growing Department in Parliament. According to the plan the library will be enclosed on all sides, and no provision has been made for any expansion. I do not think it safe for a national library to be housed in the parliamentary building, which is rather more susceptible to fire than one might at first suppose. The Congressional Library of the United States was destroyed in 1851, and the nucleus of a national collection lost. The parliamentary buildings at Ottawa, and also the parliamentary buildings at Wellington, in New Zealand, were destroyed by fire. Our national library is irreplaceable, and it is unreasonable to suggest placing the Petherick collection and Australian section in any building that is not absolutely secure against fire. The Cook manuscripts, which have recently been acquired, will be placed in the national library, and to put those and other valuable historic documents in the centre of a building, which is not fireproof, would be a great mistake. I do not think the suggested building in the administrative block will be composed of wood; but we hope to be consulted in connexion with its construction. It should not only be made fireproof as far as possible; but should be constructed on modern lines and capable of meeting our requirements. I understand that such a building would only be regarded as a tem-

porary national library, and would be provided to relieve congestion, and for meeting the requirements of departmental officers and members of the public. A complete national library, such as we hope some day will be erected, on the lines of the national library of Congress, is a matter for the distant future. The proposed building in the administrative block would be within 300 or 400 yards of the Houses of Parliament. A building in such a position would be quite suitable for accommodating the national collection, and would be readily accessible to members. Such a building should be capable of accommodating 250,000 volumes, with room for extension, and also allow for a small reading-room for use of officers of the Departments and students. Another room should also be provided in which historical objects and records, such as Captain Cook's journal, could be displayed. I do not think a large building would be necessary at the outset; but as the city developed, and as the library increased, that section could be enlarged, or the permanent National Library erected. The parliamentary section will not need enlarging, because when books become out of date, or are not likely to be required, they could be transferred to a stack in the other building. I believe that a building 120 feet by 180 feet would be adequate as a commencement for our National Library and would meet requirements for many years, unless Canberra expands more rapidly than is at present contemplated. Colonel Owen did not inform me definitely that a building for housing the national library would be made available, but he thought there was such a possibility. He realized the objections and danger of placing the national library in the parliamentary building, and also admitted that there was not sufficient accommodation for both sections in the parliamentary building. Our suggestion has not been brought before the Government, as my conversation with Colonel Owen occurred only last Friday. The idea, however, is not a new one. We have based our plans largely upon the practice of Congress, and we have always expected the establishment of a national library in a separate building. If a separate building for housing the national section of our library were not provided we could accommodate all our books for eight and a half years, but by that time the work of the library would be very seriously hampered. Lack of accommodation is the great bugbear in any library. There is no accommodation for other branches of the library's work, such as the provision of rooms for the exclusive use of members. If a separate national library building be not provided members of the public, departmental officers, and others would have to use the same reading-room as is used by members, which is undesirable. Members of the public would have to go into the parliamentary building, and make use of the library, which should be reserved for members. To provide for accommodating both libraries in the parliamentary building would mean recasting the whole plan. I would certainly recommend that accommodation be provided for members who wished to work with secretaries, or who wished to discuss matters with others. For instance, when the honorable member for Fawcner (Mr. Maxwell) wishes to refer to works in the library, he has to have the assistance of some one to read to him. In the plan we have only the one reading room, and if additional rooms were provided for members it would be a great advantage. Provision should also be made for a room in which interesting documents, such as the Commonwealth Charter, could be displayed, and if this were done there would be no occasion for visitors to the building intruding into the parliamentary reading-room. Members of the Committee will probably have noticed that the proposed reading-room is situated right in the centre of the building, and that the only light which enters it is from the top. Sunlight or fresh air cannot come directly into the reading-room, as it is enclosed by corridors. Now, the reading-room is a place where members will spend a good deal of time, and it should be made as attractive as possible.

The only means of overcoming this disadvantage would be by transferring the library section to an outside portion of the building. The light which comes from the top will, I understand, be adequate, but the absence of windows with a pleasing outlook will be a great loss. A central position for the reading-room is desirable for convenience, because it has to serve both Houses; but it is bad in the event of fire. The cataloguing-room should be quite separate from the reading-room, as numbers of typewriters will be in operation, which will cause a good deal of noise. The plan provides a better system for concentrating our books than we now have, so that we will not require the same number of messengers. We have now fourteen different rooms in use, and have to employ a staff of messengers for bringing books backwards and forwards from these rooms to the main library. I also suggest that pneumatic tubes be provided for carrying messages and books from the library to both chambers, so that members may obtain what they require with the least possible delay and inconvenience. Under the present system a member in either chamber who requires a book from the library has to give to a messenger a verbal message, which is often mutilated by the time it reaches us, with the result that the particular publication or reference required cannot readily be obtained. A tube could, I think, be provided to be used for carrying books and also for conducting conversations, and so situated that even if a member had to leave his place in the House, he would not have to go further than, say, beyond the entrance to the chamber.

51. *To Mr. Blakeley.*—I produce a plan showing the arrangement of the steel bookshelves in the Fisher Library. These shelves are limited in height to 7 feet, so that every book is available without the use of a ladder. The "book-stack" system which is there adopted consists of a building devoted to the storage of books only. The floors, which are 7 feet apart, carry parallel rows of shelving with narrow passages between. The floors are of glass and the light from the top penetrates right through. By this means a very large number of books can be accommodated in a very small floor space. The book stack in the Fisher Library covers a ground area of about 40 feet by 45 feet, but, as a result of this system of construction, has a capacity of 250,000 books. Book lifts are also provided for conveying large volumes to the newspaper and receiving rooms. Provision has, I believe, been made in the plans for a book lift, as books will be stored in a gallery above the passages and rooms surrounding the reading-room. We hope to have the shelves constructed of steel, and on the latest modern principle, but the whole building cannot be made fireproof. I believe the floor will be of cement. If provision could be made for the officers' rooms to be within the library, or opening off it, it would be an improvement, because there could then be better supervision. I do not think that the suggested arrangements are ideal, but the plans were prepared before we were consulted, and it was a case of accepting the least inconvenient arrangement.

52. *To Mr. Cook.*—I am not in a position to say whether every care has been taken to make this section of the structure as fireproof as possible, but danger could be avoided by eliminating the use of wood in the construction as far as possible. At the Fisher Library the book-stack section is built away from the main building, and there is one entrance, through a fireproof door, which is on the fourth, or middle floor of the book-stack. There are seven floors, so that in the event of the reading-room, or any other portion, catching fire, the closing of this door is a means of protecting the books from fire to a large extent. Such a system is not possible here owing to the arrangement of the books. We were not asked for our opinion concerning the design of the rooms until the plans were drawn up, and we have been working on the assumption that the proposed accommodation is to house the parliamentary section of the library only. If the parliamentary section of

the library were destroyed it would not be an incalculable loss, as would be the case if the Australian or national section were destroyed. I am very anxious to see the national section separately housed, but not necessarily in the building which Colonel Owen has in mind. I thought that possibly a building might be erected adjacent to Parliament House, but the officers informed me that if that were done it would interfere with the appearance of the parliamentary building from an architectural point of view.

53. *To Mr. Mackay.*—A library not properly catalogued is inefficient, and as trained officers are required to carry on this important branch of the work ample accommodation must be provided for them. At present we have five officers engaged in cataloguing, and that number is inadequate, when we consider that there are 21 similar officers in the Public Library, Sydney, exclusive of the eight officers in the Mitchell section of that library. When we go to Canberra, and fulfil the function of a national library, we will require an increased staff on the trained or professional side.

54. *To the Chairman.*—I would like to emphasize the point that we regard the plan as fairly satisfactory for a parliamentary library, but in that respect only. If we are not going to have accommodation provided immediately in a building outside, it will be very serious for us indeed. Further, the work of removal will require that this section of the building should be completed at least six months before Parliament meets there, to give us time to remove our library, and have it available at the opening of Parliament. Unless we can have some additional accommodation we cannot possibly serve the function of more than a parliamentary library. We could only remove the library during a recess, and to transport 70,000 books to Canberra, and have them available for members within reasonable time, is a big undertaking. I assisted in the removal of a library of 86,000 volumes a distance of about 100 yards across a quadrangle, and it was a heavy undertaking. I originally intended to attack the plans because a recognition of the national aspect of the library had been overlooked, and I therefore went to the office of the Works and Railways Department to obtain further information. When I was there I was in conversation with a gentleman, who I later learned was Mr. Murdoch, the Chief Commonwealth Architect, to whom I explained my objection that there was not sufficient room to accommodate all the books, and that sufficient provision did not appear to have been made for protection against fire. I continued the discussion and investigation with another departmental officer, and was later informed by a messenger that Colonel Owen wished to see me. It was then I discovered that I had previously been speaking with Mr. Murdoch. Unfortunately, there appears to have been a good deal of confusion in the minds of the architects as to our requirements, so I took the opportunity of explaining the position fully from our point of view to Colonel Owen. That led to discussing the advisableness of providing something extra, and I suggested a modern book-stack, in a separate building, with accommodation for departmental officers and the public probably in an adjoining building. He, however, informed me that that was impracticable from an architectural point of view, as it would spoil the general appearance of the building. Colonel Owen then informed me that there was a building in the administrative block which might possibly be suitable, which had not been definitely allocated to any other Department. He asked me whether it would be possible to use it for the national section of the library, and gave me to understand that such a building would be approximately 120 feet by 180 feet, and that its distance from the parliamentary building would be about 300 or 400 yards. I told him that, so far as I could see, such an arrangement would suit our requirements admirably. I do not wish to place Colonel Owen in a false position, or to create the impression that we were endeavouring to make an arrangement for the occupation of a building. The question arose in

the manner I have mentioned, and was discussed in an informal way. The matter has not been before the Library Committee, as its *personnel* was not completed till the last day on which the House of Representatives met, and as the two Houses were not sitting at the same time it has not been possible to get the members of the Committee together.

55. *To Mr. Mackay.*—There are in the parliamentary library 49,063 volumes, and in the Petherick section 15,000 volumes. When Mr. Petherick died he left an additional collection of about 4,000 volumes, and the whole comprise the national library of the Commonwealth. These books have been separated to some extent, as the Australian section has been taken out of the general library and placed in other rooms under my charge, so that the Australian section can be developed as much as possible. Colonel Owen has made provision for, approximately, 90,500 books altogether; but that does not take cognisance of the fact that there must be room for a further expansion. With the accommodation provided difficulties would be constantly arising because, under the system of classification or shelf arrangement which we have, which is the most modern, a book has to go into one particular space irrespective of whether the space is available or not. The books are arranged according to their subjects, and we always have to provide for expansion in each part of our library. There may be room for, perhaps, 50 works in one section, and if we have to place more than that there, we have to move all the other books to provide sufficient room. With modern methods and adequate accommodation the mere routine work of this library could be reduced by 50 per cent.

(Taken at Melbourne.)

TUESDAY, 27TH MARCH, 1923.

Present:

Mr. GREGORY, Chairman;	
Senator Newland	Mr. Jackson
Senator Plain	Mr. Mackay
Mr. Blakeley	Mr. Mathews.
Mr. Cook	

Harrie Benjamin Lee, Chief Officer, Metropolitan Fire Brigade, Victoria, sworn and examined.

56. *To the Chairman.*—I was consulted by the Works and Railways Department with reference to the provision of fire-fighting appliances in connexion with the proposed buildings at Canberra. I have seen the sketch plans, and having visited the capital site I am very well satisfied with all the provision made. Only last week I went carefully over the ground with Mr. T. Hill, Chief Engineer of the Department, for the express purpose of forming an opinion as to whether the arrangements for the protection against fire were adequate, and I have no hesitation in saying that they are. I only wish that I had as good a water supply in Melbourne, having in mind the size of the city and the risks here as compared with Canberra. It is wise to look ahead in these matters. The provision made for water supply will relieve the authorities of the necessity for pumping in order to get a good head of water in case of fire. The pressure is so good that the local fire brigade organization, which, I take it, will be established, ought to be able to deal effectively with any outbreak. I am more than satisfied with the arrangements made. There is a 12-in. main coming down from the reservoir, and a 9-in. main around the parliamentary buildings. In other places the mains are 6 inches and 4 inches. The pressure will be more than sufficient for all purposes. The situation would be quite satisfactory with a lower pressure. If there is

any fault at all—and I do not say it is a fault—it is that the pressure is more than adequate. I am aware that the idea is to prevent the erection of any tall buildings in Canberra. I am trying to keep the height of buildings in Melbourne to 130 feet, but I am afraid I shall not succeed much longer in doing that, and possibly the time will come when there will be tall buildings in Canberra also. There will be a system of screw-down pillar hydrants throughout the Capital City area. The maximum distance between each hydrant will be about 120 yards. With the high-water pressure there, it will be possible to draw off water from a number of hydrants to combat any outbreak of fire, and the pressure will be still good enough. The valve hydrants, in my opinion, are much to be preferred to fire plugs, as there is no risk of the domestic water supply becoming contaminated. The scheme as laid down is an excellent one for all of the contemplated buildings. If the recommendations contained in my report are adopted, there will be ample protection against fire risks. One cannot say more than that. I understand it has been suggested that something might be done to minimize the risk in connexion with the library, which will contain a number of valuable works and records, and I would point out that in a fire-resisting building, such as the provisional Parliament House will be, any risk of fire will be internal rather than external, so the only adequate protection I can advise is the installation of sprinklers, which come into action immediately following a rise in temperature. If it be argued that the use of sprinklers may cause serious damage to books by water, I can only say usually the damage caused by water from fire sprinklers is infinitesimal. Sprinklers are universally used in all large buildings, including public libraries, and cathedrals throughout the world. Fire is then attacked at its inception. I do not care how near a fire brigade may be. If it is distant only 100 yards from a building, it is sometimes too far to prevent serious damage, but with sprinklers installed in a building, a fire is often extinguished at once, but if not, it is held in check until the arrival of the fire brigade. I do not think it necessary to provide extra hydrants or standpipes within the parliamentary and administrative buildings. They would to some extent be a disfigurement. I assume, however, that there will be an efficient first-aid equipment in the form of chemical extinguishers. With internal standpipes and hoses there would always be a danger of attendants playing water on an outbreak and causing unnecessary damage, whereas with chemical extinguishers any outbreak could be effectively checked. I am cutting out the rising mains in many of the more important buildings in this city simply for the reason that so much damage is done by water. Sprinklers and chemical extinguishers will be adequate protection. Watchmen should be automatically checked. It is a job that men do not like as a rule, and I do not blame them either. It is unnatural for a man to keep awake at night. If he does not fail to-night, he will probably fail to-morrow night or some night next week, so it is necessary to have an automatic check. Then if he neglects his duty somebody in authority is notified immediately, and prompt action taken to ascertain what is wrong. I endeavour, as far as possible, to eliminate the human element. If a watchman must be appointed, let him be, not a man who has grown old in the service, but a young, intelligent man, and pay him practically as much as a first-class mechanic, and do not ask him to work more than nine hours each night. There will then be a reasonable safeguard, but I do not forget that every watchman is human, and may go to sleep on his job.

57. *To Senator Newland.*—The proposed pillar hydrants have provision for two hose connexions. The use of two at one hydrant would, of course, reduce the water pressure, but it would still be adequate for all purposes, and not less than if the water were drawn by two hoses from separate hydrants. It would be much handier to be able to attach two hoses to one hydrant, than to use separate hydrants. The pressure is about 160 lbs. to the square inch. It would be quite

safe to use three hydrants, if necessary, in the event of an outbreak of fire. Automatic sprinklers are in universal use in other countries of the world. I have been in Melbourne for about sixteen years, and I have always advocated their use in this city. On two occasions they proved somewhat faulty, but that was a long time ago. In one case a shrinkage in the building caused a leak in the main. If the chemical extinguishers are properly charged, they will not require subsequent attention for at least six months. About 7,000 of these appliances have been installed in Melbourne. I have a special staff of men examining each extinguisher once every six months, and we furnish the owner with a certificate to the effect that it is in good order and condition. A chemical extinguisher may be used by anybody. The average girl, and quite a number of men, too, would be unable to do much in the way of checking a fire with a bucket of water, but with a chemical extinguisher could do quite effective work, because you may stand 30 feet away and direct the hose of the extinguisher on to the seat of a fire. A big percentage of fires is extinguished by means of this first-aid equipment. If these extinguishers are manufactured up to specifications which we lay down, they are perfectly safe. We test them up to 350 lbs. to the square inch, and we say that is safe.

58. *To Mr. Mackay.*—A population of 10,000 people at Canberra drawing upon the mains would reduce the pressure, but still it would be adequate to deal with any fire outbreak.

59. *To Mr. Mathews.*—No class of building is really fireproof. I have a piece of blue metal that liquefied in the oil fire at Spotswood. The best that can be said of any building is that it is fire resisting—that will be the class of building to be erected at Canberra. A Royal Commission that inquired into the fire that destroyed the Ottawa parliamentary buildings was unable to ascertain conclusively what was the cause of the outbreak. The New Zealand parliamentary building, also destroyed some years ago was, I understand, a timber structure. The only way to stop fires is to make adequate provision by the installation of modern fire-fighting appliances such as sprinklers and chemical extinguishers in a fire-resisting building. If you want to increase that protection, then watch it closely. I will guarantee that, if the conditions which I have laid down in my report are observed, the Government will be more than reasonably safe from the point of view of fire risks, at Canberra. Our records show that in the case of 60 per cent. of the fires that occur, the causes are unknown. We know that a rise in temperature will cause the solder to melt, and thus bring the sprinkler into action right over the seat of any fire that may occur in a building, and at the same time we are notified at brigade headquarters. The sprinkler system is very reliable. I have never yet known of a sprinkler refusing to go off, though there have been cases of sprinklers going off too soon. Every sprinkler system is inspected twice a year. The chemical extinguishers are tested regularly in the presence of employees of the firms concerned in order to give them confidence in the use of this first-aid equipment. I am satisfied that the employees at Parliament House have seen these extinguishers in use, and understand how to work them. The special staff from the Fire Brigade paints the extinguishers provided by private firms, and so their life is a little longer than in buildings like Parliament House where they are continually being polished.

60. *To Mr. Blakeley.*—The installation of the sprinkler system results in the immediate notification of any trouble to brigade headquarters. For instance, if a sprinkler at Buckley and Nunn's were to come into action as the result of a rise in temperature, due possibly to fire, there would be an automatic alarm at brigade headquarters, and the man on duty would see Buckley and Nunn's telephone shutter fall. He would then ring the house bell, and everybody would turn out to deal with the trouble. I think the time has arrived when steps should be taken to establish a fire-fighting organization at Canberra. I would not recommend the volunteer system, because of the lack of discipline. My

experience is that a partially-paid brigade would better meet the situation. Certain employees could be attached to the fire station, and learn the business from the expert there. They could be paid a small retaining fee. In Melbourne we pay them £6 a year, and if they go to a fire they are paid so much per hour. With the flow of water at Canberra there will be ample protection against any outbreak of fire in any of the contemplated buildings. Members of the Committee will find information bearing on this subject in my report to Mr. Goodwin.

61. *To Mr. Cook.*—In my opinion the position at Canberra in regard to the water supply for fire-fighting purposes is exceptionally good. Three of the representatives on the Fire Brigades Board are connected with insurance companies, and I have no hesitation in saying that if it could be shown that fire risks were reduced by means of special precautions, there would be a corresponding reduction in premiums. As business men they charge according to the risk. If you own a property, and protect it according to their rules, it is possible to have premiums reduced by 50 per cent., which goes to prove that insurance companies are out to give a fair deal to the general public.

The witness withdrew.

John Smith Murdoch, Chief Architect, Department of Works and Railways, sworn and examined.

62. *To the Chairman.*—I am responsible, under the Department, for the sketch plan of the proposed Parliament Buildings at Canberra. The plan has been submitted to, and generally adopted by, the Advisory Committee appointed by the Government to deal with Canberra. It has been drawn up to meet the wishes of the Government, and to comply with the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, and is designed to provide accommodation for the legislative activities of Parliament. The provisional building will be of a more or less temporary character. Before reaching the stage presented to the Committee in the sketch plan, many sketches were prepared and consultations held with the President and Speaker, as well as the administrative staffs of Parliament. It is only a sketch plan. The permanent drawings have not yet been made, so the entire scheme is capable of alteration and modification in any way which the Committee might think advisable, without putting the Government to any great expense. My definition of a temporary building, as distinct from a provisional structure, is a place designed to last for, say, twenty years. The sketch plan makes provision for something better than that—something between a temporary structure, as I have described it, and the monumental buildings which no doubt will be erected some day. The proposed Houses of Parliament will probably be sufficient for the legislative activities of the Commonwealth for the next fifty years. At all events, the buildings are expected to be able to meet the needs for that period. I have seen various permanent Parliament Houses in different parts of the world. I can say that the proposed building, although called a provisional structure, will prove so comfortable that there will be no great haste exhibited by members to erect and occupy an ornate permanent building. In my opinion the temperament of the average Australian is such that he would not be any happier in one of those extremely elaborate structures, to be found elsewhere in the world, than in this proposed building. The Advisory Committee did not recommend the expenditure of any specific amount for the provisional Houses of Parliament. It was not possible to do so until the drawings were made: but I think that of the total sum necessary to begin legislation at Canberra (£1,799,000), they put down £110,000 as the amount likely to be required for the first section of the parliamentary buildings. That was about two years ago, and before any plans were prepared. At that time there was an idea of rushing up a hall in six months for the purpose of holding a Convention of statesmen to consider possible amendments of the Constitution. It was thought fitting that

such a Convention should be held at Canberra, and that the suggested hall would eventually become the nucleus of the legislative Houses. This idea, I think was in the minds of the Advisory Committee, and probably led them to assume that the building would cost less than is now estimated. The Advisory Committee's report did not contain any provision for a national collection of books, as an essential for the beginning of legislative activities at Canberra, and probably that was the reason why representatives of the Library, when giving evidence before the Committee, stated that they had been informed that money would not be available for more accommodation than is shown. I think that will come later. No limit could have been fixed by the Advisory Committee because, as I have already said, plans had not then been drawn, and the estimated cost of the parliamentary buildings, including engineering services, is £174,000.

63. *To Mr. Mathews.*—The estimate does not include furniture or fittings. We have an immense amount of furniture here, and I think it possible that some arrangement may be made with the Victorian Government to use the fittings of the State Parliament in the Exhibition Buildings, if the sittings of the respective Parliaments conduce to that arrangement.

64. *To the Chairman.*—I do not think the cost of the building, including furniture, will exceed £200,000.

65. *To Mr. Mathews.*—We did not consult the Prime Minister concerning the plans. We conferred with only the Speaker, and President, and officers of the Parliament.

66. *To the Chairman.*—I took the responsibility of assuming that before the life of the proposed building is ended, the *personnel* of the House of Representatives will probably be 112 members, and of the Senate about 80, and drew the plans accordingly. I thought it would be fair to look ahead at least fifty years, and that one might reasonably expect an increase in the membership of both Houses. If any exigency should arise before the expiration of 50 years, rendering it desirable to erect permanent Houses of Parliament, this building could be used as offices. I have had opportunities of inspecting Parliament Houses in other countries of the world, notably at Westminster, Washington, Ottawa, Toronto; and I have also visited the Parliament Houses in Berlin, Paris, and Vienna, but I did not see Parliament in session at the three last-named capitals. The arrangement of Chambers that impressed me least was that at Washington. There the seating accommodation for members is on the concentric plan, quite unlike the scheme followed in the British Houses of Parliament, and I judge that it is inconvenient for members because when they are addressing the Chair members in the seats to the rear of them, as well as the public in the galleries, cannot always see the speaker. In Westminster and the other British Houses of Parliament that I have visited, the seating arrangement is as shown on the plan for the proposed Parliament Houses at Canberra, so that nearly everybody in the House and the general public can see the member speaking, who talks not so much to the speaker as to members opposite, and, indeed, all round the Chamber. I did not see the French chamber in session, but I understand that members speak from a rostrum. I should think that arrangement would be very inconvenient if a member wished to speak for only a minute or two. The seating arrangement in the sketch plan follows the lines of the British House of Commons. An alteration to provide, say, one desk for two members, with narrow passages enabling members to enter and leave their seats without causing inconvenience to the member speaking would, I think, prove a desirable improvement, and the additional space required would not be considerable. I will work out the scheme and ascertain definitely. I will also prepare an estimate for a legislative chamber to hold 75 members, 100 members, or 120 members, and for a Senate to provide accommodation for half that number, so that, should Parliament decide to authorize the extra accommodation to meet

future needs, members will know the probable cost. It would be possible to so alter the plan as to enable members leaving the chamber to step straight into the garden, but if that were contemplated the site problem would have to be considered. The area is unlimited, but the levels are such that an extension as suggested might prove difficult. I should like at this stage to set out in detail the accommodation provided by the sketch plan. It is as follows:—

Reception Accommodation—

Reception Hall	Sup. ft.	2,301
Reception Corridors surrounding Hall		5,760
		<hr/> 8,064

Legislative Accommodation—
Senate :

Senate Chamber (80 members)	} Sup. ft.	2,688
Public Gallery (86 persons)		
Press Galleries (80 persons)		560
Press Rooms		801
Members' Lobbies (2)		552
Spare Room		84
		<hr/> 4,685

Representatives :

Representatives Chamber (112 members)	} 2,688
Public Gallery (60 persons)	
Public Gallery (45 persons)	372
Press Galleries (2) (80 persons)	672
Press Room	372
Members' Lobbies	552
Spare Room	84
	<hr/> 4,740

Legislators' Official Accommodation—

Senate :

President (4 rooms and bathroom)	842
Chairman of Committees	252
Leader of Senate (3 rooms and bathroom)	705
Party Rooms (2)	966
Ministers' Rooms (2)	504
Senate Club	1,728
Committee Rooms (2)	396
Ante-rooms (2)	408
Strangers' Rooms (2)	362
	<hr/> 6,163

Representatives :

Speaker (4 rooms and bathroom)	864
Chairman of Committees	234
Prime Minister (3 rooms and bathroom)	782
Ministers' Rooms (7)	1,524
Ante and Strangers' Rooms (2)	308
	<hr/> 3,712

Party Accommodation—

Ministerial Party Rooms (4)	1,109
Opposition Rooms (3)	1,350
Country Party Rooms (3)	1,010
	<hr/> 3,469

Committee Accommodation—

Committee Rooms (7)	4,155
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Library Accommodation—

Library and Reading Room	2,576
Newspapers and Periodicals	1,568
Cataloguing, Receiving, Binding, and Store Rooms (5)	1,606
Newspaper Storage (6 rooms)	3,658
Book Storage (3 rooms)	8,652
Library, Administrative Staff (3 rooms)	686
	<hr/> 18,746

Official Staff Accommodation—

Senate :

Clerk, Assistant Clerk, Clerk of Papers, Usher, Records, Typists (9 rooms)	4,145
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Representatives :

Clerk of House (2), Assistant Clerk, 2nd Assistant Clerk, Clerk of Papers, Sergeant-at-Arms, Accountant, Records (5), typists (3), (15 rooms)	4,796
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Hansard Accommodation :

Chief of Staff and Reporters (5 rooms)	1,132
Transcribing (6 rooms)	722
	<hr/> 1,420

Post-office Accommodation :

Post Office, Telegraph Office, and Telephone Exchange (3 rooms)	533
	<hr/> 10,894

Refection and Recreation Accommodation—

Members :

Dining Room (150 persons)	2,400
Private Dining Rooms (5)	1,170
Smoking Room and Lounge	1,280
Billiard Room	1,550
Bar and Cellarage	1,180
	<hr/> 7,580

Officers :

Officers' Sitting and Dining Room	1,600
Typists' Sitting and Dining Rooms (2 rooms)	527
Messengers' Sitting and Changing Room	434
Kitchen and Waiting Staff (2 rooms)	322
Spare Rooms (3)	780
Service Room	180
	<hr/> 3,843

Kitchen and Offices :

Kitchen and Servery	1,664
Offices (13 rooms)	1,006
General Store	532
Heating and Mechanical Appliances	1,560
	<hr/> 4,762

Two Cottages	2,360
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Total area	83,173
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This Schedule does not include—

(a) Messengers' accommodation, which is disposed in positions considered suitable in relation to the several Departments of the Houses—total area	723
(b) Lavatory accommodation disposed generally throughout the Houses—total area	2,764
(c) Corridors, including Entrance Vestibule—total area	11,780
(d) Terraces, Verandahs, and Loggias—total area	8,850
N.B.—Total area of land covered by buildings and enclosed gardens, 342 feet x 455 feet, equal to 155,610 feet, equal to about 3 acres.	

Convenient further extension of plan may be obtained by—

(a) Two one-story wings flanking kitchen, as indicated on plan	4,550
(b) Lower floors under <i>Hansard</i> and Ministerial party wings flanking library	4,275
(c) Upper storeys on right and left outer centre pavilions	10,600
	<hr/> 19,425

67. *To Mr. Mathews.*—A slight alteration of the plan with regard to the reception hall and the surrounding corridors could be made, but this would limit somewhat the wall space contemplated for the hanging of pictures. Except in the Library, there is no other provision for pictures. Treated in this way there would be twice the accommodation now provided in the Queen's Hall here.

68. *To the Chairman.*—The main northern entrance will be approached by an uncovered terrace 12 feet in width, with at each end covered loggias in front of certain rooms. The main corridor will be 20 feet wide with messengers' accommodation at each side. From this corridor there will be an entrance to the great reception corridors 20 feet wide surrounding the reception hall, which will be 48 feet by 48 feet, but, as I have just said in reply to Mr. Mathews, an alteration of the plan here may increase the accommodation in the reception hall to more than twice that of the Queen's Hall. The provision for the press in the House of Representatives is less than in the Senate, because owing to the larger numbers of members of the House, we have to place the public gallery upstairs. On the Senate side this accommodation, not being required for the public, is made available for the press, though I do not think it will be required. There is no provision for the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate. This oversight may be rectified.

69. *To Mr. Blakeley.*—At Washington the accommodation for members is in a separate building, and is

very complete. Members are not supposed to live there; but a good many of them have their meals in the House, and, in some cases, practically live in the official buildings, in which, of course, they transact their public business as representatives of the people. It is obvious, I think, that the accommodation for the President and Speaker should be in the parliamentary buildings. Members should be provided for elsewhere.

70. *To the Chairman.*—The committee-room accommodation should be ample. There will be two rooms, 36 feet by 28 feet; two rooms, 36 feet by 20 feet; two more, 30 feet by 24 feet; and one, 21 feet by 19 feet. The library will be placed in the centre of the building, equidistant from both chambers, and convenient to all the accommodation enjoyed by the members. I have put the telegraph office and the post-office in different rooms, because each has different hours. I take it that the telegraph office will be going night and day while Parliament is sitting. If, however, one officer can control both services there is no reason why they should not be carried on in one room, and the other room devoted to some other purpose. The automatic telephone is in a separate room altogether. The automatic wires will be taken from each point in the building, and carried by cable to the telephone exchange, which is expected to be in the group of administrative buildings; this will be the telephone exchange for the whole official district as it were. There would be no difficulty in making one room do for the postal and telegraphic business, if it be so desired; and, as I say, such an arrangement would release a very conveniently situated room for some other purpose. As to the refectory and recreation accommodation, if at any time a banquet is held in the House, the smoking-room, which opens off the dining-room with large doors, and only glass divisions between, can be thrown temporarily into the dining-room, thus affording seating accommodation for 250. I would not suggest having such banquets in the Queen's Hall, because that means having to carry food a long way. I think that I have managed to arrange all the dining-rooms pretty conveniently, the work being done from one kitchen communicating by means of a corridor of no great length. The service corridor links up the whole lot. By kitchen, I mean the scullery, pastry-room, room for vegetables and fuel, two pantries, two cool stores, two dry-goods stores, chefs' room for keeping records and other work of the kind, and stewards' room. Under the kitchen block there is a large room for the heating apparatus and other mechanical appliances connected with the vacuum cleaning, ventilation, and so on. For the caretakers there are two cottages provided each with a living room, three bedrooms, and the usual conveniences. I repeat that this plan provides, in accordance with the wishes of the Government, the minimum of accommodation by which Parliament can conveniently commence work. It is quite true that the plan as shown provides no more accommodation than will be found necessary at the very beginning. It is obvious, however, that more accommodation must be provided in the future if this temporary house is to remain in use for any time. There are several convenient ways of making the Parliament House larger, while at the same time adhering to the general arrangement of the plan. At the south of the building there could be added two one-storied wings on either side, each of which would provide, as shown on the plan 2,275 feet, at the same time making the side elevations of the building a symmetrical whole. I have heard that the accommodation provided for the *Hansard* staff is considered to be rather pinched, although it is the accommodation with which the Chief of the Staff stated he could carry on. In view of the fact that more accommodation for *Hansard* may be required, and that it could not be provided in the future, it would be a good thing at the beginning to add a lower story on the wing devoted to this branch of the work. In the ordinary acceptation of the term this would not be a basement, because the windows would be of full size and look onto a sloping lawn. The outlook would

be pleasing, and there would be no lack of light and fresh air. This part of the building would then become three storied. I do not wish members of the Committee to think that this lower story is a dungeon or a place that is not well lighted, because it will be as well lighted and ventilated as any other part of the parliamentary building, and at the same time have a beautiful outlook. If this extension is made for the use of *Hansard*, I suggest doing the same thing on the corresponding wing at the east end under the librarians and Ministerial party room. I may say that there are the same sort of rooms in the Commonwealth offices in Melbourne. These two lower floors which I suggest will extend, in the case of the eastern side, from below the members' lavatory to below the Ministerial party room at the other end; on the western side they will extend from below the members' lavatory to below the room of the Chief of *Hansard* Staff. This is an alternative proposal, but if this extension be desired it will have to be done at the beginning of the work. There are still further means of conveniently extending the building as I have already stated. I have been looking into the effect of this suggestion in relation to the appearance of the building, and I am satisfied that the addition will give a better looking group than otherwise. These second stories will have the effect of raising the centres of the side elevations, leaving the two wings at a lower level, and altogether it will, I think, present a pleasing composition. These three methods of enlarging the building give the possibility of extending the accommodation by 19,425 feet. This enlargement can be carried out at any time, but in the case of the lower floors the alteration must be made at the beginning. When I next give evidence I shall furnish the Committee with the approximate cost of these future extensions. I do not think that the addition of these lower stories for the *Hansard* staff will lay the Committee or the Government open to a charge of putting their employees in cellars, because these rooms will be thoroughly well lighted and ventilated, and have, as I say, a pleasing outlook. I have heard it mentioned that the representatives of the press have not been provided with sufficient accommodation. If the Committee should be of that opinion also, a second story on the centre wing, on the eastern side, which I have suggested as a possibility, would be a convenient way of providing accommodation to any extent. The press people could find means of communication by a covered way between the rooms and the chambers. A fact which may be still more welcome to the Committee is that the representatives of the press, instead of, as in the case of the present House, having to come into corridors which are almost entirely official, will have quite a separate entrance to themselves, and have no need to come to portions of the House devoted to members. There will be a pneumatic tube from the press rooms to the telegraphic office, and the reporters will have access to their galleries and writing rooms without entering the House proper at all; the corridors will be kept private. It will be seen that, should the Committee be of opinion that the press should have more accommodation, that accommodation can be provided. The walls of the Senate Club Room and adjoining rooms are 12 feet high; the officers' rooms are 10 feet high. There is abundance of room for strangers in the corridors. One valuable feature of the plan is the promenade accommodation provided. Members of Parliament can walk about in the sun all over the flat roof of the Senate club room and reception room, and also the flat roof of the reception corridor—in this regard there is a vast space available, right to the front of the building, and reached by two stairs. One area alone of this flat roof is 58 feet by 120 feet, and that does not include the promenade over the public corridor, which is 20 feet wide. The flat roof extends all over except the Queen's Hall, and members can quickly get down to the chambers. I do not prefer the amphitheatre style of chamber. I do not think that the acoustic properties of a small room such as this need be considered. It is

too small to give rise to any apprehension of difficulty. If there is trouble in the present House of Representatives it is because that chamber is not well proportioned. Good proportions in a hall are admitted to be those of the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, which is in the proportions of 5 and 3 and 2. This means that if a room is 50 feet long it ought to be 30 feet wide and 20 feet high to give the proper acoustic qualities. No doubt the arranging of a room has its effect on its acoustic properties, but in the case of a small room of the size now under consideration the acoustic questions hardly enter, unless, of course, the room is unduly high. I should say that the acoustic trouble in the present House of Representatives is due to the fact that the chamber is very high in proportion to its other dimensions, and, moreover, there is a good deal of glass on the roof. As a matter of fact, I never knew before that the chamber was defective acoustically. We have not provided for galleries all round the chambers, but only on the sides. All-round galleries could be provided if desired; there is no objection to such a plan. We have arranged for the press reporters to be in side galleries where they are just over the heads of members. If the press were given one side, and the end over the Speaker, there would be room left for ladies' galleries, and so forth; if the press rooms are made elsewhere in the two wings I suggest, another gallery could be introduced at the end of the House of Representatives, and the same principle could be adopted in the Senate chamber. Galleries, I think, will affect the acoustic qualities, but these galleries are only 12 feet deep, and I do not anticipate they will matter. It is only when we have to consider vast halls that acoustics are scientifically taken into account; in chambers of this size I anticipate no difficulties. We must, however, by all means avoid making the chambers too high; they are 26 feet high, and I was thinking of making them 28 feet. The chambers are 56 feet long and 40 feet wide, which departs considerably from the proportions I have quoted as being perfect. As I say, however, these standard proportions are only attempted in the case of large halls. If we make the press rooms into galleries it will bring the proportions very close to those of which I have spoken. If it is decided to have the open spaces spoken of this morning, that will affect the building architecturally. As to members having ready access into a garden at each end of the chamber, there is a corridor 10 feet wide opening on loggias. If this corridor were made 20 feet or 30 feet wide by the removal of some rooms it would give easy access to the garden, and should the Committee indicate in their report that this is desired it can be done. The accommodation for members is, I think, going to be very fine, even in this building, especially in the garden arrangements and the promenades; there is no Parliament House that I have seen that is so good in this respect. I have seen the Speaker and the President in regard to the requirements of the officials of the House, and the matter was also gone into by the Assistant Architect in my absence, and the result was laid before the Committee by Colonel Owen the other day. I saw in the press a suggestion that there should be a committee of officers of the House to draw up a report as to what they require in the way of accommodation, and I think that an excellent idea. As a matter of fact, I was under the impression that that had already been done.

71. *To Senator Newland.*—It would not be impossible to extend the building further back over the garden in order to give more accommodation to the library, but it would be very difficult; I would not suggest narrowing the garden. The accommodation for the library has been calculated on a basis of 50 per cent. of free space for moving books, providing for a period of eight and a half years; but, although I am not an expert librarian, I think that is a very liberal estimate. If the calculation were on a basis of 25 per cent. the life of the library would be increased to 21½ years; but I am afraid that if that were suggested to the Librarian he would not agree. My own opinion is that the

library in this building should be regarded as purely a parliamentary library, and that, at an early date, we should commence the building of a national library. This, I think, is what both the public and members of Parliament would desire. No provision has been made for the public having access to these books under permit. If one of the wings I have spoken of had the lower story added it would afford the public access to the library at a very convenient point. A certain proportion of the basement room could be set aside for male and female members of the public who desired to consult the books. I take it that probably for a year or two the present suggestions in regard to the library may be carried out, but as early as possible we should begin with a real national library. I am not saying that the space asked for is not required, but while not an expert I think the estimate is a liberal one. There is no doubt that the public will before long insist on proper facilities for consulting books of the kind. As to whether the *Hansard* reporters should, as at present, sit at the table in the chamber, or should be provided for elsewhere, I must say that I have often admired the facilities that the seat at the table affords for doing accurate work. If the reporters were placed in a gallery at the side, certain of the speakers would have their backs to them. In any case, for a number of years the floor of the House is going to be bigger than that actually required for the number of members. Of course, a gallery behind the members' benches, similar to those in which the Inter-State press is accommodated in the present House, could be provided for *Hansard*. There is no doubt that the question of the disposition of the House fittings is going to call for much consideration by many minds. The only provision I have made for the reporting for *Hansard* is on the floor of the House; theoretically, that may be a crude way of meeting the requirements, but practically it is an excellent one. If the Victorian State Parliament should resume occupation of the present Federal Parliament House after the Federal Parliament moves to Canberra, there is no doubt that many of the fittings of the State House could be utilized for the new Parliament House.

72. *To Mr. Mathews.*—The accommodation provided is the minimum with which to begin the legislative work at Canberra. The widening of the corridors which has been suggested would, of course, give ready access to the gardens and admit light and air freely. If galleries are made in the way suggested by the Chairman, by taking in the press rooms, light could be admitted from four sides. Each side of the chamber as planned now is practically a continuous window at the top; it is, of course, desirable not to have windows on a level with the eyes of honorable members.

73. *To the Chairman.*—The suggested widening of the corridors would not lead into a private garden; but, I would say, to the buildings that will be erected for members about 150 yards away. There could be a private road for members, and the central and other gardens are private. If we are going to extend the House and have more room, I do not see why we should not sacrifice the ante-room behind the Senate chamber, and the Assistant's Clerk's room behind the Representatives' chamber, and make these separate entrances right into the centre of the garden; that could be done in addition to the widening of the corridors.

74. *To Mr. Blakeley.*—The corridor surrounding the reception hall takes up three times the space of the hall itself. That space could not be utilized for providing extra rooms for officers because there is no light there. I consider this 20-ft. corridor very essential to the working of Parliament; it is really a very large strangers' room. Some one has suggested that it would be a good thing to make the opening from the reception hall into the corridor larger so that the hall and the corridor should become practically one. As to providing rooms for the accommodation of the Librarian and his assistant within the library itself, I can only suggest that they could sit in a corner; I would not mutilate the library plan by cutting in small

rooms. As I have already explained, the dining-room and the smoke-room may be made into one large room with only two columns. The large room on the end of the Senate on the top story is a spare room, and could be used for the press, if the press required more accommodation. If, however, the press is provided for elsewhere this space could be available for a gallery for the Senate. It would be quite possible to make direct communication for the press reporters from their rooms to the chambers without their going on the floor of Parliament, and without going into the open air. I can see the convenience of the idea. The Speaker and the President are each provided with four rooms and a bath, while the Prime Minister has three rooms and a bath. The Speaker and the President have, of course, permanent officers and messengers employed, whereas the Prime Minister's staff is really accommodated at his own offices and not at Parliament House. The Speaker's accommodation is swollen rather by the provision of a spare kitchen. There is no dining-room accommodation for the press. The accommodation provided for the messengers will, I think, prove ample for all; easily twenty could be dined in the room provided for them. If the alteration suggested by the Chairman in the post-office are carried out, a room would be made available for the messengers to perform their clerical and other work in. There are ten messengers' rooms provided in the buildings, and four messengers' rooms directly connected with members. The galleries are suspended on the cantilever principle.

75. *To Mr. Cook.*—I think that before Parliament has been very long at Canberra more room will be required, but work can be begun with the accommodation provided on the plan. When it is shown that more accommodation is required it can be provided in a perfectly natural manner as I have described. If members would put up with a weatherboard building, such as has been talked about, it could be provided at a great deal less cost, but I do not think they would be satisfied with such a place, and then there would have to be a permanent building costing perhaps £1,500,000. As I have said, I favour going on with other stories on the side wings straight away, if the Committee are of the opinion that the press requires more accommodation.

(Taken at Melbourne.)

WEDNESDAY, 28TH MARCH, 1923.

Present:

Mr. GREGORY, Chairman;	
Senator Newland	Mr. Jackson
Mr. Blakeley	Mr. Mackay
Mr. Cook	Mr. Mathews.

The Right Honorable William Alexander Watt, Speaker of the House of Representatives, sworn and examined.

76. *To the Chairman.*—From a more or less cursory examination of the plans for provisional Parliament Houses at Canberra, I have been able to form some conclusions in respect to certain matters. I do not feel fully qualified to advise the Committee about staff accommodation questions. The ex-Speaker (Sir Elliot Johnson), who occupied the Chair for so long, and the senior officers of the Houses, could probably afford better guidance on those points. I have been chiefly thinking about two phases of the accommodation question, namely, that for the public and the chamber accommodation and arrangements. I think the accommodation for the public will be found to be altogether insufficient, and that experience will demand a number of rooms in which the public can interview and consult with members as apart from Ministers. Hitherto, the Commonwealth Parliament has sat in a capital city of one of the States, but at Canberra there will be a considerable visitation of individual citizens and groups of interests who will desire to deal with members. In such circum-

stances a series of rooms somewhere in reasonable proximity to the chamber will be required where members can confer with these visitors. I do not mean large rooms necessarily, but when a man travels from Western Australia or Queensland to Canberra to consult his member on an important issue, he will not want to stand up in a reception hall to do so. I have in mind certain interests—the fruit interests, the sugar interests, the coal interests, and others, industrial and commercial, who may decide to go to Canberra to see parliamentarians there, and on their arrival will want to sit and discuss these matters perhaps for hours with individual members or groups of members. Much more accommodation, therefore, would be required for the public than the plan provides. Hitherto it has been held that deputations ought not to be encouraged in the precincts of Parliament House, but that rule must be relaxed at Canberra, or else we must provide accommodation outside the precincts of the House where such deputations can be held. Correspondence will be found to be a very imperfect instrument with which to acquaint members and parties with the views of individuals or interests. Consultations or deputations will be found essential to make members acquainted with the views of those interests, and, therefore, accommodation ought to be provided on the lines I have indicated. The public will deem it necessary. In regard to the chamber, I separate the accommodation itself from the arrangements. I understand that it is contemplated to occupy the proposed building for fifty or sixty years. To my mind, if the building proves durable and habitable at the end of fifty years, the tendency will be to postpone the expenditure on another building, and devote the money to other forms of development. Therefore, the present proposed building will probably be used for more than fifty years; provision must be made for upwards of two generations. But within that time the House of Representatives must be numerically stronger than it is now. I think we shall have a larger Parliament within that time—the growth of population and the diversity of interests in neighbourhoods at present sparsely populated or settled will warrant it. As population grows beyond the present margin of settlement the cry will go up for a greater number of members for the House of Representatives. Of course, that would involve constitutional changes, but I believe they will be effected. The pressure of public thought will determine that. In all probability, the relative importance of the Commonwealth and the States will alter. It may not happen in our parliamentary lifetime, and certainly the referendums which have been taken so far do not justify our imagining there will be any early alteration, but it is bound to come. I think Australia will work more towards the Canadian model in Constitution making or altering. That means that there will be more members in the House of Representatives, and that provision will have to be made for seating a considerably larger number in the chamber. I understand that provision is made on the plan for 112 members in the House of Representatives, but I think that it should be made for at least double that number. It all depends on the growth of public thought on the question. Victoria as a State is broadly not in favour of the extension of the Commonwealth powers, and as a Victorian I do not pretend to know the views of the other States very much, but I do know that in some portions of Australia the sentiment in favour of adding to the power of the central Government is growing, and is much stronger than it is in Victoria. Provision should at any rate be made for accommodating double the number of members at present in the House of Representatives. As to the style of accommodation within the chamber, I think that it should be a semi-circular chamber, and not the rectangular one provided on the plan; and each member should be provided with a desk with a gangway behind him, and between him and the next desk. Such provision is made in other chambers in the world. By

giving him a single desk a member is afforded privacy for his correspondence, and at the same time has ample room to move about without interfering too much with other members. I prefer the single desk to a desk accommodating two members. A man may be making notes for a speech, and does not necessarily want his neighbour at the same desk, who may also be waiting to catch the Speaker's eye, to see what line he proposes to take. Associated with this is the question of whether the Commonwealth Parliament would be prepared to adopt the rostrum system of speaking. I think we ought to work to that method by inaugurating it at Canberra. This with the semi-circular chamber and desk accommodation would work admirably. Close to the rostrum the press and *Hansard* could be situated. The press would get a better opportunity of hearing the whole debate than they can get from a gallery either behind or in front of the member speaking. I have seen the rostrum system in the French Chamber of Deputies, and it struck me as admirable. I should say that the second-reading debates ought all to be conducted from the rostrum, and that in the Committee stage of a Bill members who preferred to do so could speak from their desks. A man in Committee may arise to make a suggestion, and could easily do so from his desk, but if he desired to make an important speech he should claim the right to advance to the rostrum. The Standing Orders could easily be amended for this purpose. I know that no Australian Parliament has adopted the system, and there may be a prejudice against it, but I think the National Australian Parliament may well inaugurate it. It would certainly lead to more orderly debate, and more concentrated attention upon the member speaking. An objection to the rectangular chamber, whether square or oblong, is the fact that when a Minister speaks on an important subject the bulk of the members are seated behind him, and it frequently happens that they flock across the chamber and crowd out others in order to hear him. If a Minister is speaking from a spot near the centre of the semi-circular chamber every one seated at his own particular desk will be able to hear him. Therefore, there will be more convenience and less crushing. Personally, I think it would lead to a better type of debate, and more orderly proceedings. The French Chamber of Deputies is a theatre with a slightly raised floor, and then again behind it are the galleries for the public, who also have the same opportunity of looking straight at the face of the member speaking and of hearing every word he utters. The rostrum is situated just before the President's dais and slightly below it. When a member is speaking from the rostrum he faces the whole of the chamber except the Chair. If a man feels that all eyes are upon him he is inclined to put forth his best efforts. Consequently, the rostrum system would elevate the standard of debate. It would enable members to hear better, there would be less interruption, and consequently less calls for order from the Chair. I think that New Zealand has the desk system, but not the rostrum. The French Chamber of Deputies is the most noted example of a semi-circular chamber that I have seen, but I understand that the Berlin chamber is also semi-circular. Many of the great Parliaments of the world have tried this method, and none of them has gone back on it. The desk system should lead to a better attendance in the chamber, which is eminently desirable. From a health point of view, I think it would be an advantage to have direct access to the gardens from the chamber. The opportunity for a smoke and a stroll would be convenient to members and would be conducive to their health, but it might depopulate the chamber partly, on the principle of the more attractions outside the less the attendance in the chamber. One thing that drives members out of the chamber now is the lack of convenience for conducting correspondence. If we cure that trouble there will be a tendency on the part of members to write their letters in the chamber, and follow the debates in between times. If, in addi-

tion, you could contribute to the happiness and physical and mental brightness of members by giving them an opportunity to stroll in a garden adjacent to the chamber, it is your duty to provide those attractions. I think that the light should be let into the chamber just above the natural line of vision. If the bottom of the windows in the chamber is 16 feet above the floor level, it will probably be found to be an ideal lighting system. You really want a frieze of light starting about 16 feet high. As for ventilation, I started my parliamentary life in this House twenty-five years ago, and then went to the State House. Both chambers are man-killers. A great deal of time, talent, and money has been spent on the method of ventilation of this chamber, but the difficulty does not seem to have been conquered. One has only to sit five or six hours on end in the present chamber to realize that he is living in a fetid atmosphere. Every effort should be made to have the ventilating system as complete as human experience can make it. There are three most important factors—a good lighting system, proper acoustic properties, and proper ventilation. I strongly urge the Committee to investigate the systems pursued by most important European or Continental Parliaments in regard to their rostrum speaking, their semi-circular chamber, and the accommodation they provide within the chamber. I am sure that if members only realized the advantages which arise from the semi-circular chamber and the rostrum system they would readily accept it, and eventually prefer it. With the semi-circular chamber the presiding officer would see every man who was listening, and also the members of the public. In the rectangular chamber it is very difficult sometimes to pick out the man who is interjecting. In the semi-circular chamber the fact that the presiding officer has his eye on the auditors will conduce to orderliness. I have heard in the State Parliament and in the Commonwealth Parliament that the members of the press are given too many liberties, and too much access to or contact with members of Parliament; but I think that the matter rests very largely with members themselves or with the governing authorities of the House. For instance, if the press were supposed to enter by a certain corridor, and they were abusing their privilege, and roaming through the whole of the corridors reserved for members, a report to the presiding officers should bring the cure. I do not think that I would put the press completely away from contact with members. As a matter of fact, members will seek contact with the press at Canberra as a means of communicating with their constituents. Their means of communication with their constituents will be the press, and not *Hansard*, and the chances are that members, particularly those from distant parts of Australia, will be likely to seek reasonably frequent contact with the press, so that messages in regard to departmental matters into which they have been making inquiries for their constituents will be forwarded through the local newspapers for the information of those most concerned. There certainly ought to be areas in the precincts of the House where confidential discussions between members can take place without interference from outside, public or press; but I think you can correct any abuse by the press or by the public by saying that they are assigned certain accommodation and must keep to it. It rests with the presiding officers. I have seen a Speaker in the State Parliament confine the press to areas allotted to them, which were ample enough. It would be difficult to do the same in the present House, but I do not think that it would be very desirable to keep them necessarily from any contact with members. In regard to the central reception hall, I do not approve of the walls as provided on the plan. If it is to be a picture gallery, I think it is a mistake. If there are to be pictures they should be removed to some other place either associated with, or detached from Parliament, say, a library, or anything else temporarily employed for the purpose; but I think it would be a mistake to attempt to display paintings of the fathers of the Commonwealth on the walls of the reception hall at

Parliament House, Canberra. In any case, it does not strike me as being an architectural feature of much value to have this reception chamber as planned, and if the walls of this chamber are required for supporting an overhead structure, surely they could be replaced by Corinthian or other columns. In regard to the pictures displayed in Queen's Hall here, I think the idea was perfectly right, that the men who had contributed to the foundation of the Commonwealth should have their memory perpetuated, but I do not think it was ever intended that a man who might be Speaker of the House of Representatives for a few days should come into line with them, and have his picture hung with those of Sir Henry Parkes, Mr. Alfred Deakin, Sir Samuel Griffiths, and Sir Edmund Barton, who were the men that did the work of founding the Commonwealth. Later on, by legislation, Parliament may decide that there are others who have done great work, and that their pictures should be added; but I do not think that these paintings should be automatically augmented in the way we have witnessed. I would not recommend the hanging of paintings in the chambers. They would probably destroy the acoustic properties. If you choose to associate a reading-room or a library with Parliament House, let the pictures be put there. Of course, it is not the responsibility of the Public Works Committee to alter the system of perpetuating the memory of Speakers or Presidents, but some day it is a matter that will have to be considered. I am told that there is to be a flat roof surrounding the central hall. I was in Canberra once in winter, and I did not get the use of my extremities until about 1 o'clock in the afternoon. At such times I do not think the flat roof will be used as a promenade, but at other times it should be a very desirable feature of the building. The question of cooling or heating the air in the chamber must rank alongside the ventilating of the chamber. There are many manufacturing enterprises in Australia which are doing a great deal in the matter of correcting temperatures and purifying the air. They have solved the problem for their own purposes. They bring in the air at the temperature required. Mr. Ford, in America, has dealt with it as a matter of hygiene to keep his huge staff healthy. I am sure that the Committee could get a good deal of assistance from the manufacturing brains of Australia if the architects cannot give them a solution of the ventilating and temperature difficulties. The questions of the introduction of pure air, its circulation, and keeping it at the right temperature, are all related, and are all-important to the convenience and health of those associated with Parliament House. I do not know why a Senate club room of very large dimensions is provided near the entrance. The space would probably give a dozen rooms in which the public could consult with members. During any session territorial, industrial, or commercial interests will go to Canberra and seek interviews with members. These rooms will be required for that purpose. I think that at least a dozen of them will be needed. I am a local member in Melbourne, and when a constituent sends in a card I see him for a few moments in Queen's Hall, and then pass him into the gallery. It is not necessary, generally, that he should interview me in a room. On the other hand, if a man comes from a distant constituency, he does not visit the House for the fun of the thing, but goes there in order to get certain matters settled. At Canberra it may be two or three days before he gets an answer. It would be a reproach to the National Parliament if decent accommodation were not provided for the public on the lines I have suggested. The accommodation in this direction in the existing House is a joke. Members must take visitors into the library or hang about Queen's Hall. There is only one little interview room provided. The Governor-General must have accommodation provided, if not in Parliament House, at least in some other building adjacent. I understand that in the House of

Lords accommodation is provided for His Majesty the King for temporary purposes only when he goes to open Parliament. The Victorian Parliament has made no special provision at Parliament House for the Governor, but it has always required him to attend meetings of the Executive Council in the Executive Council Chamber, which is in the Public Offices. I believe in that. The Governor should meet his Ministers in a properly appointed place, and not at his residence, as is done in the case of the Commonwealth. There should be a regular meeting place for the Executive Council in one of the public offices, and the Governor-General should be expected to go there. I think that the rooms in which the members should meet the public should be situated near the front of the building. The public do not know much about the precincts of a House of Parliament, and they do not wish to go wandering about directed by attendants as to where they ought to go to find the members they want to see. The spot on the plan allotted to the Senate club room could be used for the public interviewing rooms. The members will have their side entrance to the building. I have had a discussion with the Assistant Librarian, who is the officer in charge of the nucleus of the national library, as to the future housing of the collection, but the matter has not been discussed in any practical way associated with the plans of Parliament house at Canberra. However, I do not know what my predecessor has done in this direction. I understand that the Petherick collection is most indifferently housed. It is a very valuable collection, and I can imagine an enthusiastic officer urging a recommendation for proper accommodation. I have no objection to an officer saying what he thinks ought to be done, although I, as head of the Department, may not have been actually consulted in regard to the matter. As a matter of fact, I have had very little chance of doing much more than urgent matters requiring attention since I have assumed office, and the Government have been very much in the same position. The new Library Committee has done nothing in this direction. It is impossible to get the Committee together except when the House is in session. If Australia is wise it will gather up a heap of interesting memorials associated with its origin and early development before these documents are scattered beyond recovery. Take Captain Cook's diary, the latest acquisition. From the standpoint of original history, it is an invaluable document to the nation, and we were luckily able to make arrangements to get it at a fair cost. That is a memorial that should repose in the national museum at Canberra when it is created. I do not care whether it be attached to the National Parliament, or whether it be a national gallery; but I should say that if later on a national gallery is established, it and other documents of the same nature should find a place there. What Parliament wants is a library useful to members. It does not want original documents. They are more a museum proposition. Members want to be able to get whatever information they desire on past or current questions, and useful books required by members should be provided. The public dinners at Parliament House, Canberra, are not likely to be so largely attended as are those in Melbourne, where the presiding officer feels it obligatory to invite the Lord Mayor and prominent officials of the big organizations of commerce and industry, and representatives of the banking world, and every one of that description. At the same time I do not think that it will be sufficient to have seating accommodation for not more than 150 persons. It will not always be convenient to be removing the partition wall between the dining-room and the lounge. If the Constitution is altered the number of members may be considerably increased. I notice that separate accommodation is provided for the staff, and that ample room has been made for private dinners, which will be necessary at Canberra more than in Melbourne or Sydney. I would not like to see the corridors or lighting space affected by any extension of the dining-room. The cloister idea is a good one. The dining-room itself

should accommodate at least 200 persons, without depriving members of the use of the lounge, which in any case would be used as a reception room on the occasion of a public dinner.

77. *To Senator Newland.*—If the acoustic properties of the semi-circular chamber I propose are good, it will not be any disadvantage to find members pushed further back in order to permit of a gangway being provided behind each member's desk. A semi-circular chamber would cut out the wings or corners to be found in a rectangular chamber. My recollection of the Chamber of Deputies in Paris is that it is a very much larger House than ours, and that there is very much more accommodation provided for the public—in fact, it is a big theatre whose acoustic properties are perfect. I am not very much concerned about the accommodation for the public in the chamber. In the early stages of removal I do not think there will be very large numbers of visitors to the House at Canberra, but the semi-circular plan is capable of giving the public generous accommodation if it is desired. I am particularly anxious that members should have proper convenience, and that the method of conducting parliamentary proceedings should be such as to give members of the public and the press a good chance of hearing. For that reason I suggest a central spot for speaking and the circular arrangement of the seats.

78. *To Mr. Mathews.*—The greatest mistakes have been made by architects in the matter of acoustics and ventilation. Members of Parliament are supposed to be "the kings of men," and it is necessary to attend to the health of the law-givers when they are doing the work of the nation. My proposal for a rostrum would cure the press difficulty. The reporters could be placed so that they could be fronting the speakers. The accommodation provided for them above the Speaker's chair is the worst that could be devised. The reporters must have a terrific difficulty in following exchanges during debates. One uninterrupted sound rises clearly to a gallery, but with a medley of sound there is confusion. I am sure that much of what is said in the chamber is lost in the galleries. When I have been speaking as a Minister from the table, and facing the House with my back to the Speaker, the press have frequently complained that they have had the greatest difficulty in hearing me. I notice that representatives of the *Age* and the *Argus* are now forsaking the old press gallery and taking their places in the small galleries at the sides of the chamber. If accommodation is being provided for 100 persons in the public gallery of the House of Representatives at Canberra, it will seldom be fully occupied. The population will be mostly official in the period for which provision is being made, and the people who visit the place to make representations to members will only incidentally want to hear debates as a feature of their trip. I do not think that the galleries will be crowded as they are in Melbourne, where the press notifies the public of any important debate to come on, and all sorts of people flock to hear it. I am sure that the officials associated with departmental life will not want to take a 'busman's holiday by going to the parliamentary gallery to hear debates. I quite agree that when the embellishment of the Capital is reasonably advanced we are likely to have a number of trippers to Canberra, and if the railway facilities are good they will take it in their trip through Australia; but, of course, much depends on how long Parliament is likely to sit. My opinion is that it will have shorter sessions in Canberra than there are in Melbourne. When the attractions of the place for the next twenty or thirty years are compared with what has been formerly enjoyed, they will be found to be very limited, and members are not likely to absent themselves for any protracted time from their friends, their domestic circles, and the social activities of the places where they usually reside. They will want to do their work at Canberra with every reasonable celerity, and get back home. It

will be a long time before there will be anything at Canberra to compare with the attractions of Sydney or Melbourne. Parliament, therefore, will not be sitting all the year round, and in the circumstances provision for accommodating about 100 persons in the public galleries should be sufficient. If the semi-circular chamber is adopted it will be very easy to enlarge the accommodation for the public. I think that it will be necessary to give more floor space accommodation than is shown on the plan. The provision for members and Ministers' rooms, and the alterations necessary to give the public more accommodation cannot be achieved unless more floor space is given. I do not think it will be necessary to provide the two one-story wings flanking the kitchen as indicated on the plan. The officers of the House are, however, better qualified to express an opinion as to the proposed lower floor under the *Hansard* and Ministerial party wings flanking the library, and as to the upper story on the right and left outer centre pavilions. If the two latter schemes are carried out, it will probably give all the accommodation required.

79. *To Mr. Jackson.*—I presume that somewhere grounds for bowling, cricket, and tennis should be provided either by the members themselves or by the public. Ministers and members will probably have more spare time on their hands than they have in Melbourne, and I think they will want some recreation arrangement in reasonable proximity to the chamber. If there is a decent arrangement whereby men can enjoy physical culture with a little tuition it would be an advantage. Members themselves could easily provide an instructor. It would pay them to do so. The proposal to have a gymnasium is a good one.

80. *To Mr. Blakeley.*—I have not had enough opportunity of studying the duties of the messengers and attendants, but during the recess I propose to see what every man is doing, and what conveniences he has. From what I am told the present conditions here are not creditable. The attendants and others have no places in which to eat their lunches. There is no dining-room for them. They must eat their meals in the garden or in their cubby holes. If I were a man in those conditions I would feel inclined to kick. Some of the officers are to have a good dining-room at Canberra. It is uneconomical and bad business not to provide proper conveniences for the staff. A mercantile firm would provide for those things. It is part of the scheme of life now to realize that the staff of an establishment is just as important as are a number of other features to which attention has been paid in the past. I am not able to say whether what is provided on the plan is good enough, but certainly I can say that there ought to be proper accommodation for the staff.

81. *To Mr. Cook.*—Extra accommodation should be provided for an increased number of members, and extra accommodation to enable members to receive deputations. This accommodation could be provided in the spot on the plan devoted to the Senate club room near the entrance to the building. Other accommodation could be provided for the Senate club room. If you adopt a plan giving the public so little accommodation you will find that you are making a mistake in not providing places where men can sit down when discussing with members problems that they have to come to Canberra to have solved.

82. *To Senator Newland.*—I think *Hansard* are quite unobjectionable on the floor of the chamber, and the *Hansard* staff do their work very well where they are situated at the table; but with my proposition for a rostrum the *Hansard* problem would be solved, because the reporters would be seated right in front of it, thus giving them the utmost convenience without obstructing the movement of members or the order of debate. But I have watched *Hansard* come into the chamber noiselessly, change places noiselessly, and go out of the chamber noiselessly. Ministers are quite accustomed to the *Hansard* reporters, and are not in any way diverted from their arguments by their movements in and out

of the chamber. The system of having the reporters at the table is convenient, and they must be near the speakers if the records are to be reliable. It is sometimes difficult for *Hansard* when a speaker is right behind the reporters' chair, but the *Hansard* men seem to get over that difficulty. They are trained at the business, and after a little time in a new Parliament they recognise members by their voices. I have heard no complaint of their having any difficulty in doing their work. However, if you can get the semi-circular chamber idea, you can solve quite a number of these press and *Hansard* problems.

83. *To the Chairman.*—I was surprised to see that these plans contemplated a life of anything from 25 to 50 years for the proposed building. I do not know that such a building could be built safely, or even wisely, in wood. I would not like to see it built of wood. Therefore, we must build in brick or stone or cement, or some other reasonably durable material, and the permanent monumental structure can follow if Australia requires it, but this will do for half a century. Some reluctant persons in Australia who still refer to Canberra as the "bush capital," and object to moving—I have never been one of that view—would consent to this proposal, but would not at present consent to anything put up in enduring marble at a cost of five or six times what this building will cost. I understand that this provisional building is to be located in front of what will be the site of the permanent Parliament House, and if it will not obstruct the view of the permanent building I certainly see no objection to utilizing it afterwards for public offices. If Australia grows in population our public offices will have constantly to be added to. If we are to spend anything from £200,000 to £250,000 on the proposed temporary building for Parliament Houses at Canberra, we should endeavour to take into consideration everything that is likely to be required within the next forty or fifty years. A vision of ten years only is too limited. I do not think that the public or any one else would thank Parliament for having such a limited vision. I have had no great opportunity of studying these plans, and my reflections, if they are of any value at all, are simply those of a layman with a quarter of a century of parliamentary experience. As to what he thinks is likely to be required in the future that, of course, is merely guesswork. Generally speaking, you have the best man you can get in Mr. Murdoch. I have had experience of him in his Department, and I do not think that he will lead you astray in matters of design, durability, or cost.

The witness retired.

Charles Herbert Palmer Robinson, Second Reporter, Commonwealth Parliamentary Reporting Staff, sworn and examined.

84. *To the Chairman.*—I have considered the accommodation proposed to be provided in the Parliament House at Canberra, for the Parliamentary Reporting Staff, and I have prepared a statement which sets out my views thereon in orderly form. The statement is as follows:—

Mr. Friend has asked me to give evidence, in his place, regarding the suggested plan for the accommodation of the official reporting staff in the Parliament House at the Federal Capital site. He and I have examined the blue print hanging on the walls of the room, and your secretary was good enough to explain its proposals to us. What I have to say about them would have Mr. Friend's indorsement in general, although he has not had an opportunity to read this statement in advance.

The accommodation suggested—because I take this to be what might be called a sketch plan rather than a matured proposal—is inadequate, and could be more conveniently placed.

At present—that is, in the building now occupied by the Federal Parliament—the official reporting staff has a floor space at least one-third greater than that allotted to it on the plan, and several more rooms than it is proposed to give to it at Canberra. Here, the bulk of our accommodation is in the basement of the northern wing of the building, and the rest on the second floor of the southern wing, a very inconvenient arrangement of rooms; but this Parliament House, like most others, was built before there was any thought of appointing

an official staff to record the debates, and the reporters were provided for later, without much regard for the nature of the work required of them; that is, any quarters that could be made to do were allotted to them, little else being available. This evil has not been continued on the plan now before the Committee, in which the architect has tried to study our needs by placing us near the chambers of legislature, though, as I shall try to show, a slight change in location would greatly improve it. But as the chief fault is to be found in the insufficiency of the suggested accommodation, I shall deal first with that.

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Reporting Staff consists of the Principal Parliamentary Reporter and the Second Reporter, who act chiefly in a supervising and editorial capacity; eleven reporters, and seven, and occasionally eight, typists. It will be seen that six cubicles—the number provided for on the plan—would not accommodate eight, and not even seven, typists. By the terms of our appointment, we are called upon to report the debates of the two Houses of the Parliament, and the Minutes of Evidence of their Select Committees and of the Standing Committees. Two reporters were added to the staff when the Public Works Committee and the Public Accounts Committee were set up, it being thought better to make that addition than to give to each Committee a reporter of its own, and the arrangement acts well, because it enables us to employ these officers on debates work when the Committees are not meeting, and allows the Committees to have the services of several reporters when the Parliament is in recess, and when the debates work is slack. When the Parliament is in session, it is no uncommon thing for us to have eight typists working simultaneously—six typing at the dictation of reporters engaged on debates, and the other two employed on Committee work; and seven typists are often kept going at once, and for long periods, on debates work alone. Two typists could not work in one cubicle—nor even in one room. The clatter of the machine and the voices of the dictators would make too much noise.

It can then, I think, be accepted that we must have at least eight cubicles. But cubicles arranged as on the plan would not suit us at all. Those on the plan are certainly placed conveniently, having regard to access from the reporters' rooms; but the reporters would never stand the racket which such an array of machines, working at high pressure, would create. From the time either House meets—or shortly after—until it rises, there are reporters dictating, and others revising their "copy," or reading proofs. The clatter of the typewriter is a tiresome affliction to the person dictating, especially when it requires that he must raise his voice to be heard in the din; but it matters more to one reading "copy" or "proofs," being to him an annoying distraction.

Reporting is not a mechanical process. Speaking and writing are two methods of conveying opinions that differ so much that, even with the best of speakers, the reporter is constantly beset with difficulties in making the little re-arrangement of phrases necessary to preserve in the printed report the force and meaning which was imparted to the speech largely by tone, or pause, or emphasis or gesture; to say nothing of the troubles arising from only half-hearing, or failure to quite understand what has been said. Besides, when the work gets heavy and the sittings long, men become "nervy." Therefore, the typewriting cubicles, while they must be near the reporters' rooms, should be placed so as to diminish, as much as possible, the noises that come from them. I would suggest the arrangement of these cubicles on each side of a narrow passage, at right angles to the corridor dividing the staff's accommodation from the Library.

One word more about the typing rooms. The typists cannot be expected to stay each in his, or her, little 9 x 6 ft. cubicle from the time the House meets until it rises. There are lulls in the work when a typist wants to stretch his legs, and breathe in a less restricted space than that of the cubicle. He—and more especially she—could not be allowed to lounge in the reporters' rooms, even if these rooms were larger. Besides, the pay of the typists is small, and they would mostly bring their meals with them. Therefore, a typists' retiring room is needed, in addition to the cubicles.

To sum up this part of my evidence, the staff accommodation should include eight typists' cubicles—which should be placed near the reporters' rooms, but where the noise of the machines would be minimized—and a typists' retiring room.

Coming to the reporters' rooms, it cannot be said that an apartment 16 x 14 ft. is a generous provision for four men, nor is this accommodation on the same scale as that observed in other parts of the plan. The proposed rooms are too small; they would be draughty—all windows and doors—and, with the cubicles as they are placed, quite unsuitable. The partition dividing off the cubicles would, I suppose, have to be made largely of glass, to let daylight into the cubicles, and to ventilate them there would have to be windows, which would be constantly open. Therefore, the noise of the typing would be heard in the reporters' rooms almost as much as if there were no partition at all.

I would suggest to the Committee that the accommodation of officials and the attendants connected with the Parliament should be more liberal than that provided in the ordinary Government offices, because the hours of duty are often very long, and not infrequently run right round the clock. The Reporting Staff has, on a good many occasions, suffered through the application of members to the country's affairs,

because it serves both the Senate and the House of Representatives, and sits up with both of them, or with one after the other, when the political sea is ruffled, or there are arrears of work to be overtaken. On such occasions, a reporter should be able to lie down for half an hour, if he gets the opportunity, and ease his eyes by the turning down of the lights. That cannot be done when there are several men in a room, and that room a small one.

I should like to see provided for the reporters at least three rooms a little larger than is proposed, and a fourth to serve as a retiring room and reference library. We are constantly referring to some newspaper, dictionary, encyclopædia, collection of quotations, or the like, and we need a central shelved space for our books, and tables for the newspapers and public documents that we file. Such a room could be used, too, as a retiring room for reporters, who need such accommodation just as the typists do. A man who had a few minutes on his hands could spend them there. Two or three could engage in a conversation without annoying others who were working, and during a late sitting a reporter could obtain an occasional short rest in a darkened room. Off this reference room there might be an office for the clerk and the messenger, for whom there is no provision on the plan. We need, too, a small room for our stores and records. As for the rooms for the Principal and the Second Reporter, they ought to be airy, well-lighted apartments. That provided on the plan for the Principal Reporter seems to me to be good enough, but the Second Reporter's room ought to be larger. As planned, both are unsuitable, because of the nearness of the typists' cubicles.

Attention must also be called to the lack of special lavatory accommodation. There is a members' lavatory in the block allotted to the Reporting Staff, but it would hardly do for reporters and typists to use that, and there is no other near their quarters. Besides, in the future, the typists may be all young women.

May I recapitulate what I have said about our accommodation by setting out our needs as—

Principal Parliamentary Reporter's room.
Second Reporter's room.
Four transcription rooms (including reference room).
Eight typists' cubicles.
Typists' retiring room.
Clerk's and messenger's room.
Store room.

I come now to the right situation for the staff's accommodation. In the new building this is much better placed than that which we have now, because it is on the same floor as the Chambers, and much nearer to them. But as the House of Representatives sits about four days for every three on which the Senate sits, and generally sits longer than the Senate, that Chamber gives us considerably more work than the Senate, and our rooms would be more conveniently situated if transferred from one side of the Library block to the other, to be nearer to it.

You will appreciate better our desire that we shall be as near as we can be placed to the Chambers, when I remind you that the reports are made by a succession of reporters, who relieve one another at frequent intervals, generally every quarter of an hour. This is the universal arrangement for the employment of a staff of reporters, and is designed to give the printer a regular supply of "copy," commencing shortly after the House begins its work. Where the reporters' rooms are a long distance from the Chambers, the constant march backwards and forwards between the table of the reporter and the table of the House becomes very tiring to the men who have to make it, especially when a sitting is protracted beyond the usual hour of adjournment; but it is chiefly to be objected to because of the serious waste of time that it causes. When the Parliament has settled down to its work, there are usually four or five men assigned to the reporting of the House debates. If the number of reporters on the roster of the House is four, each of them goes into the Chamber of the Representatives once every hour, and has three-quarters of an hour for transcription between his "turns" of reporting. But from that three-quarters of an hour must be deducted the going and coming of which I have spoken, and the incidental waiting at the gangway. There is also the constant walking backwards and forwards of the messenger, who is being sent for members' quotations, or on some errand for the Principal Reporter. It will be seen that this loss of time by every man between "turns" amounts in the aggregate to a good deal. Often it occasions still further loss of time, because if a reporter has nearly concluded the revision of a "turn" when called away to take another, he cannot, when he gets back, complete his work so rapidly as if there had been no interruption. He has been thrown out of his stride, so to speak, and may be five minutes or more in doing what, in the first instance, would have taken only one or two.

Our position at the table is a splendid one for hearing from—incomparably better than any gallery position could be—and no reporter who has tried both would prefer the gallery. Members, too, I take it, wish us to be where we can hear best. The reporting of the debates is an expensive affair, and Parliament should get the best service possible for the outlay. To place reporters where they could not hear perfectly would be like placing a photographer where he could not get a clear view. But there are objections to our present position. For

one thing, we have only two seats at the table, and consequently a relieving reporter has to wait a minute or two in the gangway to catch the drift of a speaker's remarks, so that he may take up at a moment convenient for the man he is relieving. This increases the congestion at the doorway. Then there is the constant passing of the reporters through the main passage to the Chamber.

I would, therefore, suggest that the reporters should be placed at the head of the table, where the clerks now sit, and that these might be placed above the reporters, and below the President or Speaker.

I notice that the President has suggested that the reporters should be placed in a gallery, above the chair of the presiding officer; but, with all respect for his opinion, I would ask your consideration to these objections, from the reporting point of view, to that position:—

- (a) That such a gallery, if brought low down, would tend to spoil the appearance of the Chamber.
- (b) That if placed on a level with the ordinary press gallery, the hearing in it would be imperfect, and the noises in the press gallery would increase the acoustic difficulties.
- (c) That a gallery would increase the distance that the reporters would have to travel between the Chamber and their office, with the attendant inconveniences of which I have just spoken.
- (d) That a place in the gallery would put the Principal Reporter out of touch with members, who frequently have some communication to make to him, and often facilitate the work of transcription either by passing on their quotations as they are speaking or handing them in immediately they have finished.
- (e) That reporters placed behind the President's or Speaker's chairs would have especial difficulty in hearing rulings, which it is always of importance to hear distinctly.

In this statement I have put down what I believe to be the minimum accommodation needed for the proper performance of the work of the staff; I have not cast about to find suggestions for increasing our personal comfort. The following table compares the present and proposed accommodation with that which I suggest is necessary:—

	Present Accommodation.	Plan.	Suggested.
Principal Parliamentary Reporter	1	1	1
Second Reporter	1	1	1
Reporters (one Senate side)	4	3	4
Clerk and Messenger	1	None	1
Typists' cubicles	4	6	8
" rooms	4	None	1
Storeroom (small)	1	None	1

The practice is for reporters to dictate direct to the typists, who are not employed as shorthand writers. A reporter, when revising his copy or reading his proofs, ought not to be subjected to the distraction caused by the noise of typing, or of other reporters dictating, or of conversation in the same room. He ought to be able to concentrate upon his work, which requires complete concentration to be done well. The cubicles should be so placed that the noise of dictating and typing will not disturb the reporters who are correcting typescript or proofs. When correcting proofs several men could be conveniently placed in one room. Most of our typists are ladies, and I think it is likely that we shall continue to employ female typists. Before the House meets the reporters have to read the proofs of reports of speeches delivered at the previous sitting, but while the House is sitting they are not all in the room at the same time. It is essential that every man should have his own desk. There is a special objection, which does not apply to clerks in an office, to having all the reporters in one room. Men engaged in revision work of any kind ought not to be distracted more than is necessary. If eleven men were all working in one room there would certainly be some who would not be actively employed at a given moment, and they, by talking with one another, would distract the others. That would occur, particularly, during the dinner adjournment, when the men who had taken turns just before the adjournment would want to work, while the others would have nothing to do until the re-assembling of the House. I think three rooms would be a satisfactory

number for the men to work in, with a fourth room in which they could smoke or rest. This fourth room could also serve the purpose of a reference library. I think it would be impossible to place couches in the proposed reporters' rooms, and it would be impossible to turn down the lights in any of these rooms so as to give a man a quarter of an hour's spell and rest for his eyes during late sittings. Long sittings are very trying to the eyes, especially when doing reporting work. Placed as proposed the cubicles would be an intolerable nuisance. I do not approve of the proposal to place the *Hansard* reporters in a gallery. A reporter is dependent upon his eyes, to a certain extent, as well as his ears. It is sometimes necessary to see the expression of a man's face in order to comprehend his meaning. I do not think it is possible to report a man satisfactorily unless one can see him. In our present position we have a difficulty in this respect with members of the Opposition, who are behind us. They are, however, very near to us, and most of them come forward and speak at the table. We are now in a splendid position for hearing. I am quite certain that the reports are more capably done from the floor than they could possibly be from a gallery. Pressmen frequently come to us, especially at question time, to inquire what a certain member said. The objections to being at the table are not objections that we would raise. We are content with our present position, but would like another seat. A possible arrangement would be to place the reporters at the head of the table on the floor level. The clerks could be behind them, and raised above them, and the Speaker or President behind the clerks, and raised above them. Theoretically, every member addresses the Speaker or President. There is sometimes so much conversation in the space between the reporter in a gallery and the member who is addressing the Chair, that it is difficult for a member's voice to penetrate the babble of interjections. Noise in the chamber does not worry the reporters very much if it does not occur between where they are sitting and the speakers whom they are reporting. A corridor with four cubicles, each measuring 6 feet by 8 feet, on each side of it, would be a more satisfactory arrangement than that proposed. The determination of ventilation and lighting is a matter that would have to be left to the architects. Each of the cubicles should be sound-proof, if possible. If any part of our work had to be done in a basement it would increase the amount of time wasted by running about. I would not say that the arrangement provided in the Western Australian Parliament, where members of *Hansard* are accommodated on a raised dais, in a corner near the Speaker, is unsuitable, but it is not so good as being at the table. I think the position I have suggested at the head of the table would be the best; but, from our point of view, there is nothing unsuitable in our present position, though we require another chair. Objection to our present position, if there is any, would be the objection of members, not of reporters. If the reporters were placed at the head of the table it would be necessary to have a space of about 4 feet between their table and the dais behind them for the clerks.

85. *To Mr. Mackay.*—I do not know whether we have ever applied for a third chair at the table. I do not know what happened when we were first given our present position, but I think we have been refused a third chair. I have seen some correspondence in which the first President of the Senate objected to our having three chairs, because they would encroach too much upon the space required by members. We may have a very undignified accident some day when a reporter is sliding off the chair to allow another to take his place. The first man may shift too far and fall full length on the floor. We have come near to doing it, and it would not be a pleasant incident for the reporter. It is very awkward for us to have to relieve one another without a spare chair. Most of the work of *Hansard* is done in the basement of the present building. It is not, however, really a basement, but a ground floor. The chief

objection to it is that we have a long way to walk from the House to it. Our rooms should be as near as possible to our work. When we are at work we are almost always short-handed. Four men are not enough for reporting one House. We need six for each House, but it would involve too much expense to have a staff as large as that. We would prefer our suite of offices to be on the Representatives, rather than on the Senate, side of the building. If there were no table in the House, and each Minister and member had a desk, the arrangement would not be convenient for Committee work, when only a limited number of members on each side usually participate actively in the proceedings. Assuming that the present table gives enough convenience to members, lengthening it would enable the *Hansard* staff to have another chair. I do not think it would be necessary, however, to extend the table as much as four feet.

86. *To the Chairman.*—If I take part in the conference of officers on the question of accommodation at Parliament House, Canberra, and am asked for a report, that report will be on the lines set out in the statement I have read.

87. *To Mr. Blakeley.*—The ladies engaged in typing for *Hansard* are not now badly off in the matter of accommodation. They are employed mostly on the Senate side, where, instead of cubicles, they are provided with three small rooms. We have one lady on the Representatives side who works in a room which is badly lighted and badly ventilated. I do not think any one is comfortable in the building we now occupy.

88. *To Mr. Cook.*—I have considered only the question of *Hansard* accommodation. The accommodation proposed to be provided falls short of our actual needs, and is much less than we now have.

(Taken at Melbourne).

THURSDAY, 29TH MARCH, 1923.

Present:

Mr. GREGORY, Chairman;

Mr. Blakeley

Mr. Mackay

Mr. Cook

Mr. Mathews.

Fred U'Ren, Secretary, Joint House Department, and Clerk-Assistant of the Senate, sworn and examined.

89. *To the Chairman.*—The activities controlled by the Joint House Committee comprise the management of the refreshment-rooms, the gardens, the Queen's Hall, and other services including lighting, repairs and maintenance, and telephones. With respect to the allocation of rooms in this building, and to the control of the housekeepers, messengers, cleaners, &c., the House of Representatives' housekeeper is under the control of the Speaker, while the housekeeper on the Senate side is under the control of the President. The allocation and care of the rooms and offices in each Department come under the purview of the Speaker or the President, according to the side of the House on which they happen to be; only those rooms or chambers used jointly by members of Parliament would come within the control of President and Speaker combined. I have examined the plans and layout of the proposed Parliament House at Canberra. Generally, I am satisfied with the provision made in various directions, but there are a few alterations necessary. I fail to see that any provision has been made for a room for the Queen's Hall staff, which, in this building, consists of two messengers and a cleaner. In the proposed Parliament House it would be well to provide them with a separate room instead of their being given accommodation with the staffs of other branches in one general change and rest room. In providing accommodation for the messengers to have their meals, I should think that one room—if it were sufficiently large—would be adequate. Each branch would be better catered for by having an individual changing room. I am given to understand that accommodation has been proposed in addition to

that shown on the plans, and that there is to be a basement under the wings on either side of the Library. A room for the Queen's Hall staff, if it could be made available, might be suitably placed there, as it does not appear to be too far from the centre of their duties. However, so long as there is not over-crowding, I do not see any great objection to these messengers occupying the same changing and dining-rooms as the messengers attached to other branches. Instead of having dividing walls in the large central reception hall, thus providing for an encircling corridor, it would be better to substitute a number of pillars. Thus, much more space would be afforded, and I am of opinion that the appearance of the main reception chamber would be considerably enhanced. I have discussed the proposed arrangements for the refreshment branch with responsible officials in this House. One or two suggested alterations have been pointed out to me. Instead of a main dining-room and a lounge, with folding doors between, to provide accommodation for exceptional occasions, I suggest that these two chambers be turned into one large dining hall capable of seating 200 diners. I would do away with the lounge as a separate room for the reason that on special occasions, such as banquets, all those in attendance would prefer to be in the one large general chamber with the principal persons present, rather than find themselves more or less shut off, with only folding doors connecting them. If the two rooms were remodelled so as to provide a much wider space for the folding doors—that is to say, to practically turn the two rooms into one when the doors were thrown back—that would do away with my objection to the plan of this portion of the building. The refreshment and dining accommodation in the present Federal Parliament House is altogether inadequate. In the dining-room itself we can seat only about 70 members at the outside. We can accommodate six more in a curtained space in the corridor, another half-a-dozen in the strangers' room on the way out to the balcony, and, if necessary, twenty more on the balcony. At the utmost, therefore, we can serve only about 102 members; and, if all members sought to dine at the same time, we would have to keep a number waiting. With respect to the smaller dining-rooms planned for the building at Canberra, I am satisfied with the central nature of the provision in this respect generally; but I think it would be well to provide another room for strangers, or for members entertaining friends at light refreshments. There is no room specially set apart for that specific purpose, although perhaps one of the smaller dining-rooms might be made available. I would like to see one of the dining-rooms set apart as a steward's room; portion of this could be turned into a small office. The Chief Steward requires central accommodation so that he can always maintain supervision and control. I would suggest that the room which has been planned for the steward should be used as a pantry, and that the pantry, as set down on the plan, should be for the use of the kitchen staff. The latter and the dining-room staff should be given separate accommodation. The kitchen and arrangements generally therein appear to be quite suitable. I take it for granted that the serveries will each be properly furnished with all necessary modern appurtenances. Altogether, the refectory arrangements appear to be suitable and adequate, and designed with a view to economy of time and space, with the few exceptions just indicated. To provide a dinner in the main hall would be considerably more expensive than to do so in the dining-rooms; just as is the case in this building. Providing a banquet in the Queen's Hall and in the dining-room in this building means adding to the wages bill for attendants to the extent of about 25 per cent. There is not only that undesirable feature, but the food is not so palatable. Naturally, having to be carried so far from the kitchen, it is neither so warm nor so savoury. All accounts having to do with the refreshments branch in this building

pass through my hands. The charge for an ordinary three-course meal is 2s. per head; and, for a meal including poultry, 3s. each. For the meal which costs a diner 2s. in this building, the cost of the food alone amounts to about another shilling. That added amount has to do with food only, but there are other factors which make the 2s. meal a still greater loss to us. We have to allow also for the wages of casual waiters, which amounts to 2s. 6d. per hour. Each waiter attends to between ten and fourteen persons. In connexion with special functions, however, we have to pay each man about £1, which includes not only attendance at the table itself, but his work in connexion with the preparation and clearing up afterwards. Also, there must be considered the wages of the permanent staff and the sessional waiters, but it is in the actual cost of food alone that our 2s. meal works out at about 3s. Such an item as fuel does not come into the calculation, for that is not debited to the refreshment rooms account. The fuel consumed in this building is paid for by the Joint House Department. The high price of food is partly responsible for the loss. Those privileged to be supplied with meals in this building are members and ex-members of the Commonwealth Parliament, members of the Victorian Parliament, and occasional visitors from other State Legislatures. The latter, however, dine here as a matter of courtesy. Then there are also the officers of this House, including the members of the *Hansard* staff. No other persons are privileged to dine here. Until some time ago we provided considerable space on the balcony for the press. That accommodation, however, had to be cut down to make more room for members, so that the press were restricted to a certain portion of the balcony. I understand that some of the pressmen objected to being seated all together at a common table. Their attendance in this building for meals thereupon ceased, with the exception of half-a-dozen Inter-State pressmen, who are still provided for on the balcony. If the Melbourne pressmen generally desired it, they might still be provided for by us, but that would mean that there would be even less room available for members. I think members of the press are charged 2s. 6d. per head for meals supplied on the balcony. From the business point of view, it would be better if we were not required to cater for the press at Parliament House in Canberra. The more we have to cater for, the greater is our loss. To make the department pay would really mean that, allowing for all expenditure, we would have to charge more like 10s. than 2s. each.

90. *To Mr. Mackay.*—The tariff for meals is fixed by the Joint House Committee. I do not suggest, of course, that the charge should be made nearer 10s. than 2s.; but to make some greatly increased charge would be the only way of turning the refreshments department into a paying concern.

91. *To the Chairman.*—The Joint House Committee has control over the gardens. Here, the bowling green and tennis court are used a great deal during sessions, and they are also in frequent use throughout the recesses. I am asked whether many other persons besides members utilize the recreation accommodation in these gardens. Others do so at the request of members. The latter are required to make application for relations or friends. In this way, and only thus, are strangers permitted to take advantage of our recreation accommodation. The instructions requiring members to make application have been carried out for a long time. To my knowledge it is not a fact that outsiders make use of the tennis court, or that they can be permitted to do so, simply because a member of Parliament has told them that they may. That kind of thing occurred in the past, I believe, but we have put a stop to it. It will be highly advantageous to make full provision for recreation in the precincts of Parliament at Canberra. There should be a bowling green, tennis courts, and cricket pitch. There is a gymnasium in the basement of this building, near the quarters of

the caretaker of the House of Representatives. The ventilation of the Chambers comes within the control of the Joint House Department to the extent of our seeing that the system already installed is taken proper care of and is adequately carrying out its functions. I am not acquainted with the full history of the ventilation plant from its inception. I understand that the more recent alterations—that is to say, the plant as it exists to-day—are the work of the Commonwealth Works and Railways Department. Information supplied to me shows that in November, 1907, that Department paid £98 17s. 6d. in connexion with the work, and in December, 1908, two further sums amounting to £935 13s. 7d. There is no record of any payment by Parliament. The account would not necessarily have been paid by the Joint House Committee. The Works and Railways Department pays for certain services in connexion with this building. It has a vote placed on the Estimates each year for necessary work to be carried out here.

92. *To Mr. Mathews.*—There is room for improvement in the provision made for a messenger at the Senate entrance to this building. The box in the vestibule is not altogether suitable. None of the boxes in which messengers are housed in various parts of this building is of a really suitable and altogether healthy character. I note that the messengers' vestibule accommodation at the main entrance to the proposed Canberra building is inside the main doors; and, so far as I can see, it should be adequate, although care should be taken to ensure that the boxes are quite healthy, and sufficiently large for their purpose. In connexion with accommodation for the steward in the refreshment department, I have emphasized the need for his being placed centrally where he could supervise the dining-room, the bar, and the whole of the staff. In serving the various smaller dining-rooms, it might prove economical to have a serving truck, or trolley, in the waiters' corridor.

93. *To Mr. Blakeley.*—I have mentioned that the greater the number of meals we are called upon to serve here, the greater is our loss. I believe that such will be the case also at Canberra. Indeed, our loss there will probably be even greater. We expect to be called upon to employ a much larger permanent staff at Canberra, for the reason that casual waiters will not be easily obtainable. It is possible that, since there will probably be a greater number of members dining regularly at Parliament House each day, our losses might be reduced a little. I am of opinion that a gymnasium should be provided for the use of members. Anything tending in the direction of recreation and the upkeep of health of members and officers of Parliament should be taken into consideration.

94. *To Mr. Cook.*—I think that the planning of the dining-rooms and kitchen generally is such as will provide the maximum of economy—that is, with the exception of the few alterations which I have already suggested. One reason why our meals work out at such a loss in this building is that we have to provide for many who do not actually attend. We are called upon to prepare meals for a certain number of diners, whether the food is eaten or not. Some of the food, of course, can be made use of again subsequently; but the attendance of diners is so irregular, and is so impossible to gauge, that there is practically always some wastage.

95. *To Mr. Mackay.*—The permanent staff of the refreshments department consists at present of a steward, an assistant steward, and a chef. In addition, there are three sessional waiters who are engaged temporarily during the session. Then we call in a number of casual waiters to meet emergencies. I do not suggest that the charge for our present 2s. meal should be 10s., but that it would be nearer that amount if the refreshment department had to meet all charges and it were required to be made a paying concern. I repeat that the cost of a meal would be nearer 10s. than 2s. if all expenses were to be covered. I do not think our staff is overmanned. The attendants are called upon to wait on as

many as fourteen persons. I understand that the limit for waiters outside is about eight diners each. We provide the same class of luncheon during the recess as when Parliament is in session. Our loss, owing to the irregularity of diners, is perhaps more marked then. Sometimes we reckon on an attendance of twenty members, and only about six enter the dining-room. If we could be informed at all times of the approximately correct number of diners, our costs would be reduced. The Joint House Committee has looked into the whole question very closely; and I do not see how, under existing conditions, we could make further reductions of costs. No provision is made here for serving police with meals during the sittings of Parliament. I do not think that there is any provision on the plans of the Canberra building for the police. The police work on shifts, and no doubt their duties are so arranged that they can obtain their meals elsewhere. Another small dining-room might be added to the plan, to be known as a strangers' refreshment room. Probably this could be provided by the erection of a pavilion in the garden in front of the dining-room. It would not be out of the way of the waiting staff, and should be anything but an eyesore in the garden. Of course, the factor of compactness must be borne in mind. The whole of the refreshment branch should be as conveniently placed to the kitchen as possible.

96. *To the Chairman.*—The plans provide for a pantry at the back of the kitchen. I am advised that that is not a good place for it. The room might, with more advantage, be used by the kitchen staff. The one now set apart as the steward's room could be converted into a pantry; and at least another pantry should be provided elsewhere, as near to the dining-room as possible. The dining-room planned to seat twenty persons would be very suitable for the steward's room. Part of it should be partitioned off as an office. It would not be by any means too large, seeing that it would house books and accounts and certain stores. There is another dining-room exactly the same size as the room of which I speak. It is planned to accommodate ten persons, but it could just as easily hold twenty. There is no connexion shown between the bar and the cellar beneath. I presume that the necessary trapdoor will be arranged for.

97. *To Mr. Mackay.*—We do not make a loss on the bar in this building, but the profit is merely nominal. There is no waste. We charge the usual retail prices.

98. *To the Chairman.*—I believe that the Joint House Committee is quite satisfied that we get our supplies reasonably and well. We do not secure them on contract but deal with tradesmen who have served us satisfactorily. In some instances we secure whole-sale prices.

99. *To Mr. Cook.*—I am given to understand that the State House provides members with a good meal for 1s. 6d. If such is the case, I feel confident that the Department concerned must be making a much greater loss than we are.

(Taken at Melbourne.)

WEDNESDAY, 4TH APRIL, 1923.

Present:

Mr. GREGORY, Chairman;	
Mr. Blakeley,	Mr. Mackay,
Mr. Cook,	Mr. Mathews.
Mr. Jackson,	

Herbert Arthur Davies, Immediate Past President, Vice-President of the Australian Journalists' Association, and member of the Federal Press Gallery Committee, sworn and examined.

100. *To the Chairman.*—I have had considerable experience in note-taking in the Commonwealth and Victorian parliamentary galleries from 1909 until I went to the war in 1916, and intermittently since my

return. The conditions under which the reporting is done in the Commonwealth Parliament are exceptionally bad owing to the position of the gallery in the House of Representatives and the acoustic properties of that chamber. From certain positions in the gallery it is almost impossible to see the member speaking if he happens to occupy a seat on the end benches near Mr. Speaker's chair. As a result most of the daily newspapers send their staffs into the Inter-State press gallery whenever any speech of importance is being delivered. As a matter of fact, some of them are down there all the time in order that they may hear properly what is being said. The conditions in the Inter-State press gallery are quite satisfactory. I have had an opportunity of examining the sketch plan of the proposed parliamentary buildings at Canberra, and I have noted the arrangements contemplated for the pressmen there. It is difficult to report satisfactorily in a gallery that overlaps the debating chamber. In this respect the conditions in the Senate chamber are more satisfactory than is the case with the gallery in the House of Representatives. On some occasions when reporting in the House of Representatives gallery I have found it necessary to lean right over to ascertain who was speaking, because from the position I occupied, portion of Mr. Speaker's chair obstructed the view. A gallery after the style of the Inter-State press galleries in the present House of Representatives chamber would be much more satisfactory, because the reporter would be able to see all the speakers and hear all the interjections. The ideal height for a press gallery would be about 6 feet above the floor on either side of the chamber. If there is to be an upper gallery it should not be more than about 15 feet high. If the design of the proposed chambers were altered to enable members to leave by a small passage-way at the rear a press gallery above this passage-way would, I think, be quite convenient. I anticipate that at first there will be between thirty and thirty-five pressmen engaged in reporting upon governmental activities and the parliamentary proceedings at Canberra, and as the building is to be designed to last for forty or fifty years, it is reasonable to anticipate with the expected increase in the number of daily newspapers of Australia, that there will be a corresponding increase in the number of pressmen employed at Canberra. At present both Melbourne and Sydney are understocked in the matter of daily newspapers. Melbourne with a population of about 700,000, and Sydney with over 800,000 people have each five daily newspapers. Many other capital cities of the world are much better served in this respect. For instance, Sofia, with a population of 102,000, has fourteen daily newspapers; Copenhagen, with 462,000 people, has fourteen; Christiania, with 300,000 people, has twelve; Lisbon, with 435,000 people has thirteen; and Madrid, with 605,000, has seventeen. I have consulted with other pressmen in regard to the probable increase in the number of pressmen likely to be employed at Canberra during the life of the proposed parliamentary buildings. At a meeting held yesterday afternoon, and attended by members of the Federal Press Gallery Committee, and representatives of the agencies supplying syndicated news, it was estimated that, starting with thirty to thirty-five, the number will increase to between fifty and sixty during the life of the proposed parliamentary buildings, so accommodation should be planned for that number. Assuming that the Melbourne and Sydney daily newspapers with similar policies syndicate their news, then each paper would be represented at Canberra by two or three men. The common report of the proceedings supplied would be used at the discretion of the representatives of the various newspapers. Then there would be a Federal roundsman, and a man to write the parliamentary sketch and generally supervise the matter despatched to his newspaper. If, on the other

hand, the newspaper proprietors sent separate staffs there would then be at least three additional men for every daily newspaper in Melbourne and Sydney. The provision of a common room for the whole of these men would be impracticable and unworkable, but there should be a common room for recreation. Most of the work is done outside of the gallery, and so provision should be made for the reporter who has to write the parliamentary sketch or the leading article, because it is quite likely that both the Melbourne and Sydney newspaper proprietors will send their leader-writers to Canberra. The Federal leading articles of the *Sydney Daily Telegraph* are written from here now. There is, of course, no reason why this particular branch of newspaper work should be done in Parliament House, but there should be provision for it in the accommodation contemplated for the pressmen. In view of the number of pressmen likely to be employed at Canberra, and bearing in mind the conflicting policies of the papers they represent, it is very desirable that separate accommodation should be provided. Syndicated news is not always satisfactory. To illustrate what I mean, I may cite the case of the *Argus* and the *Brisbane Courier*, which have an arrangement for the reciprocal interchange of news in the respective capitals. There might be a debate on, say, the sugar question. Naturally the *Brisbane Courier* would devote very much more space to that subject than would the *Argus*. To meet the requirements of pressmen at Canberra we anticipate that nine rooms will be necessary for the metropolitan daily newspapers—four for the Melbourne newspapers, regarding the Melbourne morning and evening *Sun* as one paper, and five for the Sydney dailies. The newspaper proprietors of Brisbane, Adelaide, and Perth are not likely to send separate representatives, but will depend upon their present arrangement with the newspapers of Melbourne and Sydney. We think also that three rooms should be set aside for the press agencies that supply syndicated news to provincial and country newspapers of the several States, making twelve rooms required altogether. A common room for the metropolitan newspapers would not be a convenient arrangement owing, as I have shown, to their conflicting policies. There will probably be direct telephone lines to Melbourne and Sydney, and on occasions the specialists and leader-writers might wish to consult with their editors as to what aspects of the day's proceedings should be touched upon. Obviously it would be impossible to do this in a common room occupied by a number of other pressmen. The same objection to a common room would hold good in the case of a reporter wishing to communicate with his editor concerning an exclusive article. I think it would be possible to subdivide some of the rooms shown on the sketch plan, and give all the necessary accommodation. The leader-writers and specialist writers could have rooms set apart for them, and the telephone boxes could be provided apart from the common room. It is desirable to have all press accommodation located conveniently to the chamber in order to be able to call upon the staff promptly. For instance, the debate might be uninteresting, and the reporters taking hourly turns in the gallery, but if the Prime Minister gets up suddenly to make an important announcement the staff will at once be put on to ten-minute turns, and so it is advisable to have them close to the chamber to obviate delay. Certain portions of the building should be reserved absolutely to members, but on the other hand pressmen should have ready access to Ministers and members. This privilege has not been abused. During my experience of fourteen years I have not yet seen the bar or the billiard-room in this building. Pressmen do not agree with the evidence given by the President, Senator Givens, who stated that the press are "all over" the House, and that members have no privacy. Pressmen are frequently

sought out during a sitting by Ministers and private members. The representatives of newspapers in distant States are often advised by members from those States that they are going to say something that will be of interest to their constituents, and they want the reporters to know when they will be speaking, so that they may be reported. The arrangement which permits pressmen to use the corridors affords a good deal of facility, not only to the reporters themselves, but also to members. In the New South Wales Parliament the press have a separate set of rooms with, at the back, a dining-room and a balcony from which they may smoke and get a breath of fresh air between turns. They have also convenient lavatory accommodation. In this respect many complaints have been made about the present Federal Parliament. Representatives of the Inter-States press are obliged to go down stairs and through the cellars to accommodation at the rear of the building. If the parliamentary corridors at Canberra are to be reserved entirely for members, pressmen will be unable to see Ministers unless they are sent for. Frequently they have inquiries to make on behalf of the papers they represent, and desire urgently to see Ministers. Touching on the accommodation in the galleries, we suggest that the desks should be at least 2 feet wide and 3 feet long for each reporter, with a drawer underneath in which to keep copies of Bills and other parliamentary papers.

101. *To Mr. Mathews.*—The metropolitan daily newspapers of Melbourne have no arrangement for the syndicating of Melbourne news, but they have reciprocal arrangement with newspapers in the other States. The *Argus* sends Victorian news to the *Sydney Morning Herald*, and gets Sydney news in return. The *Age* supplies Victorian news similarly to the *Sydney Daily Telegraph*, and gets New South Wales news from that office. It is probable, however, that separate staffs for all these newspapers will be sent to Canberra, because whilst there might still be the reciprocal arrangement for interchange of news in the respective States, the *Age*, to quote one illustration, might give much more prominence to some happening in the Federal Parliament than would the *Sydney Daily Telegraph*. As Canberra will be an official city it is not likely that there will be very many hotels to cater for ordinary travellers, and therefore I think dining-room accommodation should be set apart for pressmen at Parliament House. It would not be at all convenient if representatives of the press had to go to the hostel for their meals, because reporters do not, as a rule, take the full meal time allotted to members, but have a quick meal, and get back to their rooms to write up. Pressmen generally endeavour to furnish absolutely accurate reports of parliamentary proceedings, and to maintain most friendly relations with members. The policy of the newspaper which employs them should not militate against their relationships with members. They are engaged merely for the reporting of the debates, and leave comments to the leader-writers and the higher officials in the office.

102. *To Mr. Blakeley.*—To meet the requirements of the press at Canberra twelve rooms should be provided and allotted as I have indicated. Pressmen would greatly appreciate ready means of access to both legislative chambers, and also adequate dining arrangements. Until recently, when the room set apart for their use was required for other purposes, they were able to dine in the present building, but now have to go elsewhere. There is provision for them in the Victorian and New South Wales Parliaments, and also, I understand, in New Zealand. A club room for their recreation would be greatly valued, because the men who go there will, like members of Parliament themselves, be exiles from their homes for the duration of each session. It is very desirable, therefore, that there should be some facilities for their recreation when the Houses are not sitting.

103. *To Mr. Cook.*—To meet the convenience of the press, I suggest that the galleries should be slightly raised above the floor level, and that they should not overlap the chamber; that separate rooms be provided for the representatives of the different newspapers and the syndicating agencies; that dining accommodation be provided; and that some common room be made available to them for their recreation. There will not be sufficient pressmen employed at Canberra to establish a club for themselves—the cost would be prohibitive. Therefore, unless there is some provision for them they will, during the time when Parliament is not sitting, be driven to their rooms in lodgings or be obliged to wander about aimlessly.

104. *To Mr. Mackay.*—I think the newspaper proprietors should be asked to give evidence as to the policy they intend to adopt in reporting the proceedings of Parliament at Canberra. Until we know what they are going to do we can hardly say definitely what our needs may be. I understand that there will be a direct telegraph line from Canberra to the Melbourne and Sydney offices, and also probably direct telephone lines. The arrangements for the convenience of pressmen amplified, as I have suggested, would be satisfactory.

105. *To the Chairman.*—I visited the House of Commons when I was in England, and I know that the arrangements there for the reporting of the debates are very unsatisfactory. The following is an extract from the *Newspaper World* of 17th February, 1923, bearing on the conditions there:—

Once again the press gallery, like the front Opposition bench, was uncomfortably crowded on Tuesday, demonstrating the inadequacy of the present accommodation. Sketch writers were jammed together on the long back bench, whilst others were herded at each side of the gangway, rendering note-taking a difficult task. For years the gallery facilities in the House itself have proved to be quite inadequate, notwithstanding the stringency exercised by the Serjeant-at-Arms in issuing new tickets.

The accommodation in the precincts of the House behind the gallery has been considerably extended and improved in recent years, leaving little to be desired. It is unfortunate that similar improvements have not been made in the sitting arrangements in the gallery itself. The same thing obtains on the floor of the House, where it is impossible for the whole of the members to secure seats when there is a full attendance. The practice followed here is for the Serjeant-at-Arms, prior to the opening of each session, to write to the newspaper proprietors and the press agencies seeking information as to the number and names of the reporters who will be engaged reporting the debates during a session, and upon receipt of this information tickets are issued to the pressmen concerned. There is an attendant at the door leading to the press gallery, and unless a pressman has a ticket of admission he is not entitled to enter. I well remember on one occasion in 1911, and before this practice was adopted, when, owing to the interest in the debate, the press gallery was crowded with outsiders. It is frequently occupied by persons other than pressmen now on days when the debate is interesting, and inconvenience is sometimes caused to reporters by those standing behind walking about and talking in whispers. We have no objection to other people occupying that portion of the accommodation in the gallery, provided no noise is made. From a reporter's point of view, and I think from the viewpoint of the member also, the practice of delivering second-reading speeches from a rostrum would be a desirable innovation. I had an experience of this custom at a conference in Honolulu. Speaking from a rostrum a member would always be facing the reporter, and would probably be subject to less interruption. The adoption of this course would probably lead to more decorum in debate. I might also mention that in New Zealand the *Hansard* reporter is accommodated at a small square table on the floor of the chamber, and may so seat himself as to face a member speaking from any part of the House.