1928.

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

Laid on the Table by Lea. Peares

Pursuant to Statute

Clerk of the Senate.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE

THIRTEENTH CENERAL REPORT.

Presented pursuant to Statute: ordered to be printed.

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Printed and Published for the GOVERNMENT of the COMMONWEALTH of AUSTRALIA by H. J. GRREN, Government Printer, Canberra.

MEMBERS OF THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

Fifth Committee:

GEORGE HUGH MACKAY, Esq., M.P., Chairman.

Senate.

House of Representatives.

Senator John Barnes Senator Patrick Joseph Lynch† Senator Herbert James Mocklord Payne* Senator Matthew Reid Malcolm Duncan Cameron, Esq., M.P. § Robert Cook, Esq., M.P. The Hon. Henry Gregory, M.P. ‡ Andrew William Lacey, Esq., M.P. David Charles McGrath, Esq., M.P. Alfred Charles Seabrook, Esq., M.P.

* Appointed 1st July, 1926... † Resigned 30th June, 1928, : Resigned 2nd March, 1927. \$ Appointed 24th March, 1927.

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THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

THIRTEENTH GENERAL REPORT.

To His Excellency the Right Honorable John Lawrence, Baron Stonehaven, Member of His Majesty's Most Honorable Privy Council, Knight Grand Cross, of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Companion of the Distinguished Service Order, Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief of the Commonwealth of Australia.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY:

. .

In accordance with the requirements of Section 11 of the Commonwealth Public Works Committee Act 1913-1921, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works has the honour to submit the following report of its proceedings for the year ended 31st December, 1927:—

CHANGE IN THE COMMITTEE.

1. On the 2nd March, 1927, the Honorable Henry Gregory, M.P., resigned his position on the Committee.

On 24th March, 1927, Malcolm Duncan Cameron, Esq., M.P., was selected as a member of the Committee.

Prior to entering upon his duties Mr. Cameron made and subscribed the declaration required by the Commonwealth Public Works Committee Act 1913-1921.

NUMBER OF MEETINGS.

2. During the year the Committee held 105 meetings and examined 66 witnesses in connexion with the proposed works submitted. In making its inquiries the Committee travelled 12,694 miles by rail and 180 miles by road, a total distance of 12,874 miles.

QUESTIONS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE.

- 3. When the Committee presented its last General Report the following questions were under consideration, namely:—
 - (a) Improvement of Wharfage Facilities at Darwin.
 - (b) Installation of Mail-handling Appliances, General Post Office, Sydney.
 - (c) Selection of Site and Construction of Wharf at Rabaul, New Guinea.
 - (d) Erection of Postal Workshops, South Melbourne.
 - (e) Erection of Commonwealth Offices, Sydney.
- 4. Since then the following matters have been submitted to the Committee for inquiry and report, viz:—
 - (f) Construction of Buildings and Formation of Reserves at Cauberra for the National Museum of Australian Zoology.
 - (g) Erection of Commonwealth Offices, Brisbane.
 - (h) Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Oakleigh, Victoria.
 - (i) Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Box Hill, Victoria.
 - (1) Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Cottesloe, Western Australia.
 - (k) Erection of Postal Workshops at Sydenham, New South Wales.
 - (l) Extension of Installation of Mail-handling Appliances, General Post Office, Sydney,
 - (m) Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange, at Maroubra, New South Wales.
 - (n) Construction of North-western Intercepting Sewer, Canberra.

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COMPLETED INQUIRIES.

III COIIIIEXIOII	e Committee has dealt with several of these questions and has presented therewith, viz. :—	l reports
	i) Installation of Mail-handling Appliances, General Post Office, Sydney	timated Coet.
~ (i) Installation of Mail-handling Appliances, General Post Office, Sydney	41,400
r (ii) Selection of Site and Construction of Wharf at Rabaul, New Guinea	40,000
⊀ (iii	Erection of Commonwealth Offices, Sydney	108,817
≁ (iv	c) Construction of Buildings and Formation of Reserves at Canherra for	100,011
	the National Museum of Australian Zoology	87,080
ζ(ν.) Improvement of Wharfage Facilities, Darwin	223,934
(V1	Erection of Commonwealth Offices, Brisbane	170,464
(vii) Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Oakleigh,	
(*****		40,180
(111)) Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Box Hill, Victoria	46,985
(ix) Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Cottesloe, Western	
7	Australia .	49;191
/0 (x) Erection of Postal Workshops, Sydenham, New South Wales	43,000
(xi)) Extension of Installation of Mail-handling Appliances, General Post Office, Sydney	#1.000
(xii)) Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Maroubra, New	71,000
()	South Wales	20.040
	** ** ** **	52,249
	Total	974,300

SUMMARY OF COMPLETED INQUIRIES.

- (i) Installation of Mail-handling Appliances, General Post Office, Sydney.
- 6. While the General Post Office, Sydney, was being extended and remodelled, the Postmaster-General's Department sought authority for the installation in the remodelled building, at an estimated cost of £41,400, of mechanical aids to expedite the transaction of business, to ensure a more economical handling of mail matter, and to eliminate as far as practicable what was described as a serious waste of human energy.

It was stated that mail-handling would be carried out on three floors, to and from which it would be necessary to transport the various classes of mail matter. The equipment proposed was to consist of lifts and bucket elevators, belt conveyors, and letter and parket sorting machines, and it was claimed that the proposal would offer the following advantages:—

- (a) Eliminate irksome, monotonous, and uninteresting repetition work.
- (b) Enable the large influx of mail matter at peak periods to be more smoothly and expeditiously dealt with.
- (c) Preclude any necessity for the interruption of sorters in their work,
- (d) Avoid waste of time of sorters who had to remain idle while sorting receptacles were being cleared; and of men taking away mail matter who, after depositing it at its destination, returned empty handed for another supply.
- (e) Allow of considerably increased business per square foot of the building, enabling expensive accommodation to be more effectively utilized.

As it was shown in evidence that the proposal would result in a substantial saving to the Commonwealth, the Committee recommended that the installation be proceeded with.

(ii) Selection of Site and Construction of Wharf at Rabaul, New Guinea.

When the Commonwealth received from the League of Nations a mandate to govern the Mandated Territory of New Guinea, formerly known as German New Guinea, the main wharfage accommodation at Rabaul, the capital, consisted of a timber jetty 877 feet long erected in 1905. In 1923 a fire occurred which destroyed the cargo sheds on the jetty and a considerable portion of the seaward end of the structure, and allowed the contents of the sheds, estimated at 500 tons of cement and 2,000 tons of general cargo, including machinery, to drop through the jetty into the water.

It was then decided to proceed with the erection of a new wharf on a new site, and a loan of £36,000 was made available by the Commonwealth Government to the Territory. Administration to meet the cost of the work. Towards the end of 1924 tenders for the work were invited, but, as the lowest tender received was in excess of the money available, no tender was accepted. The plans and specifications were then amended and modified and fresh tenders invited. The lowest of these tenders was also in excess of the money oved for the work.

In the meantime there had arisen a difference of opinion as to the suitability of the new site selected, and the question was raised as to whether it would not be more economical and a better business proposition to repair the old wharf; and Cabinet, in 1926, decided to invite the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to investigate and report in regard to the matter.

The Committee after visiting Rabaul and taking evidence in regard to the matter, recommended:—

- (a) that urgent necessity existed for the provision of improved wharfage accommodation at Rabaul;
- (b) that the site at Malaguna, as suggested by the Administration, be adopted;
- (c) that a continuous wharf 600 ft. long, as suggested by the Administration, be erected;
- (d) that alternative tenders be called for-
 - (a) the construction of a timber wharf with timber piles sheathed with reinforced concrete;
 - (b) the erection of a wholly reinforced concrete structure;
 - (c) the construction of a timber wharf with reinforced concrete piles;
- (e) that in the event of tenders received being considered excessive the work be carried out departmentally by the Administration;
- (f) that the sheds to be erected be constructed of steel frames, 24-gauge galvanized iron roofs and walls, and concrete floors, the walls to be 18 feet high;
- (g) that a water supply to serve the proposed wharf be installed on a gravitation system if possible.

(iii) Frection of Commonwealth Offices, Sydney.

This proposal submitted for investigation by the Committee aimed at the erection on portion of certain land in Phillip-street, Sydney, acquired by the Commonwealth for the purpose, of a modern fire-resisting building, having a basement, a ground floor, and ten other floors. It was proposed that the structure should have reinforced concrete piers and beams, brick walls and concrete floors covered with wood blocks laid in bitumen; the front of the building to be faced with axed trachyte from ground level to a height of about 5 feet and from that point to the top faced with Hawkesbury sandstone.

The estimated cost of the proposal as submitted to the Committee was £108,817, and the time fixed for completion two years from date of commencement.

After carefully considering all the evidence received, the Committee found that necessity existed for the provision of office accommodation for Commonwealth purposes in Sydney, and recommended that the building as proposed be proceeded with. It further recommended that space be set apart in the building for the provision of a luncheon room for the use of the occupants of the building, and that an additional staircase to afford a means of escape in case of need be provided at the rear of the building.

(iv) Construction of Buildings and Formation of Reserves at Canberra for the National Museum of Australian Zoology.

Medical scientists claim that a true knowledge of the complexities of the human body can be obtained only by the study of those types of animals in which the various parts can be demonstrated in simpler forms; and that in Australia alone, of all the world, exist these simpler types of mammals, the study of which is absolutely essential for a correct understanding of the human body, not only in health, but also in disease.

For over sixteen years Dr. William Colin Mackenzie collected specimens of Australian fauna and made them the subject of scientific research. The live animals were accommodated in an 80-arc enclosure at Healesville, Victoria, while specimens of organs, muscles and skeletons were kept at the Doctor's own residence at St. Kilda-road, Melbourne.

In 1923 Dr. Mackenzie offered as a gift to the Commonwealth the live animals on the reservation at Healesville, together with his collection of specimens at St. Kilda-road, and this offer was accepted, the Commonwealth agreeing to reserve in the Federal Capital Territory a site or sites suitable for a National Museum of Australian Zoology, and after the transfer of the Seat of Government to Canberra to construct at its own expense such buildings and other enclosures as in its opinion might be necessary or desirable for the accommodation of the museum.

The proposal submitted for the consideration of the Committee was the construction of a building to provide for a museum chamber, lecture hall, storage basement and other accommodation, and the preparation of the reservation, including provision of animal enclosures reptile house, pond enclosure, water supply, sewerage, residences, &c.

The total cost of the proposal was given as £87,080, and the time fixed for completion of the work about two years from date of commencement.

After carefully reviewing all the evidence taken in regard to the matter the Committee recommended:—

- (a) that an area of 80 acres south of the Molonglo River be set apart for the Zoological Park;
- (b) that this area be planted with necessary trees and shrubs as early as possible;
- (e) that a museum building and residence be erected on an area of 5 acres in proximity to the University area;
- (d) that the two wings of the museum building instead of being one story, as suggested, should be shortened and made two stories high to give the same accommodation at approximately the same cost;
- (e) that the front of the lecture hall be faced with Fairy Meadow limestone and that the remainder of the building be constructed with high-class Canberra bricks, with the base mouldings and other architectural embellishments of Fairy Meadow limestone—thus saving approximately £6,000 on the original proposal.

(v) Improvement of Wharfage Facilities, Darwin.

In 1924 the Committee, after taking exhaustive evidence on a proposal to construct a concrete wharf at Darwin on a design put forward by Sir William Clarkson, recommended that it be not proceeded with, but suggested that the Government should instruct a harbour engineer to make a full and detailed examination of Darwin Harbour and submit a scheme of harbour improvements or utilization of the existing jetty which would provide for the efficient and economical handling of imports and exports.

In October, 1924, such report was obtained from Mr. J. F. Ramsbotham, M.Inst. G.E., M.Am.Soc.C.E., Director Commonwealth Lighthouse Service, and on 18th February, 1925, His Excellency the Governor-General in Council referred to the Committee for investigation and report the proposal for the erection of a wharf at Darwin on the lines of Mr. Ramsbotham's

On 16th March, 1925, the Committee commenced its inquiry, but during the progress of the Committee's investigations the Government, on 30th March, 1925, asked Sir George Buchanan, a prominent British engineer who was visiting Australia in connexion with other matters, to advise in regard to the provision of up-to-date shipping facilities at the port of Darwin. The Committee decided to await the receipt of Sir George Buchanan's report, and the then Chairman of the Committee (The Hon, H. Gregory, M.P.) so informed the House in a statement made on.

23rd September, prior to the adjournment of Parliament on 25th September, 1925. The House of Representatives was dissolved on 3rd October, 1925, a new Committee was appointed on 22nd January, 1926, and the matter was referred to that Committee on 11th February, 1926.

In July, 1926, Sir George Buchanan's report was made available to the Committee, and the reference was further considered, the evidence taken by the former Committee being availed of by the present Committee.

After weighing all the evidence received the Committee found itself faced with the problem that while Darwin is provided with a magnificent water way—discounted by the fact that it has a rise and fall of tide of 26 feet—it had a population in the township of only about 1,250 whites, and in the whole of the Northern Territory of about 4,000.

The suggested improvement schemes for the first section only, were estimated, in one case at £223,934, and in the other at £587,687, while the goods handled over the wharf approximated on an average 0,000 tons per annum.

It was pointed out that the Darwin Meat Works were closed, and that the principal export of the Territory was live cattle which could be adequately dealt with under conditions obtaining; furthermore, the Commissioner, Commonwealth Railways, who controlled the wharf, was insistent that the existing jetty could handle all the trade of the port, and stated that he was unable to recommend any expenditure other than for maintenance.

The Committee reported that, although the wharfage accommodation existing was not modern, it met all requirements, and that there was nothing to show that a better wharf would encourage development, and that the spending of money to provide greater facilities was not warranted until increased trade called for it. It was added that when developments reached such a stage as to warrant any considerable expenditure on wharfage improvements a definite scheme should be adopted and proceeded with in successive stages as required.

The Committee carefully considered the proposal outlined by Sir George Buchanan in his report of 30th April, 1926, but was handicapped by the fact that many details were not available, and there was no opportunity of obtaining evidence from Sir George Buchanan, as, while he was in Australia, he had intimated that he had not given sufficient thought to the matter at that stage to enable him to formulate any scheme or supply any definite information.

From the information available, however, the Committee reported that while the accommodation suggested by him would be more than sufficient to handle any trade likely to pass through the port of Darwin for many years, the cost at which it was proposed to provide the facilities was much higher that the Committee considered warranted.

The Committee, after giving the matter most careful consideration, reported that, while in its opinion the first stage of the scheme submitted by Mr. Ramsbotham would eliminate all the disabilities complained of in respect of Darwin jetty, and could be progressively extended as the business of the port expanded, there was not sufficient existing or immediately prospective trade at the port to warrant any additional wharfage construction at the present time.

(vi) Erection of Commonwealth Offices, Brisbane.

Facing the Central Railway Station, Brisbane, is an area of land bounded by Ann, Edward, Adelaide and Creek streets. Of this area a block having frontage of 132 feet to Ann and Adelaide streets by about 295 feet along Creek-street is privately owned; the adjoining block 132 feet to Ann and Adelaide streets by a depth of 295 feet was the property of the Commonwealth, and the remainder was State property.

After extended negotiations the Commonwealth and State Governments agreed to donate strips of their land towards a civic improvement scheme consisting of a public square 225 feet wide by the full depth of the block, incorporating with it a site for a Soldiers' Memorial intended to be erected by public subscription.

A proposal was then submitted to the Committee that on the remaining area of Commonwealth property having frontages of approximately 86 ft. 7½ in. to Ann and Adelaide streets by a depth of 269 ft. 4 in., there he erected a building for the purpose of housing those Commonwealth activities occupying rented premises in Brisbane.

The estimated cost of the proposal as submitted to the Committee was set down at £170,464; and the time fixed for completion two and a half to three years from date of commencement.

After carefully reviewing the whole matter the Committee unanimously agreed that the erection of the building as suggested be proceeded with, and recommended that the granite and sandstone proposed to be used in facing the building should be obtained from Queensland quarries.

(vii) Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Oakleigh, Victoria.

The proposal submitted to the Committee was for the erection, on a site acquired by the Commonwealth in Neerim-road, Oakleigh, of a telephone exchange building, and the installation therein of an automatic telephone switching system having an initial equipment for 1,300 subscribers' lines, and an ultimate capacity of approximately 4,300 subscribers' lines. It was proposed that the initial equipment should be capable of extension to the ultimate capacity named, thereby affording sufficient accommodation for the anticipated development in the Oakleigh area for a period of twenty years after the proposed date of opening.

The estimated cost of the work was set down at £40,180.

After due consideration of the evidence placed before it the Committee expressed itself in favour of the installation of an automatic telephone service for the Oakleigh area as proposed.

(viii) Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Box Hill, Victoria.

This proposal aimed at the erection of a building at the rear of the existing telephone exchange site at the corner of Whitehorse-road and Station-street, Box Hill, and the installation therein as from 31st December, 1928, of an automatic telephone switching system having an initial equipment, for 1700 subscribers lines and an ultimate capacity of approximately 5,200 subscribers lines. It was proposed that the initial equipment should be capable of extension to the ultimate capacity named, and thus enable requirements in the proposed automatic exchange area to be met for twenty years after the suggested date of opening.

The estimated cost of the work was set down at £46,985.

After hearing the evidence adduced the Committee agreed to recommend that the proposal be proceeded with.

(ix) Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Cottesloe, Western Australia,

This was a proposal to erect a building on a site already acquired at the corner of Cliveroad, Congdon-street, and Claremont-avenue, Cottesloe, and to install therein an automatic telephone switching system having an initial equipment for 1,700 subscribers' lines, and an ultimate capacity of approximately 4,400 subscribers lines. It was proposed that the initial equipment should be capable of extension to the ultimate capacity named, and thus enable requirements in the proposed automatic exchange area to be met for twenty years after the proposed date of opening.

The estimated cost of the work was set down at £49,191.

The Committee, after carefully considering the evidence, recommended that the automatic telephone exchange be established as proposed, but that the building be roofed with tiles instead of galvanized iron as proposed, and that the installation of a complete air conditioning plant be left in abeyance pending further investigations.

(x) Erection of Postal Workshops at Sydenham, New South Wales.

This was a proposal to erect on an area of land at Sydenham, the property of the Common-wealth, a building sufficiently large to accommodate for some years the various sections of the telegraph and telephone workshops, and thus permit of their removal from unsuitable and expensive premises occupied under lease.

The estimated cost of the proposal as submitted to the Committee was set down at £43,000, and the time fixed for completion approximately twelve months from date of commencement,

From the investigations made the Committee was satisfied that urgent necessity existed for the provision of more ample and improved accommodation for workshops, and, as the evidence showed that under the new conditions there would be a saving in annual charges for the first five years after establishment of £1,492, and after the first five years when the cost of removal was wiped out, there would be a saving of £1,924 per annum, the Committee unanimously recommended that the proposed building at Sydenham' be put in hand without delay.

(xi) Extension of Installation of Mail-handling Appliances, General Post Office, Sydney.

The Committee's report on the Installation of Mail-handling Appliances in the General Post Office, Sydney, at an estimated cost of £41,400, was presented to Parliament on 2nd March, 1927. Subsequently the Minister authorized an expenditure of £40,000, but, as the work progressed, it was found that the cost would greatly exceed the original estimate.

On 12th October, 1927, therefore, on the motion of the Minister for Works and Railways, the House of Representatives referred to the Committee for investigation the question of the Extension of the Mail-handling Appliances, Sydney General Post Office".

The estimated cost of the work was given as £71,000. In the course of the Committee's inquiries, it was learned that the estimate of £71,000 was not additional to, but inclusive of the amount of £41,400 originally recommended.

When complete detail drawings were prepared, it was found that certain items had been under-estimated, in addition to which manufacturing costs had increased during the twelve months which elapsed from the time the first estimates were prepared. Furthermore, later statistics had indicated that provision would have to be made for dealing with an increased volume of mail matter, and it was deemed wise to include certain additional facilities not included in the original proposal.

The Committee took a grave view of the fact that the estimate of £41,400 given in the first instance as a close approximation of the cost (made after the construction of working models) should have varied to the extent of over 70 per cent, and reported that it should have been emphasized to the Committee that, owing to the original nature of the apparatus involved, a wide variation might have been expected so that if necessary the provision of working drawings might have been authorized to more correctly ascertain the cost before the project was agreed to. However, as further evidence taken indicated that the system to be installed, even at the added cost, would show a saving of £2,244 per annum on the present methods, the Committee recommended that the work be put in hand as early as possible.

The Committee expressed concern at the wide difference in prices of tenders received for portion of the machinery for the work, and recommended that every effort be made to safeguard Commonwealth interests.

When possible it was thought that Commonwealth or State enterprises, capable of satisfying the demands, should be specially invited to submit an offer to fulfil requirements, thus providing a check against tenders received from private firms.

(xii.) Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Maroubra, N.S.W.

This was a proposal to erect on certain Commonwealth property in Storey-street, Maroubra, a building in which would be installed an automatic telephone switching system having an initial equipment for 1,400 subscribers' lines, and an ultimate capacity of approximately 7,000 subscribers' lines. It was proposed that the initial equipment should be capable of extension to the ultimate capacity named and thus enable requirements in the proposed automatic exchange area to be met for twenty years after the date of opening.

The estimated cost was set down at £52,249.

After due consideration the Committee agreed to recommend that the work be proceeded with as proposed.

INQUIRIES INCOMPLETE.

- 7. Inquiries in respect of the under-mentioned public works are incomplete:
 - (a) Erection of Postal Workshops, South Melbourne;
 - (b) Construction of North-western Intercepting Sewer, Canberra.

ESTIMATES.

- 8. The attention of the Committee has been drawn to instances where the completed cost of works reported upon by the Committee have greatly exceeded the estimates submitted to the Committee during the course of its investigations and conveyed by it to Parliament.
- For instance, in a report dated 9th May, 1921, the Committee informed Parliament
 that the proposed installation of automatic telephone exchanges at Albion and Newmarket,
 Queensland, would cost £89,779, and on that information Parliament approved of the work being
 proceeded with.

Tenders for this work were not called until 1924, and the installation was completed in 1927.

On 2nd November, 1927, the Chairman of the Committee, by question in the House of Representatives, elicited from the Minister for Works and Railways the information that the completed cost of the installation was £130,375.

In explanation of the greatly increased cost of the work the Minister stated :-

- "1. The proposal was considered by the Committee early in 1921, but tenders for buildings and equipment were not invited until 1924.
- "2. Development during this period made it necessary to provide subscribers' lines additional to the number originally proposed. The policy adopted by the Postal Department in 1923 of accepting the life of automatic equipment as twenty years instead of fifteen years as previously, made it necessary to provide for an ultimate capacity of 9,000 subscribers' lines as against the estimate of 5,500 lines presented to the Committee. This involved building, accommodation approximately 30 per cent. in excess of that originally proposed.
- "3. Structural improvements, apart from increased accommodation, were effected to the building as originally designed to conform with more recent ideas submitted to the Committee and agreed hipon in other similar exchanges to improve the buildings from air-conditioning and fire-resisting standpoints and, to facilitate future vertical additions.
- "4. Increased labour costs due to Arbitration Court Awards to the extent of 40 per cent, were experienced in connexion with the installation of the equipment."
- 10. Again, in September, 1926, the Committee after taking evidence in regard to the proposal to install mechanical mail-handling appliances in the General Post Office, Sydney, was informed that the estimated cost of the project would be £41,400, but twelve months later, after the work had been started it was ascertained that the installation would probably cost £71,000.

In this case, however, at the instance of the Committee, the matter was in due course made the subject of a fresh reference, and the Committee submitted a second report on 14th December, 1927.

- 11. The Commonwealth Public Works Committee Act 1913-1921 makes it mandatory that:-
- "No public work of any kind whatsoever the estimated cost of completing which exceeds £25,000, and whether such work is a continuation, completion, repair, reconstruction, extension, or a new work shall be commenced unless sanctioned as in this section provided,"

and the Committee is strongly of opinion that where, after a project has been reported upon, it is found that circumstances have arisen which will make the completed cost substantially higher than the sum at which Parliament has been informed the work could be carried out, the matter should be submitted for further review by the Committee.

NON-COMPLIANCE WITH THE ACT.

12. Instances may occur where approval has been given to proceed with works at an estimated cost of slightly under £25,000 and thus not within the scope of the Public Works Committee Act, but where the completed cost exceeds £25,000.

In these cases the Committee considers that compliance with the Act demands that the project should be submitted for investigation by the Committee immediately it is discovered that the total completed cost will exceed the statutory amount of £25,000 mentioned in the Act.

CANBERRA WORKS.

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HOTELS.

13. Certain works carried out at Canberra have been estimated at so small an amount under the statutory £25,000 as to warrant the impression that the Federal Capital Commission is purposely-endeavouring to avoid investigation of its projects by the Committee, and in answer to a question asked by the Chairman of the Committee in the House of Representatives, the Minister for Home and Territories on 2nd December, 1927, stated that the completed cost of the following buildings were as under:—

Hotel Ainslie				 	£24,847
Hotel Wellington		٠,		 	23,166
Beauchamp House	• •	• • •		 	24,000
Assembly Hall			1	 	24.106

These figures were admitted to be exclusive of over-head charges and interest on capital during the course of construction, by the addition of which the amounts would probably be brought over the statutory sum of £25,000, and, as a matter of fact, on page 40 of the Third Annual Report of the Federal Capital Commission tabled in Parliament on 13th December, 1927, the recorded cost of—

Hotel Ainslie is given as	,		 	£27,990
and of Hotel Wellington at		••	 	£25,849

The Chief Commissioner, giving evidence before the Committee on the cost of Canberra cottages, stated:—

. "If you set out to build you have to pay your contractor month by month and incur an interest charge whether you notice it or not.

"We notice it very definitely because the Treasury charges us interest on the capital. We have to include that as portion of the cost of constructing a house."

This being so, the Committee is unanimously of opinion that the total cost at which the project stands as a debit in the books of the Commission when absolutely finalized is the completed cost within the meaning of Section 15 (1) of the Commonwealth Public Works Committee Act, and where that amount exceeds £25,000 the work should be referred for investigation by the Committee.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE.

14. Attention is also drawn to the fact that the remodelling of the old Yarralumla Homestead to serve as a temporary residence for the Governor-General which cost £53,825 7s. 11d. plus an additional amount of £15,424 19s. 11d. for furnishing, was carried out in contravention of the Commonwealth Public Works Committee Act, without reference to the Committee.

PRIME MINISTER'S RESIDENCE.

15. The fact that the building erected as an official residence for this and succeeding Prime Ministers cost £28,070 fs., including furnishing, and has since been stated to be unsuitable for its purpose, rather indicates that this work should have been investigated by the Committee before the project was entered upon.

ADOPTION OF REPORTS.

16. Section 15 (6) of the Commonwealth Public Works Committee Act 1913-1921 prescribes that:—

"After the receipt of the report of the Committee the House of Representatives shall, by resolution, declare either that it is expedient to carry out the proposed work, or that it is not expedient to carry it out."

but instances have occurred where, although the Committee's report has been presented to Parliament and ordered to be printed, no subsequent motion has been brought up to obtain the approval of the House to proceed with the work.

17. In the case of the installation of mail-handling appliances at the General Post Office, Sydney, Ministerial approval was given to proceed with the original project estimated to cost £41,400 without obtaining Parliamentary approval; and in the case of the proposed erection of a wharf at Rabaul the report of the Committee on this work, estimated to cost £40,000, was presented to Parliament on 14th March, 1927, and ordered to be printed, but no motion for its adoption has yet been submitted, although tenders have been invited for the work.

18. In order that the Committee may be kept fully informed of the projects with which it deals it is considered that within one month of the completion of every work reported upon by the Committee, the Department concerned should furnish to the Committee full details of the total completed cost of such work; and where the estimate furnished to the Committee during its investigations has been exceeded, a statement should be appended showing the reasons which led to such increased cost.

RECORD OF INQUIRIES.

19. Appended hereto is a return containing a record of the inquiries of the Committee from the date of its appointment to 31st December, 1927.

G. H. MACKAY,

La Colonia de la

Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,

Parliament House, Canberra,

23rd February, 1928.

Transmitted to the Sim Minister.

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PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

RECORD OF INQUIRIES.

The following is a list of proposed public works inquired into by the Committee from the date of its appointment to 31st December, 1927, with the result of its inquiries:—

Date of Inquiry.	: Proposed Work.	Expenditure proposed by the Government.	Expenditure recommended by the Committee.	Amount In Excess of that proposed,	Amount in Reduction of that proposed.	Remarks.
		£	£	£	£	
1915. 5th Jan. to 24th Feb.	Construction of a main sewer for the city of	75,000	75,000			Recommended as proposed
8th Jan. to 25th Feb.	Storage and regulating reservoir, Upper	100,000			100,000	Committee decided that the was no present necessity urgency for this work
1th Mar. to 4th May	Queanboyan River Erection of buildings at Flinders Naval Base	111,032	111,032		••	Recommended as proposed
6th Mar. to	Sewerage scheme for Flinders Naval Base	9,500	7,500	١.,	2,000	'
th May to 24th June	Lithgow Small Arms Fac- tory Extension	66,600 (including power plant)	92,100	25,500		In lieu of making additions to it existing factory at Lithgow, Committee recommended crection of a factory at Cohern twice, the size of existing factory, the instaltion of now machinery there and the removal thereto of existing machinery at a covenient date.
th: May to 27th May	Increase of output, Small Arms Factory, Lith- gow					Committee recommended este
th May to	Increase of plant, Small Arms Factory, Lith- gow	38,727	38,727		••	Recommended as proposed
7th July to 26th Aug.	Small Arms Factory-	••				Site recommonded
8th Sept. to 15th Oct.	Automatic Telephone Exchange, Sydney	93,008		"	••	Committee favorable to propo subject to provision of ad tional means of ingress a ogress
lst Sept. to 22nd Sept.	Barracks, quarters, gun park, &c., for R.A.F.A., Enoggera, Queensland	28,000	28,225	2,225		Recommended subject to i proved lighting, water, and i services
3rd Sept. to 24th Nov.	Cement Works for Com- monwealth purposes	100,000	100,000			Recommended as proposed
8th Sept. to 6th Oct.	Alterations and additions to the Customs House, Sydney	37,500	29,500	"	٠٠.	Recommended, but stipulate made that occupants be moved to temporary accomm
2th Oct. to 15th Oct.	Automatic Telephone Exchange, Malvern, Victoria	46,933	46,933		••	dation during alterations Recommended as proposed
2th Oct. to 15th Oct.	Automatic Telephone Exchange, Colling- wood, Victoria	49,762	49,752			Recommended as proposed
5th Oct. to 26th Oct.	Additional Office accom- modation, Victoria Barracks, Melbourne	35,000	35,000		.,	Recommended as proposed
1916. ith Feb. to let Mar.	Selection of site for arsenal within the Federal Territory					Confidential report issued Prime Minister
ith May to 31st May	Alterations and additions to the Customs House, Sydney (further re- port)	51,481	41,000		10,481	
ith Feb., 1915, to 21st Aug., 1916	Water Supply scheme. for Flinders Naval	61,000 and 9d. per 1,000 gallons for water con- spmed	Capital cost nil; ls. per 1,000 gallons with minimum an- nual payment of 24,000 for first three years, £3,500 for second three years, £3,000 for		61,000	The interest on the capital cost 201;000 as originally propose, plus the cost of water consum at 9d. per 1,000 gallons, me than counterbalances t annual payment under tachemo recommended

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Date of Impulsy.	Proposed Work,	Expenditure proposed by the Government,	Expenditure recommended by the Committee.	Amount in Excess of that proposed.	Amount in Reduction of that proposed.	Remarks.
1916. 10th Nov., 1915, to 30th Aug.,	Extension of Pine Creek- Katherine River Rail- way to Bitter (Mata- ranka) Springs	£ 320,000	£ 320,000	E.	£	Recommended as proposed
1916 13th July, 1915, to 24th Nov. 1916	ranka) Springs City Railway, Canberra	378,972	280,000		.98,972	The Committee recommended that requirements for some years be met by temporary surface lines at estimated cost of about £37,000
14th July, 1915, to 28th Nov., 1916	Dams for Ornamental Waters, Canberra	912,421	472,421		440,000	Most of the expenditure recom- mended; however, will be de- ferred for a period of years
1917. 16th Jan, to 20th Feb.	Extension of Postal Stores, Harbour-street,	68,532	68,532			Recommended as proposed
31st Jan. to.	Sydney Power House, Flinders Naval Base	15,000	9,500		5,500	
16th Mar. 27th Sept. to 8th Mar., 1918	Naval Base Frection of workshops, hospital, detention barracks, duarters for married officers and warrant officers, water, sewerage, and storm- water reticulations; ulectric distribution system; and accessory works for that estab- lishment	168,845	142,641		26,204	
27th Sept. to 1st May, 1918	Henderson Naval Base— Two breakwaters, ex- cavations, reclamations, busins or quaywalls, floating docks, adminis- trative buildings, and pormanent railways	4,529,109	2,908,859	••	19,250	The Committee recommended that work of the estimated cost of £1,801,000 be made the subject of further inquiry at a later date. A saving of £19,250 was offected in connexion with the transport of material from Wongong
1918, 18th June to 1st Aug.	Housing of Common- wealth workmen at Lithgow, New South Wales	73,762			••	The Committee recommended the erection of 150 houses instead of 100 as proposed, but at a lower average cost
20th Sept. to	Arsenal Railway	62,614	62,614		••	Recommended as proposed
29th Oct. 23rd Dec., 1918, to 26th June, 1919	Ordnance Store, Leichhardt, N.S.W.	69,283		· ··	6,300	The Committee recommended the addition of snother story to the building proposed, but save the cost of same by concentration of Ordnance business at Leichhardt. A further saving of £0,300 was effected by the relocation of the railway siding
1919. 19th June to 7th Oct.	Commonwealth Note Printing Offices	47,800	46,800		1,000	The Committee recommended a variation in the floor finish proposed which would result in a saving of £1,000
1920. 4th May to 9th June	Erection of mobilization and vehicle stores, Seymour, Victoria	78,672	80,472	1,800		Increase resulted from the recommendation of the Committee that fire sprinklers be installed in the Foundation Building
lith June to	Alterations and Additions to the General Post	76,014	76,014			in the Equipment Building Recommended as proposed.
13th July to 24th Aug.	to the General Post Office, Adelaido, S.A.; Mobilization and vehicle atores, Midland Junc- tion, Western Aus- tralia	36,570				The Committee recommender acquisition of additional sever acres and cottage thereon, our estimated that would be prac- tically balanced by elimination of erection of caretakers cottage proposed
3rd Nov., 1920, to 22nd Mar., 1921	Kidman and Mayoh's Wooden Ship-building Contract	135,200	Nil		135,200	The Committee recommender that under no circumstance would the Commonwealth b justified in taking over the ships

	RECORD OF ANQUIRIE	-List of	PROPOSED PUBLIC	Works 1	NQUIRED I	NTO—continued.
Date of Inquiry.	Proposed Work,	Expenditure proposed by the Government,	Expenditure recommended by the Committee,	Amount in Excess of that proposed.	Amount In Reduction of that proposed.	Remarks,
1920. 22nd Dec., 1920, to 12th April, 1921	Extension by two floors of building under con- struction for General Post Office, Perth,	50,000	£ 50,000	£	£	Recommended as proposed
2nd Dec., 1920, to 13th April, 1921	W.A. Erection of an additional tolegraph line from Porth to Eucla via Transcontinental Railway route	42,030	42,030			Recommended as proposed
3rd Nov., 1920, to 20th April, 1921	Erection of additional telephone line between Sydney and Melbourne	37,000	37,000			Recommended as proposed
rd March, 1921, to 6th May.	Erection of Ordnance and other Defence buildings at Kelvin Grove, Bris-	53,040	52,131		910	The Committee recommender utilization of building to be acquired in lies of creeting
1921 3rd Nov., 1920, to 8th May, 1921	bane, Queensland Erection of telephone trunk line between Brisbane and Sydney	35,200	31,514	**		luncheon-rooms The price of copper fell after preparation of estimate
1921. at Feb., 1921, to 9th May, 1921	Establishment of auto- matic telephone ex- changes at Albion and Newmarket, Queens-	89,779	89,779			Recommended as proposed
7th May, 1921, to 28th June, 1921	Establishment of auto- matio telephone ex- changes at Ascut Valo- and North Melbourne,	183,002	183,092			Recommended as proposed
th March, 1921, to 7th July, 1921	Victoria Acquisition of lands for the proposed Anxe Memorial Square, Bris- bane, Queensland			••	••	The Committee recommended— (c) That Commonwealth lands be transferred to State in exchange for suitable area for Commonwealth purpose in an approved locality, or alternatively (b) that Commonwealth area be sold to Brisbane City Council at valuation, or, failing acceptance of (a) or (b), that the Commonwealth are the Commonwealth of the Commonwealth are the Commonwealth of the Commonwealth are the Commonwealth are the Commonwealth of the Commonwealth are the Commonwea
oth March, 1921, to 3rd Aug., 1921	Erection of offices for Taxation and other Commonwealth De- partments in Sydney	145,000	145,000		· ··	Memorial Square Recommended as proposed
3rd Feb., 1921, to 9th Nov., 1921	Re-modelling and addi- tions, General Post- Office, Sydney	268,807	289,000 plus cost of land	21,000 plus cost of land		The Committee's recommenda- tion provided an additional 24,000 feet of floor space to enable the building to be reduced by two stories, and allow some margin for ex- pansion when necessary
8th January, 1921, to 5th October,	Extension of the Port Augusta Qodnadatta Railway from Oodna- datta to Alice Springs	4,109,446	1,558,600	••	2,550,846	pansion when necessary
1922 Sth January, 1921, to 5th October,	way—Extension from Mataranka to Daly	1,159,298	925,386		233,912	
1922 th Dec., 1921, to 6th April, 1922	Waters Sewerage, Federal Capital —Construction of Main Intercepting Sewer from centre of City to connect with Main	66,000	66,000			Recommended as proposed
ith Dec., 1921, to 10th April, 1922	Outfall Sewer Watre Supply, Federal Capital — Distributary Works within the City Area, Canberra	4×'500	48,200			Recommended as proposed
9th Dec., 1921, to 11th April, 1922	Construction of Hostel at Camberra, with neces- sary engineering and other services	98,750	. 62,000	. "	36,750	Committee recommended that construction be limited to central block and half the number of pavilions proposed

RECORD OF INQUIRIES-LIST OF PROPOSED PUBLIC WORKS INQUIRED INTO-continued.

	RECORD OF INQUIRIES	-List of l	PROPOSED PUBLIC	Works In	QUIRED I	NTO—continued.
Date of Inquiry.	Proposed Work,	Expenditure proposed by the Government,	Expenditure recommended by the Committee.	Amount in Excess of that proposed.	Amount in Reduction of that proposed.	Remarks.
1922. 25th Jan. to 31st May	Automatic Telephone Ex- change and Equipment at South Brisbane,	121,086	£ 121,086	£	£	Recommended as proposed
26th Jan, to 31st May	Queensland Automatic Telephone Ex- change and Equipment at Cottesloe, W. A.	44,576	44,576			Recommended as proposed
24th Feb. to 14th March	Federal Taxation De-	209,650	125,000		84,650	
23rd Feb. to 7th April	Office Accommodation in Adelaide for various Commonwealth De-	115,000	115,000		•	Recommended as proposed
15th March to 19th June	partments Automatic Telephone Ex- changes and Equip- ment at Brighton, Glenelg, and Prospect,	161,610	161,610			Recommended as proposed
4th May, to 12th Oct.	Automatic Telephone Ex- change and Equipment at City South, Sydney	404,242	419,342	15,100		In view of value of site, the Com- mittee recommended a six- story building in lieu of three stories proposed
8th May to 14th Sept.	Automatic Telephone Ex- changes and Equipment at East Sydney, Rand- wick, Wayerley, and Gordon, N.S.W.	497,452	497,452		· ··	Recommended as proposed
10th Aug. to 20th Aug.	Gordon, N.S.W. Automatic Telephone Ex- change and Equipment at South Melbourne, Victoria	111,738	111,738		•	Recommended as proposed
10th Aug. to 20th Sept.	Establishment of Auto- matic Telephone Ex- change at Canterbury, Victoria	113,622	113,622		 	Recommended as proposed
12th Aug. to 3rd Oct.	Establishment of Automatic Telephone Excliange at Box Hill,	44,841	2,720	••	42,121	Committee recommended that oxisting manual exchange could be kept in operation without detriment to service until 1920
26th Aug. to 10th Oct.	Provision of Additional Quarters at Point Cook, Vie., for Staff of Royal	31,500	31,500			Recommended as proposed
7th Oct. to 28th Oct.	Australian Air Force Erection of Common- wealth Offices, Bris- bano	127,000	115,000	•	12,000	Committee recommended erec- tion of building in concrete
1923. 21st March to 18th June	Erection of Provisional Parliament House, Canberra	174,000				The Committee recommended the erection of the nucleus of the permanent Parliament House, or alternatively, the erection of a provisional build- ing on the site proposed below
9th April to- 21st June	Construction of Pro- visional Admin- istrative Offices at Canberra	135,500	.,	· ·		Camp Hill Committee recommended that two units of two storied brick or concrete buildings be pro- vided
14th March to 26th June	Erection of Officers' Hostel, Canberra	38,000	25,000		14,000	Committee recommended that in lieu of a hostel on garden pavilion lines there be provided a compact two storied struc-
18th July to 16th Aug,	Erection of Telephone Workshops, Spencer- street, Melbourne	66,500	66,500			ture under one roof
13th Aug., 1923, to 10th May, 1924	Establishment of Oil Depots, Darwin	12,000		•		No definite recommendation made but suggested that pro- posal receive favorable con- sideration of the Government
13th Aug., 1923, to 13th May, 1924	Provision of Wharfage Accommodation and Shipping Facilities, Darwin	120,050	Nil		120,050	Proposal not recommended
23th Aug., 1923, to 27th May., 1924	Establishment of Air- craft Depot at Laver- ton, Victoria	200,830	296,836			Recommended as proposed

RECORD OF INQUIRIES-LIST OF PROPOSED PUBLIC WORKS INQUIRED INTO-continued.

	TAROUND OR THIRDING	HIST OF	PROPOSED PUBLIC	WORKS I	NQUIRED I	NTO-continued.
Date of Inquiry.	Proposed Work,	Expenditure proposed by the Government.	Expenditure recommended by the Committee,	Amount in Excess of that proposed.	Amount in Reduction of that proposed,	Remarks,
1924. 5th March to 25th March	Erection of Additional Block of Scamen's Barracks, Flinders	£ 33,000	33,000	£	£	Recommended as proposed
7th Feb. to 6th May	Naval Depot Construction of Railway to connect Canberra	433,000	131,000		*302,000	Recommended that for the presenthe line be terminated at the
14th May to 27th May	with Yass Provision of Telegraph Cable between Sydney and Newcastle and Newcastle and West	442,000	412,000			2052-mile point Recommended as proposed
5th July to 30th July	Maitland Establishment of Auto- matic Telephone Ex- change at Elsternwick, Victoria	168,075	168,075			Recommended as proposed
5th July to 5th Aug.	Establishment of Auto- niatic Telephone Ex- change at Northcote.	101,123	101,123			Recommended as proposed
3rd July to 8th Aug.	Victoria Establishment of Automatic Telephone Ex- changes at Unley and	263,471	263,471		••	Recommended as proposed
2th Aug. fo 21st Aug.	Norwood, S.A. Construction of Southern Intercepting Sower, Conberra	47,000	47,000			Recommended as proposed
10th June to 10th Sept.	Erection of a Secretariat Building at Canberra, including Post Office and Automatic Tele-	08,140·	96,140			Recommended as proposed
oth Nov., 1924, to 14th Mar.,	phone Exchange Construction of Sewage Treatment Works, Federal Capital	60,000	. 80,000			Recommended as proposed
1925 loth Nov., 1924, to 17th Mar.,	Construction of Northern Main Sewer, Canberra	82,000	82,000			Recommended as proposed
1925 23rd Sept., 1924, to 18th Mar., 1925	Establishment of Auto- matic Telephone Ex- change at Tooweng, Queensland	67,739	57,739			Recommended as proposed
16th Sep., 1924, to 21st Mar., 1925	Establishment of Auto- matic Telephone Ex- change at Brisbane, Central	447,670	451,670	4,000	••	Committee recommended that air treatment plant be extended to deal with air contents of upper floors of the building
nd Oct., 1924, to 30th Mar., 1925	Establishment of Royal Australian Air Force Station (No. 2), at Richmond, N.S.W.	177,400	186,650	9,250		Committee recommended brick buildings in lieu of timber
1925. 6th April to 28th May	Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Manly,	71,861	71,861			Recommended as proposed
7th. April to 28th May	Establishment of Auto- matic Telephone Ex- change at West Ade:	60,415	60,011		404	Committee recommended galvan- ized iron roof in lieu of slates and reinforced concrete
8th April to 29th May	laide, S.A. Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Lakemba, N.S.W.	25,806	25,606		200	Committee recommended that, except over the frame room, the roof should be of timber and iron with a corrugated iron ceil- ing in lieu of reinforced con- crete
rd June to 17th Aug.	Erection of Hotel (No. 4) at Canberra	55,000	55,000		. "	Recommended as proposed
rd June to. 21st Sept.	Erection of a building at Canberra to accom- modate the National Library and for other	80,000	80,000			Recommended as proposed
nd Sept. to 22nd Sept.	purposes Construction of Boys' Naval Training Establishment at Geelong, Victoria	88,700	88,700			Recommended as proposed

Wake for the continuendation, if adopted, will also preclude the necessity of spending an amount of £110,725 by or on behalf of the State of New South

RECORD OF INQUIRES-LIST OF PROPOSED PUBLIC WORKS INQUIRED INTO-continued.

Date of Inquiry.	Proposed Work.	Expenditure proposed by the Government,	Expenditure recommended by the Committee.	Amount in Excess of that proposed,	Amount in Reduction of that proposed,	Remarks.
1925. 26th Aug., 1924, to 24th Sept., 1925	Recetion of a building in Brisbane for the ac- commodation of: Commonwealth de- partments	£	£.	£	£	Committee recommended no departure from its report on the same subject of 28th October, 1922
4th June, 1925, to 2nd July, 1926	partments Construction of Dam and and improvements on Molonglo River, Federal Capital	50,000			50,000	In the opinion of the Committee the construction of the Molong lo Dam was not considered immediately necessary, and it was recommended that it be postponed for the present
1926, 30th April, to 22nd May	Erection of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Hobart, Tasmania	161,118	158,118		3,000	Committee recommended that the dehumidifying plant be not in stalled unless future observa- tion shows it to be necessary
8th Feb. to 26th Feb.	Transfer of Postal Depart- ment's telegraph lines between Perth and Ade- laide to Transcentinen- tal Railway route	119,342	119,342			Recommended as proposed
3rd Feb. to 24th April	Extension of Trans-Australian Railway from Port Augusta to Red-Hill, South Australia, and the laying of a third rail to provide a railway of 4 ft. 8 ji m., gauge on the South Australiar 5 ft. 3 in. gauge railway from Red. Hill to the Central Railway Station, Adelaide	1,219,173	1,219,173		•• •	Recommended as proposed
21st April to 29th June	Construction of New Wharf at Garden Is- land Naval Establish- ment, New South Walcs	150,000	150,000			Approved. The Committee re- commended that tenders be called in all States for timber required other than piles
29th May, 1925, to 16th June, 1926	Permanent Administra- tive Offices, Canberra	842,018	700,318		52,300	Committee recommended restric- tion of burglar-proof doors to essential strong-rooms; altera- tion of fire alarm system; climination of quantity sur- veyor's fees and expenses, and occupation of building before facing completed. It also re- facing completed. It also re- tained to the committee of the gations and the committee of the Acity Meadow are sufficiently advanced, the matter be again referred to the Committee for a decision as to the class of ex- ternal facing to be used
12th July to 11th Aug.	Erection of Cottages at Canberrs	408,600	323,000		84,631	Committee recommended (a) Re- duction of costs to within 5 per cent. or 74 per cent. of Sydney prices; (b) Elimination of charge for extras, leaving occu- pier to provide same under supervision; (c) That costs of smaller types of concrete houses should be reduced to at least 16 per cent. below cost of similar brick houses
28th Sept. to 25th Oct.	Installation of Mail-hand- ling Appliances, General Post Office, Sydney	41,400	41,400			Recommended as proposed
7th July, 1926 to 19th Feb., 1927	Selection of site and crec- tion of wharf at Rabaul, New Guinea	42,000			••	Recommended that alternative tenders be invited for— (a) timber wharf with piles cased in reinforced: (b) an object of contractor; and (c) timber wharf with re- reinforced concrete piles; and if tenders received are con- sidered excessive the work to be certical out departmentally by the Administration

RECORD OF INQUIRIES-LAST OF PROPOSED PUBLIC WORKS INQUIRED INTO-continued.

Date of Inquiry.	Proposed Work:	Expenditure proposed by the Government,	Expenditure recommended by the Committee,	Amount in Excess of that proposed,	Amount in Reduction of that proposed.	Remarks,
1927. 15th Feb. to	Erection of Common-	108,817	108,817			Recommended as proposed
10th March 18th Feb., to 17th March	wealth Offices, Sydnoy Construction of buildings and formation of re- serves at Canberra for the National Museum of Australian Zeology	87,080	81,080		6,000	Committee recommended that the front of the Lecture Hall only be faced with Fairy Meadow limestone and that the remainder of the building be constructed of brick with base
	•					mouldings and other architec- tural embellishments of Fairy Meadow limestone
16th March, to 13th May, 1927	Provision of wharfage, facilities, Darwin	223,934	Nil		223,034	Committee reported that existing or immediately prospective trade did not warrant any additional wharfage construction at the present time
16th March to 23rd May	Erection of Common- wealth Offices, Brisbane	170,464	170,464			Recommended as proposed
31st Aug. to 5th Oct.	Establishment of Automa- tic Telephone Exchange at Oakleigh, Victoria	40,180	40,180	٠	••	Recommended as proposed
17th Sept. to 12th Oct.	Establishment of Auto- matic Telephone Ex- change at Box, Hill, Victoria	46,985	46,985			Recommended as proposed
6th Sept. to 13th Oct.	Establishment of Auto- matic Telephone Ex- clange at Cottesloe, Western Australia	49,101	46,699		2,492	Committee recommended pro- vision of tiled roof with con- crote cornices in licu of galvan- ized iron roof; also that in- stallation of complete air- conditioning plant be left in abeyance pending further in- vestigation
17th Oct. to 16th Nov.	Erection of Postal Work- hopes at Sydenham, New South Wales	43,000	43,000			Recommended as proposed
18th Nov.	Establishment of Auto- matic Telephone Ex- change at Maroubra, New South Wales	52,249	52,249		. 	Recommended as proposed
26th Oct. to 24th Nov.	Extension of installation of Mail-handling Ap- pliances, General Post Office, Sydnoy	71,000	71,000	:.		Recommended as proposed

Printed and Published for the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia by II. J. Green, Government Printer, Canberra.