



1923.

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
by Senator Lyne

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On return to Order

Geo. Morahan

Clerk of the Senate.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE 3 JUL 1923
ON PUBLIC WORKS.

REPORT

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

RELATING TO THE

ERECTION OF OFFICERS' HOSTEL, CANBERRA.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MEMBERS OF THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

(Fourth Committee.)

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

Senate.

Senator Hatfil Spencer Fell
Senator John Newland
Senator William Plain

House of Representatives.

Arthur Blakely, 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.

ERECTION OF OFFICERS' HOSTEL, CANBERRA.

REPORT.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, to which the House of Representatives referred for investigation and report the question of the erection of an Officers' Hostel at Canberra, has the honour to report as follows :—

INTRODUCTORY.

1. The Federal Capital Advisory Committee, in submitting to the Government a scheme for the establishment of Canberra, suggested that the development of the city should be in three stages. During the first stage, estimated to cover a period of three years, the Committee recommended the transfer to the Federal Seat of Government of the Commonwealth Parliament, accompanied by such administrative departments or branches thereof, as must be closely associated with their Ministers. It proposed that the departments taking up duty either before or at the time Parliament sits, should be as follow :—

The Parliament,
The Prime Minister's Department,
The Department of the Treasury,
The Attorney-General's Department,
The Department of Home and Territories,
The Department of Trade and Customs,
The Health Department,
The Department of Works and Railways,
The Postmaster-General's Department.

2. In planning for the transfer of these departments, it is essential that living accommodation should be provided for the officials employed therein. Inquiries made enabled the Advisory Committee to estimate that the number of officials employed in the departments named who will be transferred in the first stage, will be about 1,071, in addition to which there will be approximately 190 officials employed on local civic and governmental administration.

3. Having obtained from the Departments a statement showing the number and conjugal condition of their employees, the Advisory Committee estimated that of the 1,261 officials mentioned, 623 will be married, and 638 will be unmarried.

4. Of the 638 unmarried, the Advisory Committee suggests that the Government shall provide living accommodation for 310, and that private enterprise will find accommodation for the remaining 328. It further suggested that the most economical way of providing accommodation for unmarried officials is by the erection of hostels.

PROPOSAL NOW UNDER CONSIDERATION.

5. The proposal now under consideration is to erect one of the suggested hostel buildings for the purpose of accommodating single officials and some married officials who either have no family or a small one. The plan submitted provides for a building capable of accommodating 80 guests, but permitting of extension to accommodate 120.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED BUILDING.

6. In the construction of the proposed building it is intended that the foundations shall be of concrete and the walls of brick up to the level of the sills of the top floor windows. To the ground floor level, the bricks will be left plain, and from there the remainder of the bricks will be rough-cast. The upper portion of the central building will be of weatherboard, and the roofs will be of red tiles.

INDEX.

	PAGE
Report	iii
Minutes of Evidence	1

EXTRACT FROM VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

No. 6 of 9TH MARCH, 1923.

14. PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE—REFERENCE OF WORK—OFFICERS' HOSTEL, 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 Officers' Hostel, Canberra.

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

LIST OF WITNESSES.

	PAGE
Cormack, John Shannon, Director New South Wales Tourist Bureau, Sydney	20
Davies, James, General Secretary, United Commercial Travellers' Association, Melbourne	12
de Burgh, Ernest Macartney, M. Inst. C.E., Chief Engineer for Water Supply and Sewerage, Public Works Department, N.S.W.	19
Goodwin, John Thomas Hill, Commonwealth Surveyor-General	14
Hill, Thomas, Chief Engineer, Department of Works and Railways	8, 21
Langker, Albert Victor, General Secretary, Commonwealth Public Service Clerical Association	10
Murdoch, John Smith, Chief Architect, Department of Works and Railways	5, 23
O'Grady, Frank Ronald, Manager Caves House, Jenolan, N.S.W.	24
Owen, Percy Thomas, Director-General of Works Department of Works and Railways	1
Oxenham, Justinian, Secretary, Postmaster-General's Department	23
Rolland, Henry Maitland, Works Director, Canberra	17

7. The design of the building shows a central block two stories high, containing the dining-room, kitchen, &c., with accommodation for the domestic staff above, and flanked on the north and south sides by lower two-storied pavilions containing the guests' bedrooms. In the middle of the central block, it is proposed to have a dining-room 55 feet long by 44 feet wide, capable of seating 120 people, with kitchen and offices immediately off the dining-room to the rear. The front portion of the building is to consist of a common room 38 feet by 28 feet, a reading-room 21 ft. 6 in. long by 15 feet wide, a smoking-room of the same size, and two vestibules each containing a small cloak-room and a toilet—one for ladies and the other for gentlemen. The kitchen will be approximately 23 feet by 22 feet, and, in addition to a stove, will contain steam cooking appliances, including a steamer, hot plate, stock pot, and steam jet for washing crockery. There will also be a scullery, a vegetable store, a pantry, two kitchen closets, a fuel store, and a servants' lavatory. It is further proposed to have three men's rooms, a laundry for the general washing of the hostel, and a boiler for heating and cooking purposes.

8. Over the main portion of this central block it is proposed to provide ten bedrooms for domestics, a common room, two bathrooms, two linen closets, and a toilet; of the bedrooms, four are of a size 12 feet by 8 feet, four 12 feet by 10 feet, and two 13 feet by 8 feet.

9. The pavilions in which the bedrooms for the guests are located are removed from the walls of the main building a distance of 30 feet, and are connected by covered ways. The pavilions proposed to be erected are of two stories, and each story will contain twenty bedrooms. The single rooms are 13 feet by 10 feet, but on each floor of each wing are two bedrooms 16 feet by 13 feet. The bedrooms are planned with recessed cupboards and wash-basins, and in the recesses over the wash-basins will be a looking-glass and shelving for brushes, &c. On each floor of each pavilion will be four bathrooms.

10. The height of the walls in the bedrooms will be 10 feet, and in the dining and public rooms 13 feet.

11. On each floor, at the end of each wing of the two pavilions, it is proposed to provide a sitting-room 18 feet by 13 feet, and two balconies. In each of the bedrooms there will be hot and cold water supplied to the lavatory basins.

SITE.

12. The site proposed is an area 450 feet by 400 feet near Brisbane-avenue about half-a-mile south-east from the proposed Provisional Parliamentary buildings, and approximately 1,200 yards from the block suggested for the Provisional Administrative Offices. The area selected is of a size sufficient to permit of the formation of croquet lawns and tennis courts adjacent to the hostel.

ESTIMATED COST.

13. The estimated cost of the building is set down at £39,000, including relative engineering services, and the time fixed for completion nine months from date of commencement. It is stated that the furnishing will cost an additional sum of £5,400, excluding dining-room equipment.

COMMITTEE'S INVESTIGATIONS.

14. The Committee visited Canberra, inspected the site of the proposed hostel, carefully examined the plans of the building, and took evidence from the Commonwealth Works Officers, members of the Federal Capital Advisory Committee, the Secretary of the Commonwealth Public Service Clerical Association, the Secretary Commercial Travellers' Association, the Director New South Wales Tourist Bureau, and others.

Site.

15. The site proposed is, in the opinion of the Committee, suitable for a building of the class suggested, and conveniently situated in regard to the site mentioned for the Administrative Offices.

Building.

16. The building, as designed, commended itself very favorably to the Committee, and was highly spoken of by the witnesses who were questioned in regard to it. The provision made for the comfort of the guests has been well thought out, and the general arrangement of details reflects credit on the designer.

Light and Heat.

17. It was ascertained in evidence that electric lighting is to be installed, and it is proposed generally to use semi-indirect lighting in all the common apartments. In all bedrooms it is probable there will be a plug for a table lamp.

18. No fireplaces are provided in the building at all, but the common rooms will be heated by hot-water radiators, and the bedrooms will be provided with plugs for electric radiators, which will be obtainable by the occupants at a small rental.

19. A complete vacuum cleaning plant is proposed.

Severage.

20. The sewage will be water-carried, and will be discharged eventually into the main sewer, but tentatively into a septic tank at Waratah Park.

Kitchen.

21. Through the courtesy of the Secretary Commercial Travellers' Association, and the Manager of Scott's Hotel, Melbourne, the Committee was enabled to pay visits of inspection to the kitchens of those establishments, and make inquiries from the chefs as to various appliances used in modern kitchens. From its inspections and the inquiries made, the Committee is satisfied that the kitchen equipment proposed is on right lines and of the most up-to-date pattern.

Size of Bedrooms.

22. The personal experience of members of the Committee is that in most hotels it is unusual to have single bedrooms of the size of 13 feet by 10 feet proposed for the hostel, and the fact that the wash-basins and cupboards are to be recessed adds to the available space within the rooms.

Liberal Provision of Common Rooms.

23. The accommodation in the common, dining, reading, and smoking rooms is also very liberal, and probably of a better class than found in most boarding houses—in fact, generally speaking, the accommodation proposed to be provided might be classed as equal to that obtainable at the best country hotels.

Probable Tariff.

24. The Committee was, however, concerned as to whether the capital cost involved in providing accommodation of so high a standard would not necessitate the imposition of a tariff beyond the reach of the average governmental official who would be expected to occupy the hostel, and inquiries were made as to the rate likely to be charged if the hostel is to be expected to pay interest on the outlay.

25. The Director-General of Works in his evidence stated that, allowing 7 per cent. per annum on the capital cost of the building, 10 per cent. on the cost of furnishing, 20 per cent. on the cost of dining-room crockery, &c., and a reasonable amount to cover cost of upkeep of laundry, services of gardeners, and in respect of water, lighting, and fuel, the total cost per guest worked out at £60 per annum. Allowing for the fact that each room might be expected to be vacant for two weeks per annum, and adding the sum of £20 per guest to cover cost of domestic service, brought the charge per guest per week to £1 11s. 6d. To this he added the sum of 15s. 6d. to cover the cost of food per guest per week, and brought the tariff chargeable to £2 7s. per week if no profit is to be made.

26. Evidence obtained from the Secretary Commercial Travellers' Association, Melbourne, the Director Government Tourist Bureau, New South Wales, and the Manager of the Caves House, Jenolan, convinced the Committee that if the cost of food were to be kept at 15s. 6d. per week, the dietary scale would have to be a very modest one, and that, if the establishment were to be conducted without loss, the cost of food would approximate more nearly to 22s. 6d. per head per week. It was shown in evidence that the actual cost of supplying food to the Officers' Mess at Canberra at the present time is 18s. 8d. per head per week, and if this figure be taken and added to the £1 11s. 6d. above mentioned, it will be seen that the lowest possible tariff which could be charged at the proposed hostel without involving loss would be approximately £2 10s. per guest per week.

Occupants of Hostel.

27. It was stated in evidence that the officials likely to occupy this building would be drawn from those who were unmarried, or, if married, had no family at all or a small one. Evidence obtained from the Secretary Commonwealth Public Service Clerical Association, went to show that the average rate of remuneration received by Commonwealth officials is £235 per annum. It was further stated that the majority of officials receiving over £320 per annum would be married and likely to prefer cottages of their own rather than live at the hostel, while officials receiving less than £300 per annum would hesitate before committing themselves to a weekly board bill of £2 10s., exclusive of laundry, &c.

Present Accommodation.

28. During the course of its inquiries, the Committee ascertained that accommodation for officials at Canberra has, up to the present, been met in two ways, viz., by the provision of bachelors' quarters, and by the erection of cottages.

29. At the Bachelors' Quarters, although the cost of running the establishment, plus cost of food, works out at £1 14s. 7d. per head per week, exclusive of any charges for interest on outlay, depreciation, &c., the occupants pay for their board and lodging only 37s. 6d per week, which involves the Commonwealth in a direct loss of 7s. 1d. per head per week.

30. In the case of cottages, it is shown that there is also a loss to the Commonwealth by reason of the fact that a deduction of 25 per cent. is made from capital cost, &c., before fixing the rental.

The following may be taken as a typical example of the method of assessing rentals under existing conditions :—

Cost of Cottage (four rooms, hall, vestibule, kitchen, laundry, bathroom, &c.)	£1,293
Annual value	68,3609
Maintenance	12,9300
Fire insurance	2,5860
Sewerage	4,5817
Water supply	4,5817
Rates	1,2500
Land	5,0000
Rental which Commonwealth should receive	99,2362
Less reduction, 25 per cent.	25,0000
Rent received	74,2000

The annual value is the amount which, at 5 per cent., will, in 60 years, return interest and capital on the cost of the dwelling.

COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS.

31. At the outset of its deliberations, the Committee expressed the opinion that if the various hostels, residences, &c., to be erected at Canberra were not to be a continuous drain on the resources of the Commonwealth, it should be a recognised principle that money so expended should pay interest, sinking fund, &c., on the capital cost.

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

Mr. MACKAY moved: That in the opinion of the Committee, it should be a recognised principle that money expended at Canberra for the erection of hostels, residences, and similar structures, should carry overhead charges such as interest, amortization and water and sewerage rates.

Seconded by Senator NEWLAND.

The Committee divided on the motion :—

Ayes (7).

Senator Foll
Senator Newland
Senator Plain
Mr. Cook
Mr. Gregory
Mr. Jackson
Mr. Mackay

No (1).

Mr. Blakeley

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

33. Taking all these facts into consideration, the Committee is satisfied that the unmarried officials expected to occupy the hostel would not be capable of paying the abovementioned rate. Efforts were consequently made to ascertain some way out of the difficulty.

34. It is suggested that some saving might be effected by reducing the size of single bedrooms to 12 feet by 9 feet in the clear, without inflicting any hardship on the occupants, and that some further economy might result from the erection of a more compact two-storied building under one roof.

35. The Committee realizes that it will be necessary to reduce somewhat the standard aimed at by the designer, but feels that it is essential to do so if accommodation is to be provided within the reach of occupants, and without loss to the Commonwealth.

36. It is therefore recommended that a hostel be provided to accommodate 80 officials, but the amount to be expended on same be restricted to £25,000.

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

Mr. COOK moved: That, as it is essential that the hostel to be provided be of such a character as will give comfortable accommodation at a tariff within the reach of the means of the officials it is intended to accommodate, the cost of the buildings be restricted to £25,000.

Seconded by Mr. JACKSON.

The Committee divided on the motion :—

Ayes (7).

Senator Foll
Senator Newland
Senator Plain
Mr. Cook
Mr. Gregory
Mr. Jackson
Mr. Mackay

No. (1).

Mr. Blakeley

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

Location of Staff.

38. During the course of the inquiry, it was impressed upon the Committee that more satisfaction to guests and domestics is likely to result if the staff is housed in a self-contained building quite apart from the hostel, and the Committee recommends that this be done.

Leasing of Land.

39. It was stated in evidence that no steps have yet been taken to make available for lease for residential purposes any areas within the Federal City. In the opinion of the Committee, a considerable portion of the necessary housing accommodation at Canberra must be provided by private enterprise, and it is recommended that as soon as approval is given for the erection of Parliament House, the Commonwealth should throw open certain areas of the city for leasing, and, in addition, inaugurate a system of *Crédit Foncier* to enable persons to proceed with the erection of residences, subject, of course, to necessary approval as to design, and materials of which the building shall be constructed.

Provision of Cottages.

40. In its report of 11th April, 1932, dealing with the proposed erection of the No. 1 Hostel at Canberra, the Committee pointed out :—

The erection of a structure of this kind, however, opens up a number of questions, probably only indirectly connected with the subject under consideration, but having an important bearing on the establishment of the Federal Capital as a whole, and as such received attention at the hands of the Committee.

One of these, to which particular attention might be invited, is the provision to be made for housing the workmen during the progress of the work of building the city.

At first sight, this may appear foreign to this reference, but the Committee feels that this will have a marked effect on the cost of the Hostel as well as upon other works to be subsequently undertaken.

At the present time, a number of the workmen employed at Canberra are occupying huts, which they have apparently erected themselves, while others are more or less uncomfortably housed in a large group of wooden buildings, originally erected to house German internees. Possibly on account of this fact, it was ascertained that at times it has been found difficult to obtain skilled labour at Canberra, and all workmen who are employed have to be paid 2s. per day extra on account of the remoteness of the locality. It is probable that this allowance will have to be continued until Canberra has become what is called an industrial centre, and this can only be brought about when the average workman is readily able to obtain accommodation on similar lines to that obtainable by him in the cities or larger towns, and have prospects of regular employment.

The question of housing workmen has not been referred to the Committee, but until it is undertaken, and until Canberra has been declared an industrial centre, it may be expected that any works carried out there will cost considerably more than in either Sydney or Melbourne.

41. In the opinion of members, this matter is of such importance that it is again mentioned. According to the report of the Federal Capital Advisory Committee, it is assumed that during the first stage of the construction of the city it will be necessary for the Commonwealth to build 300 cottages, whilst private enterprise is expected to provide 396, but at least one member of the Advisory Committee, in giving evidence, expressed doubt as to whether private enterprise would respond to that extent.

42. In the opinion of the Committee, it is essential that adequate housing accommodation should be available for officials and workmen if hardship is to be avoided in the initial stages, and the Committee therefore recommends that arrangements be made to invite competitive designs for the early erection of 300 cottages.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS.

43. Briefly summarized, the recommendations of the Committee are as follow :—
- (i) That it should be a recognised principle that money expended at Canberra for the erection of hostels, residences, and similar structures, should carry overhead charges such as interest, amortization, and water and sewerage rates (p. vi).
 - (ii) That a hostel be provided to accommodate 80 officials, but that the amount to be expended thereon be restricted to £25,000 (p. vi).
 - (iii) That single bedrooms be reduced in size to 12 feet by 9 feet in the clear (p. vi).
 - (iv) That the building to be erected be a compact two-storied structure under one roof (p. vi).
 - (v) That the staff be housed in a self-contained building quite apart from the hostel (p. vii).
 - (vi) That as soon as approval is given for the erection of Parliament House, the Commonwealth throw open certain areas of the city for leasing, and, in addition, inaugurate a system of Crédit Foncier to enable persons to proceed with the erection of residences, subject to approval as to design and materials (p. vii).
 - (vii) That arrangements be made to invite competitive designs for the early erection of 300 cottages (p. vii).

H. Gregory
H. GREGORY,

Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Federal Parliament House, Melbourne,
26th June, 1923.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

(Taken at Melbourne.)

WEDNESDAY, 14th MARCH, 1923.

Present:

Mr. GREGORY, Chairman;	Mr. Cook
Senator Nowland	Mr. Jackson
Senator Plain	Mr. Blackey
Mr. Blackley	

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

I. To the Chairman.—It is proposed to construct hostel accommodation at Canberra for the unmarried officials, and for some married officials with small families, on an area to the south-east of the site of Parliament House. The site selected for the hostel is a commanding one. Being one of the first large buildings to be erected there, and having in view its proximity to Parliament House, and the Administrative group of buildings, it was thought that its architecture should be dignified, and, although quiet and simple, it should conform with the general idea of the whole of the Advisory Committee's scheme of garden treatment for Canberra. The proposal before the Works Committee is to put up a building that would at the initial stage accommodate 80 guests, and the plan provides for an extension to enable 100 guests to be housed. The building could be extended to accommodate 120 by a modification of the plans of the pavilions, making them two-storied instead of one, but generally the grouping of the buildings to the central block is proposed to be cumulative. There will be a dining-room to hold 120 people, with kitchen and offices immediately off the dining-room. The front portion of the building is to consist of common rooms, including reading and smoking rooms. The central buildings will be two stories high, the upper story being for the accommodation of the domestic staff. The dining-room itself, because of its dimensions, will have a higher ceiling than the bedrooms in the pavilions. The bedroom accommodation proposed to be provided in pavilions will be symmetrically arranged with regard to the central building. Each pavilion will consist of two wings, in each of which there will be bedrooms and bathrooms. Each wing will contain ten bedrooms on each floor, and there will be a sitting-room on each floor. It is proposed to construct the lower portion of the hostel of brick, which will be rough-casted, and the upper portion of the central building will be of weatherboard. Red tiles are to be employed for roofing purposes. I omitted to mention that the foundation walls will be carried up to the floor level in brick. It is thought that the colour effect thus obtained will be good. This is important, having in view the fact that the hostel will occupy a conspicuous position, and be visible from all approaches. The dining-room is 58 feet x 44 feet. It has window ends providing a look-out upon gardens. The central corridors of the pavilions coincide with the centre of the dining-room, from which there will be a clear passage through the whole building in each direction. The dining-room will be approached from either side through vestibules, one for men and the other for women. Each vestibule will have a small hat and cloak room, and a toilet. The dining-room is practically the centre of the main block, at the front of which are a common room 38 feet x 28 feet, a reading-room 21 ft. 6 in. x 15 feet, a smok-

ing-room 21 ft. 6 in. x 15 feet, and two vestibules. The common room also opens to the front, and gives a vista through a glazed entrance to the front of the garden. The kitchen accommodation includes a kitchen and a scullery. The latter is not cut off from the kitchen, but is recessed. There are also a vegetable store, a pantry, two kitchen closets, a fuel store, and a servants' lavatory. There are three men's rooms, a laundry for the general washing of the hostel, and a boiler-room. The boiler will be required for heating and cooking purposes. Over the back portion of the building it is proposed to provide ten bedrooms for domestics, and a common room, two bath-rooms, two linen closets, and a toilet. There will be a balcony at each side. It is proposed that only female domestics shall occupy this portion of the building, and an effort has been made to give them a proper degree of comfort. Two of the bedrooms would be large enough for two beds in each, but it is anticipated that a number of the domestics will live elsewhere. The sizes of the rooms are 12 feet x 8 feet and 12 feet x 10 feet. The pavilions in which the bedrooms for the guests are located are removed from the walls of the main building by a distance of 30 feet, and are connected by covered ways. The pavilions proposed to be erected under the present reference will be two-storied, and each story will contain twenty bedrooms. The rooms are normally 13 feet x 10 feet, but on each floor of each wing there are two bedrooms, measuring 16 feet x 13 feet. The proposal is that the hostel shall not be devoted exclusively to either sex or to unmarried folk. It is thought that it would be advisable to have some married people staying there, in order to give a good tone to the house. Probably the unmarried girls would be located in the same wing as the married couples. The plan allows sufficient flexibility for any desirable arrangement to be adopted. In each wing there are two bathrooms, two toilets, and two housemaids' cupboards. There are four bathrooms on each floor of each pavilion. The bedrooms are planned with large recessed cupboards and wash-basins, and it is proposed that in these recesses there will be, for the men at all events, a looking-glass, and shelving for brushes and odds and ends. The details have not been worked out yet, but the general idea is to make the wash-basin recess serve as a dressing-table. In that way, we have provided for a clear space of 13 feet x 10 feet, the only furniture in addition to the recessed cupboard being the bed, a chest of drawers or wardrobe, a small table, and chairs. The height of the walls is 10 feet, although I believe the chief architect would be prepared to recommend the adoption of a 9-ft. ceiling, following somewhat on the American, and, to a great extent, on the English practice. I believe the ventilation would be just as good with a 9-ft. as with a 10-ft. wall. On each floor, and at the end of each wing of the two pavilions, it is proposed to provide a sitting-room, 18 feet x 13 feet and two little balconies. The present proposal provides for 80 guests, and, if necessary, there can be single-storied pavilions added, each of which will accommodate ten additional guests, bringing the total number to 100. The end pavilions could alternatively be made to accommodate a further twenty guests, bringing the total capacity of the hostel up to 120. In discussing this matter, the Advisory Committee thought that 100 was a good working number for a hostel of this description. It would allow the staff to be kept reasonably small, but if the number of guests were increased to

200 the proposition would be a comparatively difficult one. It is intended to introduce steam cooking, and to have a stove also. There will be an ordinary steam cooking appliance, including a steamer, hot plate, stock pot, and steam jet for washing crockery, in each of the bedrooms there will be hot and cold water supplied to the lavatory basin. Some little discussion took place as to whether it was necessary to supply both hot and cold water, but as hot water had to be taken to the bath rooms, the extra cost of connecting it with the bedrooms was not found to be great, and it was thought that the comfort that would be gained by the extra justified the extra expense, namely, £240 for the whole building. The site for the hostel measures approximately 400 feet by 450 feet. No area has yet been set aside for the purpose, but there will be room for tennis courts or croquet, and it is proposed that there shall be tennis courts, although a sum for them has not been included in the estimate. Loan expenditure includes a sum for recreation grounds generally at Canberra, and it is proposed to charge the work of providing tennis courts to that account. There is to be a small laundry for the household linen, but it is not intended to cater for laundering for the occupants. It is assumed that Canberra will normally develop into a city of a size to justify laundries being conducted by private people. It is proposed to equip the laundry with a washing machine, a mangle, a drier, and electric irons. It is also intended to install a vacuum cleaning plant. There is no doubt that for some time during the development of Canberra there will be a good deal of dust, and even after construction there will probably be dust to contend with. I have seen bad dust storms on those tablelands from a considerable distance westward. Vacuum cleaning will be of great advantage in the running of the household, and the plant would probably be availed of at a small charge by the occupants themselves, because this method is very expeditious and effective particularly in the clearing of clothes. The principal water supply comes from Red Hill to Mt Russell, which is just over the Military College, and the main runs along Federal Avenue. It is a 12-in. pipe, and will give a working pressure of about 100 lbs. That is of considerable importance from a fire-fighting point of view, and under those circumstances we shall merely need to put in about six hydrants, each of which will take two hoses, and there will be ample pressure and volume without a fire engine. The provision of a ring main is included in the estimate of cost. There will be a 4-in. ring main taken around the building. The main from Federal Avenue will probably be a 6-in. one. The pipes outside the area will be in accordance with the general scheme of development of the water services. Electric light is to be installed, and it is proposed generally to use semi-indirect lighting in all the common apartments. In all bedrooms, although the details have not been settled, there will probably be a plug for a table lamp and another switch arranged for a reading lamp. In addition to the lighting, it is proposed to put in power plugs. No fire places are provided in the building at all. The water-heating system will enter for the common rooms, and the bedrooms will be provided with plugs for electric radiators. It will be necessary either to charge the occupants a small rental for the plugs or install meters. The cost of the steam heating provided for the common rooms will be covered by the charge for board. The sewerage will be water-carried, and will be discharged into the main sewer eventually, but tentatively, into a septic tank at Waratah Park. This tank will have to be enlarged to cope with the increased volume of sewage. It is proposed that the main sewer shall be extended to the vicinity of the power-house before Parliament meets, and the sewerage will eventually be discharged into the main sewer. We cannot distribute sewage anywhere in the locality, and night-pans would involve an extra expense. We are having considerable trouble over the sewer. We have called for tenders twice. On the first occasion we got no response at all. I cannot disclose the result of the second call for tenders, be-

cause it is still before the Minister. In my own opinion the position is unsatisfactory, and the Government will probably be advised to undertake the work themselves. The necessary additions to the septic tank would cost about £100 or £500. The drains to be made would form part of the city, reticulation. The only tentative expense is the cost of installing another section of the septic tank. The present accommodation for the officers who are working at Acton is fully availed of. We are putting men in tents and there is now a proposal to erect more accommodation in this locality. The Advisory Committee does not sympathetically regard any great developments at Acton. It is proposed that the present hostel should be put up at once to meet immediate demands. These demands will increase month by month until Canberra is occupied. There is a real and urgent need for accommodation for officials. The proposal is for room for 50 people; we can foresee the early need for 80. An estimate of 100 guests is rather too large for the present. Whether it would pay to provide for 100 people straight away is rather a moot point. Very possibly it would. For the heating of the rooms it is proposed to use the ordinary steam system with induced circulation, that is, having the water forced through the radiators by a small centrifugal pump. This system is both cheaper and more effective than the use of electric radiators. It might well be argued that radiators should be provided in all the bedrooms, but I personally am not in favour of that idea. The estimate put before Parliament for the building and all equipment, including the engineering services, was £59,000. The estimated cost of the building alone is set down at £26,900 for 80 guests, and the engineering services at £10,860. For 100 guests the extra cost would be £7,900, of which £4,950 would be for the building, and £2,950 for the mechanical, electrical, and civil engineering services. The cost of furnishing is £5,400, inclusive of the dining-room equipment, such as cutlery. There is no provision for a piano or other musical instruments, or for anything that could be described as a luxury. There would be an extra £1,400 for furnishing if there were to be 100 guests. We do not know yet whether the hostel will be run as a Government undertaking or under private management. Whether it should be leased or managed by the Government has not been discussed. The leasing of property is looked after by another Department. Personally, I would favour the Government furnishing the establishment, because two extremes might thereby be avoided. We do not want extravagant, nor do we want "jimmie-crack" furnishing. The Department could decide on the happy medium. The furniture we have provided in other places has stood up to its work, and yet it was not expensive. We require the proposed building immediately. We have not gone on with the working drawings, because we are waiting for the report of the Committee. I think it will take nine months to complete the work after tenders have been accepted. If a big contractor, with joinery works at the back of him, took the hostel in hand he might erect it more quickly. There are three main buildings, and with a sufficient number of bricklayers the job could be attacked from all sides. If a contractor said he required two months to complete the work, I would not give him a higher price to finish the job in less time. When the scheme is approved, one of the first acts necessary will be the delivery of bricks, and, later on, of tiles. The Department is now supplying bricks at the kiln at from £3 10s. to £4 1s. per 1,000. I shall obtain for the Committee particulars of the prices of bricks in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, and Perth respectively. We have a plant at Canberra that is said to have cost £40,000, but we had to install that plant; otherwise we could not have made the bricks. Owing to the nature of the shale available there, we had to adopt the process of fine grinding and stiff plastic manufacture. At Canberra we are paying higher rates for coal and wages than obtain elsewhere.

2. *To Senator Nealand.* No trouble is experienced on account of a variation in the size of the bricks. At the start we had a little difficulty, because some of the bricks, being a little under size, came out rather bigger than the others, but our bricks are now of a very uniform size. They would fetch £6 a 1,000 in Sydney.

3. *To the Chairman.*—We have begun to make tiles from the same material as that used for the manufacture of bricks. Some of the cottages being erected at Canberra are roofed with these tiles. They are not quite so vermilion as other tiles. The colour is a more subdued red, and, personally, I like it. The manager of the works has spoken of turning out these tiles at £12 a 1,000. I do not think that will be possible, but if they can be produced at £13 or £14 a 1,000 it will be an excellent proposition. The present price in Sydney is £18. We are also manufacturing wall ventilators, and, in fact, all constructional material requiring to be burnt. It would naturally cost more to provide hostel accommodation now for 80 guests and to extend the accommodation to make room for 100 guests later, because it would mean re-assembling the necessary plant. It is difficult to say whether we should make provision for 80 or 100 people straight away. I would like to know the probable rate of influx of people at Canberra. It will depend upon what amount of money the Government are going to spend there. If the work is pushed on vigorously, and the building of Parliament House is begun, there will be a more rapid influx of people. I prefer going on with a hostel for 100 guests, if the influx of officials can be guaranteed. The only basis on which the Advisory Committee could work was the forecast of the approximate number of officials who would be living at Canberra at the time Parliament would assemble there. In preparing that forecast, I was placed in touch, as a member of the Advisory Committee, with the heads of Departments, and the prospective numbers were laid down. There were some Departments, however, that it was thought need not necessarily be located at Canberra, in the first instance, in order to be in close touch with their Ministers at all times whilst Parliament was sitting. Among these was the Department of Defence, which includes the Navy, the Air Force, and the Army. After discussing the matter with the officials, it was proposed to provide these branches with a Secretariat, which would be sufficient to keep them closely in touch with the Minister controlling the Department; but it was proposed to accommodate all the other officials of the central administration at Canberra. We have arrived at the result that the total number of civil servants required to be provided for at Canberra will be 1,071, including both permanent and temporary officers. The forecast of the population, and the housing required, with the relative proportion of males and females, and of married and unmarried officials, is given in Appendix E of the Advisory Committee's first general report, at page 85. We ascertained that on the permanent staff there would be 316 unmarried men and 148 unmarried women, while on the temporary staff there would be 71 unmarried men and 58 unmarried women. The Committee then had to make a forecast as to how the officers would be accommodated. It was thought that the married folk would mostly live in cottages, but that there would be some married men with either no family at all or only small families, who, like the unmarried men, would prefer to live in hostels. We forecasted that there would be 340 cottages on the governmental side and 366 on the northern side. It was estimated that there would be 70 small families in addition to that the married folk would mostly live in hostels or boardinghouses on the governmental side, and 107 families who would live in hostels or boardinghouses on the north side. The unmarried officials, male and female, would, it was thought, number 310 on the governmental side and 328 on the northern side. The Committee had to forecast the number of officials that would be required for civil

administration and town management. These particulars are shown on page 36 of the Advisory Committee's report. We estimated that there would be twenty married officials on the south side and 125 on the north side, which would give a total population of 711. Another aspect that the Committee had to investigate and make a forecast upon was the extent to which private enterprise would take part in the building of Canberra. We formed the opinion then that out of the total accommodation required for the officials, the Government should build 319 cottages on the south side, while private enterprise should construct 30 cottages on the south side and 366 on the north side. The expectation was that the Government should build cottages for 87 families, and private enterprise for 20, while for the unmarried men the Government should build for 319, and private enterprise for 328. The total now under consideration, if built for 100 guests, would accommodate about one-third of the total number of unmarried officials. If the present Parliament indicates that it will provide a fair sum for pushing on with the work at Canberra, I would advise the Government to build a hostel for 100 guests. I do not care to mention the sum that should be granted, but at ought to be more than the amount we have been getting up to the present. Most of the people I have spoken to in Melbourne think that private enterprise will not do much at Canberra. In New South Wales, however, it is considered that private people would do a great deal there. My own view is that when the scheme is well in hand Canberra will go ahead, and private people will be induced to go there in considerable numbers, and build.

4. *To Mr. Mutchay.*—The fact that Canberra is the Seat of Government will prove a considerable attraction. The place will have all the amenities of a modern town in the way of water, sewerage, and lighting. The scenery and climate are good. I believe that a large number of people will be attracted there apart from the official population. Men of some substance have told me that they have seen Canberra, and wish to reside there. My impression is that private enterprise will give Canberra very fair attention. The building programme in Sydney last year represented 9,000 houses.

5. *To the Chairman.*—Up to the present there has been no inducement given to private people to build at Canberra. The land is the only asset that the Commonwealth Government possess there. To lease land in the Federal Territory at present would be entirely a speculation on the part of the lessee. The Advisory Committee is of the opinion that nothing should be done in the matter of leasing until the erection of Parliament House has been commenced. There would then be something to indicate to the public generally that the erection of the Capital City is being proceeded with seriously. Until that is done, very little incentive can be given to builders. It is thought that the public hostel will accommodate a number of visitors, who will appreciate the charms of Canberra, and help to make it popular. In my own opinion the time is fast approaching for the leasing of the land, but to do that before starting the Parliament House would be to discount the value of our assets.

6. *To Mr. Cook.*—I do not think any person would take up land there if he could not forecast roughly what the future rental might be from year to year. I would not attempt to deal with the land until the work of building Parliament House is begun.

7. *To the Chairman.*—If private enterprise fails to undertake building at Canberra, the Commonwealth Government will have to spend more money there. A Sydney contractor has told me that he is prepared to go to Canberra in about eight months to build houses there on speculation. Accommodation of such a nature will not meet the needs of men on small salaries who cannot afford to have their own cottages. The rates paid to the workmen at Canberra are higher than those ruling in Sydney. The Department charges the work-

men 6s. a week for the small cottages they occupy, and the men save money by taking them.

8. *To Mr. Cook.*—I believe the Government would be prepared to supply bricks to private contractors. Through having a reserve supply the Department can now carry on without erecting another kiln. If we had not obtained a reserve of about 7,000,000 bricks we could not have managed without additional plant. I do not think a private company could produce bricks from the shale available at a cheaper rate than the Department does. The Department could break assets private enterprise by providing cheaper bricks that could be turned out with smaller plants. The Government do not make any profit at all on their bricks. Interest and depreciation and all overhead charges are taken into account. I do not think that the £40,000 set down as the capital cost was ever spent on the plant and machinery. We have never made any inquiry amongst the officials as to what proportion of them wish to go into a hostel. All we could do was to make a forecast. In arriving at the cost per head of the 80-guests proposition, I took the capital cost of the hostel, and allowed 7 per cent. On the cost of furnishing, I allowed 10 per cent., and on the dining-room crockery, cutlery, &c., 20 per cent. That brought the cost for each guest to £42 per annum, but there are further charges. There are the hostel laundry, a couple of gardeners, and "a boots." There are also the charges for lighting, water, and fuel, which bring the total cost per guest up to £60 per annum. Although we expect the hostel to be always fully occupied, I have allowed for each room to be empty for two weeks in the year. That brings the cost up to £62 8s., or £1 4s. per week. I then allowed 15s. 6d. per week for food, and that amounts to £40 per annum per guest. For domestic service I put down £20 per annum, making the total cost per guest £2 7s. per week on the basis of 80 guests, or £2 5s. per week if the hostel were built to accommodate 100. The charge I have mentioned would include light and water, but not electric power. I do not think the cost of electricity as costed, as in the cities. Fruit is cheaper in the country. There is no much fish to be obtained, but I think the meat there is just as cheap as, if not cheaper than, in Melbourne and Sydney. In the country the staple products should be less costly. Groceries may cost more, but a grocery business run at Canberra free from high rentals should enable people to obtain supplies at very little more than is paid at present in cities. Whether 15s. 6d. per week for food is a fair allowance, I am not sure; it is merely my own estimate. The cost of food at the officers' mess at Acton would be a guide. I have allowed £2 and keep for each of the domestic servants. That figure may be on the high side for Canberra.

9. *To Mr. Mackay.*—I cannot give the salaries of the officials who would occupy the hostel. This building will be secondary to the main hostel, and it will be in an important position. There will be other hostels erected, with less pretentious accommodation and equipment. As in country towns, there will be a certain number of officials who will board privately with relatives or friends, or in small boardinghouses.

10. *To the Chairman.*—The dining and other rooms will make the accommodation in the hostel better than in an ordinary boardinghouse. It would not do to erect an unattractive building on such an important site. In other parts of the Federal Capital there should be cheaper accommodation, and probably it will be provided by private enterprise.

11. *To Senator Newland.*—The accommodation in the hostel should be equal to that obtainable in a city hotel for 12s. a day. Except that there will be no bar, the accommodation should be equal to that of the ordinary country hotel.

12. *To the Chairman.*—Private individuals might be able to conduct the hostel on cheaper lines than the Government, but they would, no doubt, want to make a profit out of it. I do not think one-third of an official's income is too much to expend on house-rent, food,

&c. No doubt valuable information on catering costs could be obtained from the officers' mess at Canberra. I believe the total cost is 27s. 6d. per head for their food, and I understand they pay 6s. for room-rent.

13. *To Mr. Jackson.*—There is no separation allowed for married men.

14. *To Senator Newland.*—Timber is to be used in the upper story of the hostel for the purpose of fireproofing. The amount of timber construction is comparatively small, but no doubt it would increase the fire risk. The inside walls would be of lath and plaster, and probably there would be fibrous plaster ceilings. With good air cavities, I do not think the upper story would be any hotter than if it were constructed wholly in brick. The proposed wooden story would cool more quickly. The kitchen is on the ground floor. It is divided from the dining-room by one wall and the serving passage. There will be a serving screen. The two-storied portion does not extend over the kitchen. I do not think the wood stove would add materially to the fire risk, especially with an island range. Of course, there is always the risk of fire. I am told that out of every 100 fires the causes of 70 are unknown. The Government have not decided the question of supplying bricks to private people in the area. The Department has always contemplated that private people would be supplied. Some time ago there was a bank to be erected in Queanbeyan. First of all, the Government did not favour the idea of furnishing bricks for the work, but I saw the Minister, and he subsequently said that the bricks could be supplied if they were asked for. As Director-General of Works, my sympathies are in the direction of letting anybody have bricks, but I cannot determine Government policy. We are putting down a 3-ft. 6-in. gauge service tramway, about 17 miles in length, for constructional work generally. This line will be useful in bringing material from the railway, in handling all material for contractors, and for the general purposes of distribution of material for construction work.

15. *To Mr. Mackay.*—I am a member of the Advisory Committee which recommended the erection of the hostel. Sixteen bathrooms are provided for, and if there were to be 100 guests, four additional bathrooms would be necessary. The question of whether it would be more economical to obtain bricks from outside the Federal Capital area has been gone into, but on account of the freight it would be too costly. In my opinion the run of bricks from the kiln at Queanbeyan is well up to the quality of facing bricks from Sydney. We have some bricks that are worth £7 or £8 a 1,000 in Sydney. It is an engineering brick, in fact, and a cheaper one would be satisfactory, but with the particular mud-stone from which our bricks are made, we are compelled to adopt a process which results in the manufacture of a brick of superior quality. With our mud-stone I think we can make a superior tile also. It requires 30,000 bricks for a five-roomed cottage. If you saved 10s. a 1,000 by getting bricks from elsewhere it would only amount to £15 on the whole job, which is not a drastic decrease in the cost of construction.

16. *To Mr. Cook.*—As soon as it is known that this Committee assents to the proposed work, I would not mind pushing on with the drawings as fast as possible in anticipation of the Committee's report being adopted by Parliament. The other day the Minister asked me what we should do if the tenders for the governmental hostel were too high. I said that I would submit the matter to him. We prepared our estimate of costs, but not until after the tenders were in. When the tenders were received, they were sealed in the regular manner and put into an envelope. They were opened at the same time as my estimates. This practice eliminates the possibility of collusion between a contractor and the Department. If our estimate is substantially below the private tender, I would submit to the Minister a recommendation that we should do the work ourselves. If, on the other hand, the lowest tender were only 5 per

cent, or 7 per cent. above us, it is quite possible that I would advise the Minister to accept the tender.

17. *To Mr. Mackay.*—There is practically no waste of water in a steam-heating plant. This system gives decent comfort in a room, and it is economical compared with the use of electric radiators.

18. *To the Chairman.*—When the hostel is occupied it will be possible for the management to arrange the bath-room accommodation in the most suitable way. Probably one bathroom in each pavilion could be reserved for ladies, still leaving sufficient accommodation for the men. The present scheme is not as ambitious as the Hotel Australia, but I do not think it would be possible to obtain better accommodation in an average country hotel. The large bedrooms at the four corners of the building for married couples are close to the sitting-rooms and balconies, and are particularly desirable on that account. The plan has been approved by the Advisory Committee. The hostel is situated 600 yards from one of the proposed positions for Administrative offices, and about 1,200 yards from the other proposed hostel. Probably there will be another hostel in a less conspicuous locality, at which the boarding rate will be lower. No doubt, some of the officials will need board at a lower figure. Private enterprises may fill this need. The Advisory Committee thought that a hostel accommodating not more than 120 people would be easier to manage than a larger establishment, and could be more economically conducted. It was thought that 200 guests would be too many. The consensus of opinion was that the maximum number should be 120.

19. *To Mr. Blakely.*—I doubt the charge of £2 7s. per week for an 80-guest hostel, or £2 5s. for a 100-guest hostel, would be beyond the reach of the civil servant in receipt of, say, 13s. or 14s. a day. As far as embellishments are concerned, we have kept the cost of the furnishing down to bedrock. It is as cheap as we could do it consistent with good work.

(Taken at Melbourne.)

THURSDAY, 15TH MARCH, 1923.

Present:

Mr. GREGORY, Chairman;

Senator Newland	Mr. Cook
Senator Plain	Mr. Jackson
Mr. Blakely	Mr. Mackay.

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

20. *To the Chairman.*—The question of constructing an officers' hostel at Canberra has been referred to the Committee for investigation and report. I am responsible for the design which received consideration at the hands of the Advisory Committee, and the plan has been revised as the result of their criticism. The Committee went into the question and made certain suggestions, and generally the plan meets with their approval. The object of the building is to fulfil the Advisory Committee's recommendations in their report dealing with the minimum work necessary to enable Parliament to meet at the Federal Capital. The report goes minutely into what would be necessary to provide accommodation for married and single public servants, and this particular proposition is a step in the direction of meeting the Committee's views in housing single public servants who might be termed the senior or more highly remunerated officers rather than the junior members of the Service. The idea was formed that an establishment designed to accommodate 100 boarders would be necessary. It will really be a boardinghouse, and it was thought that provision for 100 could be economically and conveniently handled. It was then considered whether a start could not be

made by providing accommodation for less than that number, so a plan was prepared to provide for housing 100 with the intention of proceeding as a first stage for the accommodation of 80, but making the centre of the building sufficiently large for the eventual extension of living accommodation for 100. The scheme, therefore, before the Committee is to provide accommodation in the first place for 80 boarders, with, of course, accommodation for the staff. Future extensions would be made by constructing two additional wings, each of which would be capable of accommodating ten persons. In fixing the maximum at 100 I have not been guided by the advice obtained from persons conducting hotels or large boardinghouses, but have been influenced by common knowledge. It would be rather difficult to find a modern boardinghouse in the city accommodating more than 100 persons. If it were found that it might be convenient to exceed accommodation for 100, provision could be made for another twenty by making the end pavilions two stories instead of one, when room could then be found for 120. I do not think that would affect seriously the position from an architectural point of view, but my own idea is that it will look better to have the end pavilions somewhat low, seeing that Canberra is to be laid out on the lines of a garden city. It is desirable to lead the landscape up gently from the level ground to the culminating point at the centre of the building, and thus avoid an abrupt edge to the building. I admit that imaginations of such a character might be carried to an excessive degree if economy were to be rigidly considered. I would prefer several hostels, each capable of accommodating from 80 to 100 persons, rather than one housing 200 or 300 people, and my impression is that one to accommodate from 100 to 120 would be more easily controlled. I would not suggest the construction of a very large building. When before the Committee on a previous occasion I expressed the opinion that walls 9 feet to 10 feet in height were preferable to walls 12 feet or 13 feet high. It must be remembered that public rooms in the proposed building cover a fairly large area. The dining room, for instance, is 53 feet by 44 feet, and the sitting room, where the boarders will meet for social relaxation, is 38 feet by 28 feet. To have a good proportion in such rooms the ceilings must be fairly high, say, 13 feet. The standard bedrooms are 13 feet by 10 feet, and in a few cases where double rooms have been provided for, the measurements will be 16 feet by 13 feet. Provision has been made for 100 feet walls in the bedrooms. The old-fashioned idea of making the walls of ordinary living rooms of a house 13 feet or 14 feet high, such as obtained in Australia in the early days because of the warm climate, has now been upset. It is now generally recognised, and can be defended scientifically, that walls exceeding 10 feet are unnecessary except, of course, where height has to be introduced to give effect in a room of a large area. A wall 12 feet high in a standard room 13 feet by 10 feet would create the impression in the mind of a sensitive man that it was too large to contain him. If provision is made for carrying off vitiated air at the ceiling level anything over 10 feet in height is, in my opinion, extravagant. In constructing the pavilions, I would be prepared to build the walls as low as even 9 feet. In England and in America the walls of the dwellinghouses average about 8 ft. 9 in. in height. In the southern portions of North America, where the temperatures are higher such a height would be sufficient if provision were made for carrying off vitiated air at the level of the ceiling. The proposal in the main building is to construct the walls of brick and rough cast. Light-coloured rough cast creates a good effect, and that is a point on which I am very keen. I am sorry the members of the Advisory Committee are not unanimous on the point; but I believe that when the members of this Committee visit Canberra, and study from a distance the effect produced by the reddish-brown brick,

they will admit that the light-coloured rough casting will make buildings more attractive. I prefer a white or cream wall with a red tiled roof. Although it is true that elaborate buildings of stone are constructed in the big cities, I believe that the tendency now is to dispense with the use of stone. There are very few sandstones that have a life of more than a century. I can, for instance, refer to the unfortunate results of using stone in constructing the Anglican Cathedral in Melbourne. If an inspection were made of many of the large buildings in Sydney or Melbourne it would be found that there has been considerable deterioration in the stone. I believe Colonel Vernon, an architect who was for many years in the service of the New South Wales Government, estimated the life of Sydney sandstone at 100 years. The bricks being used at Canberra will, I believe, stand for centuries. The sulphurous atmosphere does not attack bricks as it does stones. Many buildings in London of Portland stone will stand the sulphur in the atmosphere; but the sandstone buildings in Great Britain are, in the cities often, a failure. The House of Commons at Westminster is constructed of sandstone, but large sums are spent in covering the portions of the structure likely to deteriorate with a dressing of silicate of soda. Years ago the British Government invited suggestions from chemists all over the world to assist them in combating the attack on the sandstone at Westminster, and from memory, I believe it was an Italian named Czeremley who submitted a formula which was considered to be better than any other, and which became a standard restorer. It resembled a liquid glass, and when applied it sets in the form of a film, and thus prevents atmospheric interference. The application has, however, to be repeated from time to time. I have had to apply that material in Australia for the preservation of stone, although in this country we have not many deleterious gases in the atmosphere. In cities such as Melbourne and Sydney, however, the chemical contents of the atmosphere are becoming more pronounced in consequence of the increase in the number of factories. Although it is proposed to construct the first story of brick and the second of wood, I do not think the use of the latter will result in much reduction in price. I think it will add to the picturesque quality of the structure, and it will hardly increase the fire risk. Speaking as one who has lived about one-third of his Australian life in a wooden house, I may say that I have never found any great difference between a wood and a brick dwelling. The maintenance, of course, costs more. Wooden houses are now constructed of hardwood, and are treated periodically with oil, lead paint is unnecessary. The appearance of this particular building would be improved by having the lower story of brick and the upper one constructed of timber, as shown on the plan. I do not think it will make any difference in the cost. I can recall a conversation I had with the Chairman concerning the hollow walls of the small cottages in the edge. We are building some of the small cottages in that way. A wall so constructed would be capable of carrying a second floor, although the building regulations in a city may prohibit it. No one can tell the difference in appearance, and if we can save 25 per cent. on the brickwork I think we should do it. I would be prepared to adopt that principle on a two-storied building, but I do not know whether I would be allowed to. If we are to build the lower story with brick, and the upper with wood, I would be in favour of placing the bricks on edge. The saving on the whole building would, perhaps, amount to £1,000, and when the Committee visit Canberra they will be able to examine the process. One great advantage in constructing the upper story of wood is that it distributes the work amongst a greater number of artisans, and also creates a better effect. Instead of a large number of men being employed on brickwork we are able to give employment to millers, timber dressers, carpenters, painters, and others. Oiled hardwood above rough-cast brickwork will look very well, and that principle has been followed

in connexion with the construction of the principal hotel. The contrast in colour takes away the bareness that would be apparent if the building were all white. I do not think the dust storms will have any great effect on the rough-cast work. There are some fine examples of this class of work on many of the old farm houses in the vicinity of Canberra, where roughcast has been made from gravel with the right degree of coarseness, readily obtainable in the locality. These houses are still snow white, although they have been up 60 or 70 years. Some of the old buildings at Duntroon were treated in that way. Provision has not been made in the building under consideration for any architectural embellishments, necessary features, such as windows, doors, and roof are treated in such a way as to make the structure architecturally attractive, and to provide good proportions and the necessary contrasts in colour. I do not think that the Department of Works and Railways would object to private enterprise building wooden structures in the Capital Territory, and I think domestic architectural expression is increased by the introduction of timber buildings. I would not suggest the extensive use of timber in the main structures, such as the Parliamentary building. If the Committee feels that provision is being made for too much woodwork, the proportion could be reduced without interfering with the design. I would not lessen the quantity in the central building, but in the pavilions a reduction might be made if necessary.

21. To Mr. Halsey.—The foundations are to be of concrete and the walls of brick up to the level of the sills of the top floor windows. The roughcast will commence from the floor level, because it has been found that to commence it from the ground would result in its discoloration, particularly during the winter season when it would become mud-splashed. For a distance of about 3 feet from the ground the bricks in the walls will be showing, and from that point upward to the bottom of the top floor windows rough-casting will be used. A good deal of the brickwork showing near the foundation of the hotel which is at present visible will eventually be hidden as the earthworks are raised. Of course, a portion of the walls will always be red, and then above the ground floor level, which is about 2 ft. 6 in. from the ground, they will be white.

22. To Senator Plain.—The proposed structure is intended to accommodate only those officers who are in a position to pay a tariff of approximately 45s. per week, and these receiving a low salary will have to be provided for by the Government unless private enterprise comes to our assistance. Failing that, the Government will have to provide accommodation for young males and females who cannot afford to pay the higher rate, and who would be able to pay, say, 30s. per week. A building less elaborate, and on a less prominent site, would have to be constructed. The cost per cubic foot of the future wings, if of one story, will slightly exceed the cost incurred in connexion with the proposed building. The future buildings will, probably, cost about £7,000, or perhaps, 1d. or 1½d. more per cubic foot.

23. To Mr. Jackson.—If brickwork were used instead of timber as proposed the cost would be about the same. Concrete buildings can be made to produce the same architectural effect, and eventually I believe that architectural thought will be such that wholly concrete structures will be favoured. Where stone effects are asked for they will be provided by a veneer of stone. The Committee accepted the proposal with the construction of Commonwealth Offices, Brisbane. It has been the practice in that city or Government buildings to be constructed of freestone; but latterly the authorities have been using brick with stone mouldings. In connexion with the Commonwealth Offices, Brisbane, the question was raised as to the material to be used, and according to the report tabled in Parliament last week, the structure is to be

built of concrete. With that decision I agree. Portions of a concrete building can be veneered to make them resemble solid granite, particularly the lower portions likely to be disfigured by traffic. We have commenced to prepare plans on the lines the Committee suggested.

24. To Mr. Cook.—The height of the walls of the bedrooms in the proposed structure is to be 10 feet. I would be prepared to suggest 9 ft. 6 in., but I think there are many who would object. The lower walls would result in a saving of, perhaps, £300. According to the report of the Advisory Committee, provision will have to be made elsewhere for about 310 public servants in addition to those to be accommodated in the building under discussion. Colonel Owen estimated that officers occupying the building would have to pay about £2 5s. per week, and I think his estimate is a fair one. Youths and girls receiving, say, £1 10s a year will have to be provided with accommodation at, say, 30s. per week. Probably private boarding establishments will be available; but I believe the Government may meet the situation by constructing a boardinghouse which can accommodate people at a lower price. The Advisory Committee contemplate that accommodation for about 310 officers would probably have to be found by the Government, and that private enterprise would make provision for about 325. Money is now available at somewhat lower rates, and as its circulation increases, private individuals may be induced to come into the business. If private enterprise enters into the matter in the manner the Advisory Committee contemplates, more than 50 per cent. of the additional accommodation necessary will be provided. That, of course, is only an estimate.

25. To Mr. Halsey.—It is possible that quite a number who may be expected to utilize the hotel will feel that the rate is too high. Married officers receiving £350 or £400 a year who have only one child would, perhaps, find it cheaper to live there than to conduct housekeeping on their own account. A married man receiving £300 a year could not afford to live in this building, but one receiving £400 per annum could do so.

26. To Senator Newland.—The size of the standard bedrooms is 13 feet by 10 feet, and when we consider the average accommodation provided in boardinghouses I think the space is ample. The rooms are provided with wash-basins and wardrobes, which are let into the walls, and the only obstruction in a room 13 feet by 10 feet would be a single bed, a small bed-side table, and a chair. I have been informed that a paragraph in the *Argus* states that a person occupying one of these rooms would have to go outside the door to turn round; but I do not think any one takes such comments seriously. A room of the dimensions mentioned, constructed as it is, would be equal to one 13 feet by 12 feet. I do not think the rough casting would need cleansing frequently. It will be covered with white lime, and if applied when in the process of allowing to set a lustre effect. I do not think it would ever want cleaning. Some time ago when at Leeton, New South Wales, I noticed that the roughcast work on the hotel which was very rough had become filled with cobwebs, but these could be easily brushed down every few months in two or three hours. I do not think exception can be taken to walls constructed of single brick on the edge of the dividing walls of the Perth Post Office, which are made of 3-in. brick on edge. The size of the panels between the stanchions will be approximately 24 feet by 11 ft. 3 in., and no difficulty from overhead weight should be experienced. I am surprised to learn that in constructing the small cottages at Canberra the bricks are being covered on both sides with concrete, and if such is the case I can only assume that it is being done to fill up the crevices, and thus make a smooth surface. A 3-in. brick wall when plastered really becomes a 4½-in. wall, and in my opinion, quite sufficient to keep out sound. I lived for many years in a house where the dividing

walls were only 1-in. thick, and even though one could hear a baby crying in the adjoining room, one soon became accustomed to any noise there might be. In the Commonwealth Offices the partitions are only 3 inches thick, and in other important buildings in different parts of the Commonwealth that thickness is not exceeded.

27. To the Chairman.—The cost of the brickwork has been estimated at £35 or £36 per 100; but the estimate before the Committee is based on the cubic principle. We did not take out the quantities, and the plans before the Committee are only sketch plans. I will supply the Committee with the cost per rod of the brickwork in the Perth Post Office, and I will also inform you as to whether our estimate in this case is higher than the cost of similar work in Perth. A comparison between Canberra and Perth is not a good one. The outside brick walls of the Perth Post Office consist of beautiful work, and the brick work there is costing a good deal more than at Canberra. At Canberra I have been informed that the bricklayers do day labour constructing cottages are laying between 500 and 600 bricks a day. The bricks at Canberra are costing £1 or £1 1s. per 1,000, and delivering them to the site will probably amount to another 12s. 6d. per 1,000. When the narrow gauge railway is laid down the cost of carriage should be reduced. I have not had any definite information concerning the construction of a building in which the lower paid public servants could be accommodated at, say, 35s. per week, but I understand that that is one of the questions I shall have to consider very soon. If such a building were to be constructed the cost could be reduced by having a smaller number of baths, reducing the sitting, smoking, and common room accommodation. The savings for the bedrooms could also be of wood instead of brick, and probably, the architraves of the windows could also be dispensed with. These reductions could, probably, result in the cost of board being reduced by 5s. or 6s. a week. Vacuum cleaners could be dispensed with, and the scale of food would be less. I understand that 15s. per week has been allowed in connexion with the food to be given in the officers' hostel, and a reduction would I suppose be made here. The attendance could also be on a more moderate scale. A building of reinforced concrete would not be cheaper than one of brick. I have to consider many proposals for constructing cottages with reinforced concrete. Patent methods are constantly being brought under my notice, and in connexion with the building of cottages tenders are allowed to submit alternative prices, but I have never known an instance where any patent concrete scheme of construction has successfully competed with brickwork. A man actually took a contract at Canberra under which he was going to introduce a patent system, and although we told him to go ahead, he never came up to the mark. The cheapest and best method, in my opinion, is one consisting of concrete blocks which we used ourselves twelve or fifteen years ago. Concrete slabs were to be used by the contractor who undertook to do certain work at Canberra, and although we waited for about three months, he did not commence the work. We are now using brickwork and employing the bond I have already mentioned. By economizing where possible I think brickwork will hold its own for cheapness. The prospect of private enterprise entering upon building operations at Canberra depends largely upon the latest policy of the Government, which has not yet been disclosed, and also upon the price at which money can be obtained. If the Government formulate a liberal land policy building by private persons would be active. I believe the members of the Advisory Committee are of the opinion that the best time to stimulate private enterprise would be when the intentions of the Government in regard to Canberra are definitely known. When capital has not been disclosed, the Government's readiness by starting the construction of Parliament House they will realize that it is time to move. Skilled labour is more costly at Canberra than in Sydney or Melbourne.

(Taken at Melbourne.)

TUESDAY, 20th MARCH, 1923.

Present:

Mr. GAZDOFF, Chairman:	
Senator Newland	Mr. Mackay
Mr. Mathews	Mr. Mathews.
Mr. Cook	

Albert Victor Langker, General Secretary, Commonwealth Public Service Clerical Association, sworn and examined.

39. To the Chairman.—I have scrutinized the plans of the proposed hostel for officials at Canberra, and I think that the accommodation provided will meet the requirements of the clerical officers of the Commonwealth Public Service, but the standard of comfort will probably be too high for officers of the General Division. The average salary drawn by the Commonwealth Public Service is £235 per annum. That includes everybody from the administrative officers to juniors. The minimum salary payable to married officers, excluding juniors, is £208 per annum. An officer receives £138 plus bonuses at 21 years of age. These bonuses are £12 for a single man, and £92 for a married man, with £13 for each child up to the age of fourteen years dependent upon him. An officer living away from home must receive at least £106 per annum irrespective of the salary he would otherwise draw. In 1901 the average actual salary of all officers was £128 per annum. In 1921 the average actual salary was £235, but the effective salary in that same year was only £122 per annum, as compared with £128 in 1901, this result being arrived at by taking into consideration the increased cost of living since 1901. These figures have been supplied to me by the Commonwealth Statistician. Only those officers of the third class or higher grades would be able to pay anything over £2 per week for board. The minimum salary that would enable them to do so would be £218 per annum and whatever allowances were granted at the time. I do not think that a married officer, drawing £310 per annum, would be able to go to Canberra and pay £2 5s. per week each for himself and his wife. If a man with the basic wage family, that is three children, were called upon to pay £2 5s. for each child, he would be paying actually circumstances a married officer with a wife and children could not use the hostel. From a public standpoint it would be better to house married men in separate cottages. The highest rent that men with families would be prepared to pay for cottages would range about £2 or £2 2s. per week. I am now speaking of the requirements of the clerical officers, who would represent fully 80 per cent. of the staff transferred to Canberra, and I do not think that a man receiving less than £275 per annum would care to pay more than 30s. per week for a cottage, even with rents remaining at their present high figure. Last night I interviewed a number of officers of my association. In all I spoke to fifteen men from various Departments, and I took out the amounts they are actually paying for their board and keep at the present time. The average proved to be £18 10s. per week for a single man. Of course that includes board, clothing, lodges, and everything of that description, but does not take in money spent on entertainments or anything of that sort. There were three officers of the fifth class whose maximum salary is £210, with an allowance of £42 for a single man. The majority were officers of the fourth class, at a salary ranging from £230 to £310 per annum. There was also a third class officer. The fifteen would represent the average class of clerical officer likely to be transferred to Canberra. They do not include men on lower salaries or officers of the professional or administrative staff. The average amount paid by them for board and lodging is £1 12s. 6d. per week, clearly showing that they would not be able to take advantage

of the hostel. For single officers, I think, it would be desirable to have something in the nature of barracks. So long as sufficient bathroom accommodation was provided, and there was a little privacy, it would be just about what they are getting in the cities. No doubt they would look for some amusement such as billiards or music rooms, and the accommodation provided in that respect in the hostel is just what they are accustomed to in Melbourne, but they do not pay £2 5s. or £2 7s. per week for it. They would probably build or rent, where they could get facilities for some pleasure. My association has recently received letters from a clerical officer now stationed at Canberra, who are anxious to form a branch of the association there as distinct from the New South Wales branch to which they now belong for the purpose of organization. They want to form a branch of their own for social activities as well as for ordinary union purposes, and the probability is that if large numbers of officers went to Canberra they would form a club, and go in for social activities of that sort. We have had complaints from the officers at Canberra in regard to the quarters already there. We were asked to make an application to the Public Service Commissioner for the granting of a district allowance. They forwarded figures to me showing that the cost of living at Canberra, as compared with Sydney and Melbourne, was very much higher. When these figures were submitted to the Public Service Commissioner, he said that he did not feel inclined to go into the question at the present time in view of the possibility of the early appointment of a new Public Service Board, but if the present situation continues, it is quite possible that a very good argument will be put up for the granting of a district allowance. The cost of living at Canberra is probably higher because of the remoteness of the place, but the Seat of Government is removed to that place I do not suppose there will be such a good claim for an allowance. It will then be taken to represent the standard of the Capital City. A district allowance depends on quite a number of facts besides the cost of living there, for instance remoteness from railways, extremes of climatic conditions, lack of facilities, and so on. I have not the figures relating to the claim of the Canberra officers. They got them back from me to revise them and bring them up to date for submission to the new Board of Commissioners.

40. To Mr. Mathews.—I am General Secretary of the Clerical Association for Australia. When I said that the hostel would be of a higher standard than would be required for the lower-paid men, I meant that it would be a higher standard than they could afford to pay for. Most of the Clerical Division, lower than third class officers receiving a salary of £310 per annum, could not afford to pay £2 5s. or £2 7s. per week for accommodation. The type of building proposed would certainly suit them, but if they had the alternative of living in a hostel where they would be required to pay £2 5s. or £2 7s. per week, or living in a cheaper kind of building where they would be called upon to pay 30s. or 35s. per week, they would prefer the latter even if it gave them less comfort, because it would be really what they could afford. The whole question narrows itself down to what the officers can afford to pay. If the only accommodation provided at Canberra be a place at which they will have to pay £2 5s. or £2 7s. per week, in my opinion a special district allowance will have to be made, because the figures mentioned are over so much more than the officers are paying in Melbourne or Sydney at the present time. Of course, with the growth of the city it is quite possible that accommodation will become cheaper, in which case the Board of Commissioners would see fit to reduce the district allowance. Married men would certainly prefer to have separate establishments. Of course, some of them would like to live in the hostel. I know that some married people prefer to live in flats because it entails less housework for the wife. The average rent paid by the public

servant in Melbourne, drawing a salary of £5 per week, is 97s. 6d., or at the most 30s., per week. Circumstances are rather abnormal at the present time, and most officers have no opinion in the matter. They have to pay that rent here, and they could do it at Canberra, where, perhaps, there might be an opportunity of saving money on amusements.

41. To Senator Healand.—The number of officers who could be accommodated in the hostel at Canberra would be about one out of every six. That would not necessarily mean that the accommodation to be provided at the hostel would not be fully utilized. It all depends upon what other accommodation is available. Officers in order to live at all might be obliged to spend practically all their income on their board, but I am sure that a large proportion of the clerical staff will not be able to pay £2 5s. each per week for themselves and their wives and children. In fact, they would not be earning enough to do it. In the event of cheaper accommodation being provided by the Government, or by private enterprise, they would have to make use of it, even if it meant a certain amount of discomfort. I do not think that the size of the rooms in the proposed hostel, or the bathroom accommodation, could be reduced. I do not think that the common room could be cut out. In establishments where officers are now paying 32s. 6d. or 35s. per week for board and lodging, there are generally common rooms where boarders can sit and talk. There certainly ought to be a common room for persons who are expected to pay £2 5s. or £2 7s. per week. In addition to the actual cost of board and lodging, an officer will be obliged to spend a few shillings per week extra on his laundry bill. When all the figures are worked out it will be found that the number of officers in a position to pay £2 5s. or £2 7s. per week will become smaller and smaller. Only the higher class officer will be able to afford to live at the hostel. The ordinary healthy man will certainly eat 16s. worth of food per week, so that it is not a high figure to estimate the cost of food at the hostel at 15s. per week. I know nothing about the cost of building, material, or labour at Canberra, and I do not see anything extravagant in the plan of the proposed hostel, but I suppose that the estimated cost for board must be due to the high cost of building and other factors like that. I think it must cost the average boardinghouse-keeper 15s. per week to feed a man. I find that a number of the Federal officers in Melbourne live in flats. The average rent for a flat in a good quarter is about £2 per week. In addition, of course, a man living in a flat has to pay more for his food. I think that it costs a man with a wife and three children about £4 6s. or £4 10s. per week to live in a flat, but officers who live in such flats are those who draw at least £260 per year, plus allowances. At first these allowances were regarded as temporary only. Mr Justice Powers, President of the Arbitration Court, first introduced the system of paying a bonus owing to war conditions. The district allowance has continued to be paid, and the general impression is that, even if any change does take place in the cost of living, a fair proportion of this allowance will be incorporated in the salaries paid. In fact, Arbitration Court Judges and the Public Service Arbitrator have always regarded the cost of living allowance as being in actual fact salary. The Public Service Arbitrator has always expressed the point that he does not feel inclined to increase nominal wages because of the existence of the cost of living allowance, which he says, takes the place of salary, and so far the Public Service Commissioner has made no attempt to ask the Arbitrator to reduce the allowance. It has now been in force for about three years, and my opinion is that there is no justification for its removal. He has the opinion that it will shortly be included in the actual salary paid. When I suggested that barracks should be erected at Canberra for single men, I meant a building where the rooms might possibly be smaller than those provided in the hostel, and where, possibly, the bathroom accommodation might be less. The common room might also be

cut out. I do not think that any officer would care to live in barracks as they are understood. When I mentioned to some of the officers that these plans contemplated a charge of £2 6s. or £2 7s. per week for board, the general opinion expressed was that they would rather live in tents than pay it. I made inquiries as to what is the ordinary practice in boardinghouses, and I understand that where the charge is 50s. per week two persons occupy one room, and where the charge is over 30s. per week separate rooms are provided. There are officers who pay up to £2 per week for board and lodging, but they are men with no responsibilities who simply board in the better class establishments to suit themselves.

42. To Mr. Mackay.—I do not think that the hostel will meet the purpose it is intended to serve because of the high rate of tariff required, and because it is mostly intended for single men, whereas the majority of the officers drawing the higher salaries are married. An officer of the fifth class reaches a salary of £210 in ten years. If he enters the Service at the average age for clerks, namely, eighteen years, he is 28 years of age when he gets £210 per annum. Now the average marrying age for all classes of persons is 28 years. Therefore, when an officer of the Public Service is drawing £210 per annum he is married or thinking about getting married. The salaries of the fourth class officers range from £220 to £310, and the majority of the officers of this class who would be drawing £260 per annum or over would be married. I think it is most inadvisable from a public point of view to have families living in flats. The average home-loving man prefers to have his own home, and a little plot of ground on which he can have a garden. Of course, there are some persons who prefer flat life. I advocate the erection of cottages rather than hostels at Canberra.

43. To the Chairman.—In making the suggestion in regard to barracks I meant a less pretentious hostel than that which is to be provided. The majority of the officers of the Clerical Division want above all to be able to get hours for 35s. per week or under, if they can. Very few, indeed, would be prepared, or would want, to pay more. Therefore, if it is a question of getting better accommodation and paying more than 35s. per week, or a place with less comfort, they would prefer to live in the latter at 35s. per week for board. The problem is what sort of place can be built so that board can be provided at 35s. per week or under. The hostel to be provided would be more suitable for the higher grade officers. These men who are now paying 35s., or even 32s. 6d. per week, in Melbourne get a hot water service for baths. I should think that a building in which they could get board at 35s. per week at Canberra should provide hot water and electric light. I understand that the boardinghouses in Melbourne charge extra for extra heating and special services such as electric heaters in bedrooms. As for the question of allowing private enterprise the opportunity of supplying the required accommodation, it is a very serious problem. Unless some sort of accommodation is provided at a reasonable cost the Government will be forced to grant an allowance to the officers at Canberra. I have had no experience of hostels run by the Government in any State, but the Government colleges and restaurants are most efficient. The average travelling stations are not much time for these places, but there is always a tremendous rush, and the waitresses do very little considering that they have to serve everything in double quick time. There is a very fine restaurant run by the Commissioner of Railways at the Sydney Railway Station. The meals there are very cheap, and the establishment is conducted in the most satisfactory manner. Last night a suggestion was put forward by my Association that possibly the Government might be able to draw up some scheme to enable officers to build their own homes, a scheme somewhat on the lines of the Credit Foncier, by which a large number of officers of the higher rank, who now own their own homes in Melbourne or Sydney, might deem it advisable to sell their property and build in Canberra. That would

mean that they would have a fair amount of capital at their disposal, and they might get some assistance from the Government. At any rate, from a financial point of view, it might be well worth the while of the Government to consider such a scheme. To the Superannuation Board, which will have a large sum of money for investment, this scheme might appeal as providing a good security. I am sure that officers would build their own homes at Canberra if they felt there was likely to be any permanency about the place. I find that a large proportion of the Commonwealth officers to be transferred to Canberra have their own homes in Melbourne. An idea on the lines I am suggesting was put forward some time ago by the officers now at Canberra, but the Association did not put the matter up to the Government. The Advisory Committee did not consult my Association before reporting that private enterprise would very likely erect 395 cottages at Canberra. We have not yet got into touch with the Government over the matter. We have too many other pressing matters on hand, but I have been instructed to prepare a report on the housing scheme, and I shall do so as soon as I can find the time. According to the 1922 report of the Public Service Commissioner, there are 3,676 officers in the Central Straits, and I estimate that about half of this number will probably have to go to Canberra as a fairly early date.

44. *To Mr. Mackay.*—The proposed hostel is likely to be a white elephant. The majority of the officers would avoid paying the amount estimated to be charged for board and lodging. Of course, if no other accommodation is provided for them they will be obliged to live at the hostel and pay these charges, but very few of them are now paying £2 5s. or £2 7s. per week for their board. The average amount payable, as I have already shown, is £1 15s. 9d. I do not think that 72 highly salaried officers are likely to go to Canberra. It must be borne in mind that in the majority of cases if an officer is not married at thirty years of age it is difficult for him to marry. He has a mother or a father dependent upon him, and, if he goes to Canberra, it will be still more difficult for him to marry, because he will have to leave his home to Melbourne or Sydney. The officers feel that if they go to Canberra they want their money to stretch as far as it does in Melbourne. It will not do so if they are obliged to pay £2 5s. or £2 7s. per week for board and lodging.

45. *To the Chairman.*—I suppose that the married officer without children would be satisfied with a cottage of four rooms, and that a married officer with children would require a five-roomed house. No doubt the Government would require about £2 per week as rent for such a house, but I am sure that it would suit the average married officer better than a hostel. I feel sure that the officer with a little capital and assistance from the Government would be prepared to spend £1,100 on building a cottage at Canberra. It all depends upon his terms. As far as the central Government will remain at Canberra, the officers will be ready to rush the idea of building because the place is likely to improve, and they will secure the advantage of getting in early.

46. *To Senator Newland.*—Until the end of last year the officers already at Canberra were charged a rental of 10 per cent. of their salary. Under the Commonwealth Public Service Act, officers inhabiting quarters owned by the Commonwealth have 10 per cent. deducted from their salaries to pay for their quarters, and the officers at Canberra attached to the Works and Railways Department, and to the Home and Territories Department, considered it was a sufficiently high charge for the quarters they were occupying. However, the Minister for Works and Railways obtained an opinion from the Attorney-General, who ruled that these officers did not come under section 61 of the Commonwealth Public Service Act, and, therefore, could be asked to pay whatever rent the Government demanded. Consequently their rents were suddenly raised, and they felt the position very keenly. We made representations on their behalf, but the policy of increasing the rents was not

altered, and they are now paying £2 per week for cottages at Canberra. This charge they consider too high, and, as I have already said, they have asked the Public Service Commissioner to grant them a district allowance because of the high cost of living and the disadvantages brought about by remoteness and so forth. There is a considerable amount of dissatisfaction at Canberra in regard to these matters of accommodation and the extra cost of living, and, as I have already shown, the officers want to form a branch of their own so that they can make representations to the Minister themselves. They are right on the spot, and know the conditions prevailing there.

47. *To the Chairman.*—Undoubtedly officers living in cottages would cultivate gardens, and thus possibly reduce the cost of living. I have no hesitation whatever in saying, from my knowledge of them, that they would prefer to have separate houses.

(Taken at Melbourne.)

WEDNESDAY, 21st MARCH, 1923.

Present:

Mr. GIBSON, Chairman;	Mr. Jackson
Senator Newland	Mr. Mackay
Senator Flain	Mr. Mathews.
Mr. Blakely	

James Davies, General Secretary of the United Commercial Travellers' Association, sworn and examined.

48. *To the Chairman.*—I have never controlled buildings which have not been under one roof, and I can only hazard the opinion that if a building is broken into parts the difficulty of supervision is thereby increased. That appeals to me from the managerial stand-point. That drawback, however, might be more than compensated for by hygienic or other considerations, which it would be very hard for me to estimate. The architect may have found it convenient, in order to get light and air on such a large two-storied building, to break it up as he has done, or he may have had some other very good reason for laying the building out as he has done. From the point of view of supervision the different sections of the building are likely to become watertight compartments. It is not customary to have hotel buildings broken up, but I should imagine that it would be quite desirable for the occupants. That, of course, is not a matter upon which I can express an opinion of any value. In the Commercial Travellers' Club we allow a depreciation of 10 per cent. on plant and machinery, and 5 per cent. on furniture. We find that amount very substantial. We charge all current maintenance to working expenditure, and that has the effect of reducing the amount required for renewals. We do not write down the value of our assets, but we carry 10 per cent. to a renewal account for plant and machinery, and 5 per cent. for furniture. We maintain the capital asset at its cost value in our books. Any replacements are provided for out of the renewal account. Upkeep is charged entirely to maintenance account, and becomes a charge against the revenue of the year. An allowance of 10 per cent. for replacement of equipment would be ample for a hostel at Canberra. In this connexion I am not speaking of perishable goods, such as linen and crockery, but of heavier plant and machinery. The replacement cost of linen, crockery, and glassware would amount to about 25 per cent. In regard to breakable articles, like crockery and glassware, and perishable materials, such as linen, we charge the whole cost of replacements to maintenance. The life of such articles is so short that one cannot estimate the percentage that would have to be set aside for replacements. The average meal which members buy in the Commercial Travellers' Club costs them about 2s. 7d. all round, and the cost to us is 2s. 6d. This leaves

a very small margin indeed. The sum of 2s. 6d. includes 13d. for food, 10d. for services, and 6d. for rent and interest. The figure includes overhead charges, but not managerial charges. It includes the cost of the staff of the kitchen and dining room, the manager of the department, and the rental charge which we make to our departments on the basis of the space they occupy. We also charge the department interest on the capital used in the Department, but we charge it nothing for overhead managerial expenses. Breakfast is a *table d'hôte* meal for which we charge 3s. Lunches are mostly *a la carte*, the charge for a three-course meal, with tea or coffee, being 2s. There is a higher tariff for better meals which are frequently ordered. For a three-course tea, with tea or coffee included, there is a minimum charge of 2s. The minimum charge for luncheon is 2s. The figures I have given are for a large business, serving about 800 meals a day. The number of meals served have a very big effect upon such charges as rent and interest, which are fixed. Such charges may not increase if you double your business, so that if you increase your turnover you reduce, in respect of those charges, the percentage per meal. It is a great advantage in such a business to know the exact number for whom you have to cater, and under that head there would be an economy in food at any rate in running a hostel such as that to be erected at Canberra. I could not possibly say at what price board and lodgings could be supplied in a hostel at Canberra. I do not know what the costs would be for transport, and if I gave an opinion it would only be a very wild guess. I do not know what the cost of labour would be. It is much easier to get labour in the big cities than it would be in Canberra, where it would probably cost much more.

49. *To Mr. Mathews.*—We have no full boarders at the Commercial Travellers' Club. Some years ago we had them, but we have given them up, because their business they are not a good proposition, because they limit the space available, and inconvenience others. If you have ten rooms occupied by ten permanent boarders, that means that you can accommodate only ten people all the year round. If the rooms are available to others, who occupy them on an average one week each, you become able to accommodate 500 people in a year.

50. *To the Chairman.*—In the Club we have a steam system of heating from a central boiler. It is very effective. The bedrooms are not heated. The necessity for heating bedrooms at Canberra would depend upon the atmospheric temperature. In America one sees radiators in every bedroom. If there are cold nights at Canberra, when the temperature goes down to 15 degrees, I should consider it would be necessary to heat the building right through. For dining-rooms and common rooms steam heating is undoubtedly a great success. It is very comfortable, and everybody likes it. I think the provision of two baths for eight bedrooms is a reasonable proportion. At the Club we have four baths to thirty rooms on each floor, and you find that ample. It is not usual in a hotel or boarding-house to isolate the dormitory rooms from the single rooms. I think it would be more popular to mix the rooms. The arrangement would be too much like dormitories if an attempt were made to segregate the sexes.

51. *To Senator Newland.*—The charges for replacements and renewals of perishable, short-life articles are included in the figure of 6s. 10d. that I gave for rent, interest, and maintenance. There are some very heavy charges included in that figure. The maintenance of glassware, crockery, and linen in our dining room last year cost over £700. The maintenance of glassware in the bar is not included; its cost last year was £107. Our renewal account is debited with heavy replacements, and we carry a sum to the credit of that account at the end of each financial year to replace the amount which has been expended during the year. We used to work on the basis of 10 per cent. for plant and machinery, and 5 per cent. for furniture, but we found that owing to the liberal expenditure on maintenance,

we were setting aside too much. We now set aside liberal lump sums after taking into consideration the expenditure for the past year and the state of the renewal account. Some big assets may not require renewal for several years, such, for instance, as a boiler, therefore, one cannot be guided entirely by the expenditure in the past two or three years. There is always something looming ahead that has to be provided for. Our furniture account at the commencement of last year had £1,793 in hand. We expended only £385, but we carried £1,000 to its credit at the end of the year. We had the money, and we could foresee large expenditure which we would have to face in the future. The only advice I can give in this connexion is to keep the account well in credit, and you can rely upon 10 per cent. for plant and machinery, and 5 per cent. for furniture being well in excess of requirements, while for breakables and "tearables," 25 per cent. will suffice. We have a premises renewal account, a furniture renewal account, and a plant renewal account. Those do not make any provision for perishables, for that is included in the cost of the dining-room. In an establishment where there was a regular number of boarders the cost of food would be reduced by comparison with a club or hotel where the number of boarders fluctuates. Any experienced hotelkeeper, however, has a very fair knowledge of what he has to provide for on the following day. He has his records of the previous week for years past; he has the bookings of his bedrooms, which are a very good guide; and he knows what is happening in the city. He knows whether there is any special attraction, and whether the Federal Parliament is sitting, and provides accordingly. I would not advise you to attach too much importance to the economy obtainable by having a fixed number of boarders. It would not be necessary to provide in a hostel at Canberra the same variety of food as is required in a town, business which has to compete with other hotels and restaurants. In a city one has to give variety in order to keep trade, which would otherwise drift elsewhere. I should think at Canberra there would be no necessity for any competitive variety in food, though it would be necessary to give a reasonable variety. Variety in a menu necessarily leads to some waste. The fact that an article of food is not required, however, does not necessarily mean that it is wasted. If there is means of refrigeration it can be kept a certain length of time, but if it has been cooked it is practically lost. The building-in of equipment at the Commercial Travellers' Club makes work easier for the staff, but I cannot say that it has reduced the number of the staff, although it enables them, perhaps, to give attention to more important duties. We have a power vacuum cleaner, operated from electric power points built into the walls. This is a great assistance. It makes the work lighter for the girls, and keeps the rooms cleaner, more wholesome, and more healthy. The cost of replacement of bedroom linen amounts to 25 per cent. Carpets and floor coverings would be covered by less than 5 per cent. With new furniture 5 per cent. is too much, but later the percentage increases. Furniture that wears out often does so sporadically, and you can frequently replace it from revenue without touching the renewal account. At the Club we employ both male and female attendants. Female attendants are only satisfactory in the dining-room and bedroom department. On board ship there are male stewards, and we have employed bedroom stewards in years past. I have known them to be employed also in other clubs. I would not advise male service in bedrooms. I do not think men are adapted for this class of work. A good waiter is very much superior to a good waitress, but good waiters are almost extinct in Australia. The Australian does not take kindly to waiting. I do not think we would ever be able to replace our waitresses by waiters. Trained waiters are not available in the first instance. We have three male heads, but the body of the staff in the dining-room is all female. They are quite satisfactory.

52. *To Mr. Mackay.*—Our cost for food per week per person works out at 2s. 9d. This is for three meals

a day seven days a week. This figure does not include service or overhead charges. It is for meals, the return from which is 3s. 4d. a week. I think it would be difficult to keep the weekly cost of board and lodgings down to 4s. per head at Canberra. Good hotel accommodation is not obtainable under £4. 4s. per week. I do not think it would be possible to cover the cost of food by 15s. per head. I do not think it can be done in an ordinary household in Melbourne under 21s. per head. I am speaking, of course, of the kind of accommodation that I think your staff would expect. I do not think it would be possible, even in Melbourne, to supply simple menus, such as you would have to provide at Canberra, for less than £1 1s. per head.

53. *To Senator Plain*—I do not know the cost of a hot water system as distinct from a steam system. In the Commercial Travellers' Club hot water is driven through the pipes into the radiators. We heat the water by steam. A calorifier is supplied with the heating system, and this is worked from the boiler. There is practically no other system in vogue, as far as I know, in any establishment of any size. Much can be done with steam besides heating. Our boiler supplies steam for the laundry and for the cooking, as well as for heating. It does all the boiling in the kitchen. I think at Canberra it would be essential to have a central boiler.

54. *To Mr. Mathews*—There is no doubt that it is much easier to maintain a building constructed on the lines of the Commercial Travellers' Club than a scattered hostel such as is proposed at Canberra. I cannot say whether the difference would be considerable. It is merely a matter of supervision. The changes in our building save a lot of time to the staff. When, however, an opportunity is offered to construct a building designed such as the proposed hostel, there is a great temptation to do it, although there is no doubt that it would cost more. I have no doubt it would cost 25 per cent. more, but I would not like to say more than that. There is no doubt that the bar trade assists in keeping down costs. It probably represents the profit to most hotel businesses. A hostel without a bar would need to charge more to its boarders. It would be necessary to raise the charge not only for meals, but for beds. I know exactly what sum I would require at the Commercial Travellers' Club, but how to recover it would require time to work out. An hotelkeeper who had to give up a bar trade might have to recover £1,000 a year spread over ten rooms, or £1,000 a year spread over fifty rooms. That factor would upset any estimate I could give. To recover half the profit on our bar trade we would have to raise the charge for the bedrooms 4d. a night, or 2s. 4d. a week. That would be equivalent to 8 or 10 per cent. The increase in the charge for meals might be in the neighbourhood of 20 per cent. The increased charge would be about 8s. per week per individual to get the same revenue in our business without a bar. This is a very small percentage over a very large business, and it should be borne in mind that the figures I have given all apply to a large business. We have 143 beds, and we run from 100 to 120 a night. I could not say what officials would expect, but we would have used our charges if we had 125 boarders regularly instead of a fluctuating number. We have a very mixed business. Our dining-room is not supported entirely by those who live at the club, but by hundreds of others who go there to eat but do not sleep on the premises.

55. *To Mr. Jackson*—We have had requests from a minority of our members for a lighter breakfast than we supply. We have not made any provision for a lighter breakfast. The charges are based upon all paying the same tariff, whether they have a light breakfast or not. Not being an *A la carte* service it does not suit us to make a special charge for a light breakfast. We supply meals on a better scale than the average residential hotel, and it would be reasonable to assume that the cost of 22s. 9d. per week per individual for food could be reduced, but not to the extent of making it

15s. I think the provision of the hot-water tap and wash basin in each bedroom is rather luxurious. It would increase the capital cost greatly, although it is a very great convenience. We had to consider that question when we built the Commercial Travellers' Club. We found that to provide such conveniences would have increased the capital cost to such an extent that we cut out the item. We rely upon the hot-water service in the adjacent bathrooms. I should say that the cost of putting in a hot-water service connected with all the bedrooms would be at least £30 a room. Our estimate for putting hot water through 150 rooms is £2,000 in 1913, or an average of £20 per room. That included the cost of the wash hand basins and the pipes. Hot water should not be carried in anything but copper pipes. If I were building a room for myself at Canberra I would put in hot water. It would be appreciated, but I do not think it is necessary. We have no doubt that a man paying a low tariff such as we do not think that a hot-water service in his bedroom. If the Hotel Sydney provided hot water in the bedrooms at a charge of 8s. for bed and breakfast, they gave a very good service. Such provision, of course, assists the staff greatly. There is, however, no ringing for hot water in a hostel, but boarders go with their can and obtain it from the bath room. If it is a question of advice not providing a hot-water service in the bedrooms, I like the style of the Java hotels immensely. They are spread out for climatic reasons. They are built on the pavilion system, with verandahs, which are essential in such a hot climate. It is not desirable from a managerial point of view to have the units of an hotel scattered. There is one head over all, and a head to each department. That objection, of course, is outweighed by other considerations. It would be very difficult to keep the cost down to £2 5s. or £2 7s. per head in a hostel at Canberra.

(Taken at Yarralumla.)

WEDNESDAY, 11th APRIL, 1923.

PRESENT:

Mr. GREGORY, Chairman;

Senator Foll	Mr. Cook
Senator Nowland	Mr. Jackson
Senator Plain	Mr. Mackay.

John Thomas Hill Goodwin, Surveyor-General and Director of Lands, sworn and examined.

56. *To the Chairman*—I am the officer administering the Federal Capital Territory, and a member of the Advisory Committee. The suggested site for the hostel for officials is very suitable; it will be near to the Government offices. Yarralumla House is conducted by the Government for the accommodation of Ministers, members of Parliament, and official visitors, and as the number of people in residence varies very considerably, the receipts are necessarily below the expenditure. The receipts for bachelor officials are available in a weatherboard building erected by the Government. It contains a dining-room, kitchen, billiard-room, reading-room, pantry, and single bedrooms. Married men are accommodated in separate cottages, and when one of these is not available, an officer must leave his family outside the Territory and live at the bachelors' mess. The Government have provided the furniture, light, water, and all equipment. The boarders have nothing to do with the management. The establishment is controlled by me, with the help of a chief steward, who manages the staff, and reports to me or my chief clerk. I inspect the establishment occasionally. A sports committee of three, elected by the residents, voices any complaints that may be made by them, but has no con-

trol over the staff. If complaint is made to the president of the committee, he speaks to the chief steward, and if he fails to get any satisfaction, he addresses his complaint to me. There are about 45 resident officers, and in addition some officers and bank officials have their meals there, but do not reside on the premises. The chief steward is paid £5 per week, and the stewards about £4 per week. The menu is very liberal, but does not include poultry or fish. The following menus are typical of the fare provided:—

SUNDAY, 4th MARCH.

Breakfast.

Granose biscuits, and rolled oats porridge, eggs and bacon, rissoles, toast, tea, coffee.

Dinner.

Roast pork, apple sauce, roast beef.
Vegetables—French beans, baked and boiled potatoes.
Sweets—Date pudding and boiled custard, banana custard jelly.
Fruit—Apples and bananas.

Tea.

Cold ox tongue, corned beef, roast beef, roast mutton.
Salads—Tomatoes and beetroot.
Cakes and scones, tea.

MONDAY, 5th MARCH.

Breakfast.

Biscuits or porridge, lamb's fry and bacon, tomatoes and bacon, tea or coffee, toast.

Lunch.

Mixed pie—hot, cold roast beef, corned beef, roast mutton.
Salads—Tomatoes and onions.
Fruit—Apples and bananas.
Tea.

Dinner.

Hot boiled mutton—parsley sauce, hot pickled pork, roast beef.
Vegetables—Baked and boiled potatoes, carrots, and parsnips.
Sweets—Custard tart, rice milk, stewed rhubarb.
Tea.

TUESDAY, 6th MARCH.

Breakfast.

Granose biscuits, and rolled oats porridge, grilled chops, grilled steak, toast, tea and coffee.

Lunch.

Hot curry and rice, cold boiled mutton, roast beef, pickled pork, mashed potatoes.
Salads—Cucumber, tomatoes and onions.
Scones, tea.
Fruit—Bananas and apples.

Dinner.

Barley broth, hot steak and kidney pie, roast mutton.
Vegetables—Baked and boiled potatoes, cabbage.
Sweets—Victoria pudding, bananas and custard.
Scones—Best brands of pickles, sauces, jams provided. Cheese and salad at all meals other than breakfast.

The costs of conducting the establishment are:—

Food—		
Average cost of three meals per day for 60 persons, per head per week	£0 18 8	
Wages—		
Preparing and cooking food	0 2 9	
Washing up tables, waiting, and washing up	0 4 2	
Actual cost of food and serving	£1 5 7	
Cleaning establishment daily, and mending beds (bedrooms, lavatories, bathrooms, tents, dining rooms)	0 3 3	
Holiday steward	0 1 0	
Managements	0 2 2	
Light and fuel	£1 13 0	
Replenishing linen, crockery, &c.	0 0 9	
	£1 14 7	

This the cost of food, 18s. 8d., and the cost of running the bachelors' quarters, 15s. 11d., make the total cost

of the establishment £1 14s. 7d. per head per week. The present tariff is £1 7s. 6d. per week, showing a loss on food and labour based on 50 guests, of 7s. 1d. per head per week. The average salary of the boarders is between £200 and £250 per annum. I do not know what is the capital cost of the buildings, furniture, and equipment. The revenue, at the rate of 27s. 6d. per head per week, is paid into loan fund, but how it is apportioned, I do not know. Interest on the cost of the buildings is not taken into consideration. The building of the Federal Capital is regarded as pioneer work, and as the officials are at a great disadvantage, in comparison with people employed in the city, the Government recognises that they should receive some concession. Occasional visitors pay 2s. for lunch and breakfast, and 2s. 6d. for dinner. That rate pays. If the tariff were increased to cover interest on the capital cost of the buildings, the Government would have to make some living allowance to the men who are employed. If a visiting officer stays less than seven days, he pays 10s. per day, and his allowance that charge, but an officer transferred to Canberra permanently receives no allowance. A junior clerk can get board and residence in Sydney or Melbourne for 27s. or 30s. per week, but it would be far from first class.

57. *To Senator Foll*—Most of the residents at the bachelors' quarters are juniors. None of the regular boarders is receiving £400 per annum. A man on that salary is usually married and living in a separate cottage. A tariff varying according to the salary received by the officer is impracticable; you could not have men sitting at the same table and eating the same food, but paying different rates.

58. *To Mr. Cook*—I suppose that we lose about £700 per annum on the operation of the bachelors' quarters. 59. *To Senator Newland*—I would not be in favour of the conduct of the bachelors' quarters by the boarders. When that scheme was tried, it was the cause of endless trouble. There is a large number of temporary employees constantly coming and going. Leasing would not be satisfactory, because the tariff would inevitably be much higher than it is now. I do not suppose that any lessee could operate the establishment under about £2 per head per week. The staff could not be reduced; at present it comprises:—

Chief steward, receiving £5 per week, less 23s. board and lodging	
4 stewards (2 waiting, 1 pantryman, 1 outdoor and houseman), receiving £4 8s. per week, less 23s. board and lodging	
1 holiday steward, receiving £1 5s. per week, less 23s. board and lodging	
1 kitchenman, receiving £4 6s. per week, less 23s. board and lodging	
1 cook (woman), receiving £2 5s. per week, no deduction	
1 kitchen housemaid, receiving £1 16s. per week, no deduction.	

60. *To the Chairman*—I do not think that any charge is made for the building in which the labourers are boarded. The men in the Molonglo camp are charged a small rental for the rooms they occupy, but there is nothing to do with me. The revenue is controlled by the Department of Works and Railways, and I think is paid into loan fund, and is not a set-off against the cost of running the camp. It was arranged that as soon as a building was completed it should be handed over to the Department of Home and Territories; but that Department would have no control over the navvies' camps. I understand that the proposed hostel will be mainly for senior unmarried officers. The building is to cost, approximately, £39,000. Interest on the sinking fund at 8 per cent. would represent a rental of, approximately, £3,262 per annum. I would suggest that the hostel be placed under the control of a manager, and that there should be no male employees, except kitchenmen. In the early stages of

Canberra, the control should remain under the administration. On the basis of the dietary scale at the Acton bachelors' quarters, the minimum tariff for board and lodging would be 50s. to 55s. per week. I would not recommend that the hostel should be leased or conducted by the inmates as a co-operative mess. If the Government were satisfied with a return of 5 per cent. per annum on the capital outlay, the establishment could extinguish the debt in 60 years, the establishment could easily be run at the tariff I have mentioned. Five per cent. on £30,000 would represent £1,500 per annum, and depreciation or sinking fund at 25s per cent., extinguishing the debt in 60 years, would amount to £100, making the total annual charge £2,050. Depreciation on furniture would be a separate charge. My figures are based on an average of 80 guests. With that number paying 55s. per week, the establishment could pay about 54 per cent. interest and sinking fund, and at the end of 60 years the building would be paid for, and still good. I expect that supplies will be cheaper when Canberra is in operation than they are to-day. In the whole of the Federal Territory, there is only 7,500 acres under cultivation. There is no local market, the whole of the food supplies—except those grown at Yarralumla—are obtained from Sydney or Queensland. I have now started a vegetable garden for supplying the bachelors' quarters. The prices of poultry and fish are prohibitive. There are very few pigs in the district, but pork can occasionally be bought from the butcher. The Federal Territory is a sheep raising district, and nobody grows other stock for sale. There is nothing, however, to prevent production, which I expect will follow closely upon the demand. With water and sewage, vegetables can be grown well. I expect that married officers who cannot afford to patronize the hostel will rent cottages and live in a boarder or two. The rents of the cottages built so far are fixed on a 5 per cent. basis; but there has been a reduction of about 25 per cent. in the rents. In regard to those cottages situated in community gardens, it must be understood that all the land inside the fences, which are temporary, is not the property of the lessee. So many feet represents the garden part of the road. The Commonwealth has planted and attends to that portion of the garden which is within the road area; only the other portion is the responsibility of the lessee. The Commonwealth, so far, has built only a few cottages at a time, and there has been no inducement for workmen to take up their permanent abode at Canberra. Until recently, this place has never been regarded as a working centre, and consequently increased wages have had to be paid. Until there is continuous work, I do not think we shall be able to build cheaply; but under any circumstances the cost will be greater than Melbourne. Canberra is now a working centre under a local contractor, nevertheless the contractor who built the school had to pay a bonus to bricklayers. I think the award rate for bricklayers is 22s. 6d. per day. Of the cottages at present rented to workmen, the smaller ones cost £338, and the larger ones £1,293. For a cottage costing £960, I should receive a rental of £75 per annum; but I actually receive £50. All extra charges, such as rates for sewerage and water supply, and charges for insurance, are debited before the 25 per cent. is deducted. For a cottage costing £1,200, I should receive £96 in rental, but I receive actually £71. We charge 6 per cent. interest on the capital outlay, and 2 per cent. for maintenance. The sinking fund, on the basis of 50 years' life, represents 25s per cent.; fire insurance cost, 4s. per cent. per annum; sewerage, 1s. 3d. in the £1 on the assessed annual value—this is a variable rate; and water supply, 1s. 3d. in the £1. The rates on these lands are in accordance with the Rates Ordinance, which is 3d. in the £1 on the unimproved value. The value of the blocks has been fixed at £100 per quarter

acres. The following is an example of the method of assessing rentals under existing conditions:—

	£
Cost of cottage (4 rooms, hall, vestibule, kitchen, laundry, bathroom, &c.)	1,203
Annual value	68,206
Maintenance	12,000
Fire insurance	2,800
Sewerage	4,617
Water supply	4,081
Rates	1,250
Land	5,000
Rental which Commonwealth should receive	99,232
Less reduction	25
Rent received	74.8

The annual value is the amount which, at 5 per cent., will in 60 years return interest and capital on the cost of the dwelling.

61. *To Mr. Cook*.—Lessees of cottages in the civic centre make their own gardens, and the other gardens within the road area are made by the Government. We do not concern ourselves with the private gardens, except that if a lessee's grounds are untidy we order him to put them in order or to get out. Lessees must keep their back yards clean and tidy. I think it will be necessary for the Government to build cheaper cottages for workmen; but how it is to be done, I do not know. The old axiom that a man on wages should not pay more than one-sixth of his income in rent is quite sound; but it is impracticable under present conditions.

62. *To Senator Plain*.—The wages of labourers varies with the locality; but I think it is higher in Canberra than in Melbourne.

63. *To Senator Newland*.—I do not think that wooden houses would be much cheaper to build than brick houses. At present, there is an objection on the part of the Advisory Committee to the erection of wooden dwellings in the civic area, but £1 will not go further in Canberra than elsewhere, and we shall have to build cheaper houses than those at present being erected, even if we do not provide the same conveniences. I do not think the Advisory Committee would like to see erected at Canberra houses of the class of many to be soon in Queensland. Wooden houses become dilapidated very quickly, and maintenance is more costly than in the case of brick structures. The men occupying the cottages have complained of the excessive rent, but no reduction has been made. I do not think the rental is any higher than the men would have to pay for similar cottages in Melbourne or Sydney. At Camberrwell, I pay £104 for a house that has no more accommodation than is contained in one of our C grade cottages. The internal conveniences are greater than are provided in similar houses in the big cities.

64. *To Senator Foll*.—The private caterer in the navies' camp is able to supply board for 25s. per week; but the conditions there are different from those which would be expected to obtain in a mess for officials. The men stand in a queue before the kitchen and wait on themselves. They get good food, but it is not served with any degree of refinement. That method would not be suitable for the bachelors' mess at Acton.

65. *To Mr. Mackay*.—We experience no difficulty in collecting rents. The tenants are either employed on the permanent staff or are mechanics in the employ of the Commonwealth, and the rent is deducted from their pay. The same practice obtains in regard to the collection of board at the bachelors' quarters. It is a cheap and sure method of collection. There are no vacant cottages at the present time; in fact, if there were twenty cottages vacant to-day I could fill them. I think the objection to the rental is really based on the belief that the tenants should get cheaper rentals from the Government; but now that the majority of the workmen live in Queanbeyan, and those who are engaged at Canberra have to travel nearly 20 miles per day. I do not

think that men getting 14s. or 15s. per day can afford to live in the cottages we are now building.

66. *To the Chairman*.—Electric light is supplied by meter at 9d. per unit. We do not charge for water, because it is required for the sewerage, and is covered by the rate.

67. *To Senator Plain*.—I could let as many houses as the Government will build. The houses mostly in demand are those that can be let at 22s. 6d. per week. The tenants are mainly skilled mechanics and senior labourers. Applications for blocks of land have been received by people desiring to start in business at Canberra, but none from people desiring to erect private houses. I do not think the time has come until Parliament says definitely that the Seat of Government will be transferred to Canberra on a certain date, and the construction of Parliament House has actually been started. At present, the lands have practically no value except for grazing purposes, because the community are not convinced that Parliament will be at Canberra within any definite number of years. It will not be sufficient for Parliament to state its intention of removing to Canberra; it must provide the money to make the city ready for occupation. A definite announcement on this subject would undoubtedly assist the building up of the city. Workmen would then have some inducement to build their own homes, and I think we would require to set apart a working man's area. The Regulations provide for a ninety-nine-years' lease, the first re-appraisal to be after twenty years, with further re-appraisals at intervals of ten years. So far the history of Canberra has been a series of spurts followed by cessation of activities. Tradesmen who had actually settled here had to leave on account of lack of employment. If workmen are to be induced to settle in the Federal Capital area, they must be assured of reasonable continuity of employment. Until definite evidence of the transfer of the Capital is provided, the conditions that apply to-day will continue. I have said that the officers employed at Canberra are engaged in pioneer work, and it is true that, in other pioneer settlements the workmen provide their own cottages; but we do not want here a repetition of the usual mining settlement. Canberra is to be a city beautiful, but an area will have to be set aside in which workmen can build homes for £300 or £400. A man earning 15s. per day cannot afford to pay £2 per week in rent. The Advisory Committee has not yet considered this question.

68. *To the Chairman*.—The cost of running the hostels will be decreased when there is a population of 6,000 people at Canberra, because competition will make commodities cheaper. On account of the paucity of supplies, provisions are more costly to-day than they are in Sydney. I anticipate that when the demand for root crops and vegetables is created supplies will be forthcoming. The Advisory Committee has submitted to the Government a scheme by which civil servants will be assisted to build houses for themselves. It is proposed to build about 350 houses prior to the transfer of the Head Office staff from Melbourne. I do not think that any civil servant will desire to build a house before the advent of Parliament at Canberra. No sites have been set apart for selection as building blocks; but when land is made available for the general public, civil servants, like any other members of the community, will be able to apply for leases.

69. *To Mr. Jackson*.—There is no reason why a workman's area should be ugly though the buildings are cheap. The only objection to cheap wooden houses is that they would be temporary. One man is building quite a good little house on his land for £350, and I am assisting him by advancing him the money. In regard to the selection of land, public servants will not be in a position different from anybody else. Until land is

available for the public, no public servant may select. The object in withholding land from selection by business people is that at present the leases have no value. If we made the land available, speculators would be only too ready to step in and hold the leasess for a profit who Parliament was transferred to Canberra.

70. *To the Chairman*.—Estimating that the hostel will accommodate 80 boarders, and cost £20,000, the interest at 8 per cent. per annum will amount to £3,120 per annum. The estimated cost of food, attendance, replenishing linen, crockery, &c., at 35s. per week would amount to £7,250; and the management charges to £600; or a total annual charge of £11,000—equal to a weekly cost of £212, or 33s. per boarder per week. A the cost of providing food for 80 people will be less in proportion than for 50 people, and as the running cost also would be lower, a charge of £2 10s. per week would probably pay all expenses, and give a reasonable return on the cost of the building.

Henry Maitland Rolland, Works Director, Federal Capital Territory, sworn and examined.

71. *To the Chairman*.—I am in charge of all works being carried out in the Federal Capital Territory under the control of the Department of Works and Railways. At the present time, I am supervising work in connexion with the erection of the No. 1 hostel and cottages, and the laying of the water mains and sewers; and I have the assistance of sectional engineers. I am satisfied that we shall have a fine water supply quite adequate to protect the buildings from fire. In regard to No. 1 hostel, the foundations to the floor line were superstructure has been let to J. Howie and Company, who have just commenced operations. The bricklaying in cottages has cost about £16 per rod, but in the hostel foundations up to £20 per rod. The latter work was especially good. The work in the cottages was more or less rough, owing to the fact that they are to be finished with rough cast. The price of bricks is £4 delivered at the kilns, either on a lorry or on to the stack. This represents about £4 15s. on the job. The manufacture of tiles is still in the experimental stage, but they will probably be delivered at the kiln for about £11 per 1,000. The Sydney price is about £18, or, plus freight, £22. The percentage of breakages in tiles brought from Sydney is very high, and no responsibility in regard thereto is accepted by the Railway Department. We have a great deal of trouble with breakages and losses on the railway. Building costs are probably higher in Canberra than in Melbourne. That is due largely to the difficulty in getting an adequate supply of labour. In some cases, we are paying lower rates than are paid by the contractors in Sydney, but often do not get the same class of work done here as is done in the big cities. Sydney contractors can select their men much better than we can. We have to pay for a certain amount of bad workmanship. We advertise in Sydney for bricklayers, and men arrive here; some of them are qualified bricklayers and some of them are not. I have given consideration to the question of providing better housing accommodation for artisans. At present there are only three classes of accommodation, the single men's accommodation, either in hutments or in tents, the married men's accommodation at Molongui, hutments, and the permanent brick cottages. The first mentioned is all right for single men; but the majority of the best workmen are married, and I find that the married men stay on the job longer and take more interest in their work. Many of the tradesmen object to the principal cause of complaint is the lack of privacy. There is one large block of buildings, subdivided by only warden partitions, and the ordinary decent living man does not care to be associated with his neighbour as closely as he must necessarily be there.

Furthermore, all classes of men, from navvies to tradesmen, are living at Molonglo. Not more than 100 of our men live in Queanbeyan. We do not pay them a travelling allowance. Last year, there was a big strike, and as a result a tribunal was appointed. After conferences between the representatives of the men, myself, and the members of the tribunal, we proposed an award governing the whole of the labour in the Federal Territory. Instead of awarding an allowance for the time occupied by men in passing to and from their work, we divided the city into certain areas, and the allowance depends on the location of the work. In the city proper, as defined by certain lines, no allowance is paid. In another area, which is a mile beyond the city proper, we pay 1s. per day extra; and beyond another mile 2s. a day; and beyond that, 3s. per day. The view that the departmental officers took was that the majority of the work will be in the city area, and for it no travelling allowance will be paid. The men agreed to that. At present there is too great a difference between the Molonglo hutments and the brick cottages. The only solution of the problem of providing intermediate accommodation at cheap rentals is the erection of wooden cottages. The brick cottages have only 3-inch interior walls, and we thus avoid a lot of waste area. Some of the cottages have more or less enclosed verandah space. In 1910, we erected at Duntroon for groundmen wooden cottages with all necessary conveniences, four rooms, and verandahs back and front, for £450 each. The buildings were approximately 28 feet square, and there were no passages. Buildings of that class would suit artisans; but they would cost today probably £600. Some wooden cottages erected ten years ago have not been painted yet, and the painting of one would cost £30. The solution of the house problem seems to be in the erection of wooden houses, preferably with tiled roofs. I submit for the information of the Committee the following details of costs in one of our D1 cottages (four rooms).—Erection, £6; concrete footings, lintels and sills, £27; brickwork (labour only), £120; bricks, £32; carpentry and joinery, £24; plastering, including colouring, £50; painting, £15; plumbing, including fittings and cast-iron bath, £88; roof tiling, labour only, £24; sills, £21; fittings, such as stove, copper, &c., £20; supervision charges, at 5 per cent, £10; total, £730. The dimensions of the rooms are:—Parlour, 12 feet x 12 feet; bedroom, 12 feet x 13 ft. 3 in.; living room and kitchen, 14 ft. 3 in. x 13 ft. 9 in.; bathroom, 7 feet x 6 ft. 6 in.; laundry, 6 ft. 6 in. x 6 ft. 6 in.; verandah, 14 feet x 7 feet. The accessory services were:—Water supply, £11; sewerage, estimated, £50—it may be done for £30; storm water drainage, £45; electric lighting, £30; total, £138; making a grand total of £868. In a wooden cottage, the cost of concrete footings, lintels, and sills, brickwork and plastering, would be saved, but the cost of painting would be increased by £10 or £12. A tile roof costs about £49, and an iron roof about £20. I understand that the Advisory Committee is anxious to eliminate iron roofs if possible. The men living in the hutments are charged 1s. 6d. per week for their accommodation, and married people pay 1s. 6d. per room. From three to six rooms are set apart for a family. All the messes are conducted upon the catering system, being run by the men themselves, the Department supplying only the building, stove, main cooking utensils, tables, and forms. In order to make the workmen more contented, we supply lighting and water free of charge. The caterer usually charges a flat rate of 24s. per week for board. Near the power-house, about 100 men are living, but as a large number of them are navvies, and are unsatisfactory tenants, they are living amongst them became restless. I accordingly created a separate camp for tradesmen near the hostel, and the messing conditions there are exactly the same as at the other camp. I understand that the caterers are making very good money.

72. To Mr. Jackson.—I understand that the Chief Architect's idea is that, in providing accommodation for workmen, we should build wooden cottages with brick dwellings, and so give more variety and beauty to the appearance than would be represented by a settlement of wooden buildings only. I would probably be better to keep them altogether among permanent cottages, and so eliminate the cost of special drainage, lighting, and water for a new settlement. I cannot see that there can be any objection to placing wooden cottages in close proximity to brick buildings; that condition exists in every suburb. The smaller the building blocks, the smaller will be the cost of fencing, water supply, and drainage, and moreover the areas will be better attended to. I do not think that these wooden cottages would be occupied by the ordinary pick-and-shovel men—the men I have in mind are the artisans. Most of the navvies would remain at the Molonglo hutments. A man who has no pride in a home will be content to live in a hut, but those men who like nice homes will apply for wooden cottages.

73. To Senator Plain.—Under present conditions, I cannot get a contented lot of men, owing to the insufficient accommodation for married people. The accommodation at Molonglo is not satisfactory for artisans, but for some of the men that settlement is quite good enough. I wish that the authorities would give approval for the erection of cheaper accommodation for workmen, because I have had many applications for cheaper cottages. I could offer nothing better than the Molonglo hutments, and, in consequence, I have had to turn away good men. I do not think that the rate of wages will be affected by the provision of better accommodation. The men are being paid a reasonable rate, in some cases less than is being paid in Sydney. Our trouble at Canberra is that, whereas the wage earner in the city may obtain a home at a rental proportionate to his wage, here the workmen have no choice. They must either rent the brick cottages or go to the Molonglo settlement.

74. To Senator Newland.—There are no wooden cottages in the city area, except a few at Duntroon and Acton. Those at Duntroon were erected for the Defence Department in 1911 and 1912. They are lasting very well, except that the internal lining was put on in the winter time and was very green, with the result that the joints have opened slightly. I have never heard any complaints in regard to the unsuitability of those cottages for this climate. I think it is possible to design a cheaper building, giving the same accommodation. The same cottage built in brick, with accessory services, would cost about £700. In regard to the electric light fittings in the brick cottages, we usually reckon £2 10s. per point. The wires are run through steel tubing instead of wooden conduits. The cost of the mains is not included. The contractor's work on No. 1 hostel will be under my supervision. We find it very difficult to insist on the work carried out by contract to be kept at the same standard as day-labour work. Unless you can see every brick laid, you cannot demur every brick that is not properly laid; you cannot get the same class of work. Generally, the day-labour work is better in quality than the contract job. The contractor is naturally looking for a profit, whereas the Department is merely looking for good workmanship. We have condemned a good deal of the brickwork in the school, which has been erected by contract, and I do not think it is a first-class job; but as the brickwork has to be coloured, I am not as particular as I otherwise would be in regard to the appearance of the brickwork. The contractors have a lot of trouble with the bricklayers. The Department was fortunate in getting a first-class lot of bricklayers for the hostels and cottages. Some of those are now working on the cottages at Blandfordia, and we hope to keep them employed until the larger works are put in hand. Tenders for

another group of cottages are being called for, and I am afraid that if a contract is let I will lose a number of good men. At present they have about ten or twelve weeks' work ahead of them. My office and supervisory staff number about 40 men. Each big contract will have its own clerk of works, and I have another clerk of works supervising the day-labour jobs. Sectional erection of the provisional Parliament works. If the second hostel is proceeded with, my staff will require to be increased. Some of the officers are living in tents at the present time, and more accommodation will have to be provided. I would prefer to have married men on the job. Three married men who have been here for three months cannot get accommodation for their wives and families. That state of affairs is not fair to the men or the families. The lack of accommodation for Good men, who would otherwise have come to Canberra, refused work here when they heard of the class of accommodation they would get.

75. To Senator Foll.—I am aware that, in Queensland, a very large proportion of the houses are built of timber. I have no objection to wooden cottages with tiled roofs. The additional strutting required in a small house to support a tile roof would be very small. The erection of wooden houses is the only solution of the problem of providing houses at a suitable rental. I would not advocate that wooden buildings should be rough-sawn or plastered. Plaster would not stand on weatherboards or asbestos sheeting. Fibro-cement is very satisfactory, but rather expensive. I would not recommend the use of beaver-board. If I were authorized to build a group of 100 wooden houses of about four rooms, they would cost £800 each. The lining could be coloured instead of painted.

76. To Mr. Mackay.—The 5 per cent. allowance for supervision in connexion with the erection of cottages covers the cost of my temporary staff and office requirements, lighting, and other office charges. There are no timber supplies in the Federal Territory. The nearest timber from Nimmibub, where we get our hardwood, is landed here for 38s. 6d. per 100 super feet. We are using hardwood for ordinary construction, and Oregon for ceiling joists. We have had trouble with hardwood in the roofs. Hardwood is more difficult to work, and heavier to transport, and it is not easy to get it seasoned. Imported timber is more suitable, and there is very little difference in cost.

77. To Mr. Cook.—The price of hardwood in Sydney is about the same as delivered in Canberra. We buy our supplies of cement, paint, lime, &c., wholesale; but we could buy in larger quantities and cheaper if we had bigger jobs. Hitherto the work has been given to us in small quantities. If I had an order for 100 new cottages, I could send my stromen to Sydney to buy off the ship's slings. The chief saving in that system would be in respect of timber, which, in a wooden cottage, would represent about £350. The saving effected by buying in large quantities would not amount to more than about 5 per cent. We are buying fibre well now. We let contracts for 5,000 casks of cement at a time. Sand and lime are procured locally. I understand that the policy of the Advisory Committee is not to allow private enterprises to build any structure in the Territory until some big public building, like the Parliament House, is commenced, which will bring the value of the land to a proper figure. Wood and iron construction is good enough for temporary office buildings, and will last probably 50 years. The estimate of £50 for the sewerage of a cottage includes the drain, and the putting in of the pipes and fittings up to and including the boundary trap. I expect that the actual cost will be less than that figure. We advertised for tenders for twenty cottages at Blandfordia, in Sep-

tember last. Three prices were submitted. One was for £23,000, without bricks, tiles, and engineering services. The next price was £22,000 for the erection of the cottages in concrete, and the same contractor quoted £10,500 for brick construction. My estimate was £10,500, and I expect to complete the job at that price. As a matter of fact, a late tender for about £17,000 was received and accepted. The contractor sent along a few pieces of timber, and some men, but nothing more was done. I wrote to him at intervals for about eight weeks, and then the contract was cancelled. I have been carrying on the work since then. I recommend the construction of wooden cottages. A large quantity of the bricks which are in reserve now will be used for other buildings. I do not think that cheap accommodation should be sacrificed for the sake of using the bricks on hand at the present time. They will all be utilized later.

78. To the Chairman.—In view of the big construction programme that is likely to be undertaken in the next few years, it will be necessary for us to have a large army of first-class workmen here. In order to get them, it is necessary that we should have an ample supply of cottages that can be let at a reasonable rental. Therefore, one of the first steps to be taken should be the erection of a large number of cottages for artisans. Of course, if a large proportion of the work is to be carried out by contract, the question arises as to whether the contractors should not provide the accommodation for their workmen. The contractor can pay workmen any wage he likes to bring them here, but the Department cannot. If the whole of the work is to be carried out by day-labour, the erection of artisans' cottages is a necessary preliminary. There is one brick settlement at the civic centre, another near the brickworks, a third at the power-house, and a fourth at Blandfordia. The water supply is being connected up to the cottages now. The settlement at the civic centre is a long way from the main sewer, but it drains into a septic tank; and when the main arrives there, we shall only have to connect the houses with it. Thirty-seven brick cottages have been erected, and at the present time we are building twenty more. In a few weeks we shall advertise for tenders for an additional nineteen. At Acton, there are twelve temporary wooden buildings.

79. To Senator Newland.—Up to the end of March, labour and material for the brickwork in No. 1 hostel had cost £3,389. The accepted contract price was £42,194. My tender was about £600 higher, and the third tender £150 more than mine. Two other tenders were much higher.

(Taken at Sydney.)

THURSDAY, 12TH APRIL, 1923.

Mr. Gazeony, Chairman;	
Senator Foll	Mr. Cook
Senator Newland	Mr. Jackson
Senator Plain	Mr. Mackay.
Mr. Blakely	

Ernest Macartney de Burgh, Chief Engineer Water Supply and Sewerage, New South Wales, sworn and examined.

80. To the Chairman.—I am a member of the Federal Capital Advisory Committee. As the number of workmen at Canberra increases, it may become necessary to establish camps for them, as we do on stations in the large State public works. If an officer stationed in Sydney or Melbourne is transferred for public purposes to Canberra, and the transfer is adverse to him in respect of the rental for which he can obtain accommodation for himself and family, he should receive an allowance. That is the practice in the Public Service of the State. For instance, if we

send an officer on to one of our big works in an isolated place where there are no buildings, we provide him with accommodation free of charge. Again, if an officer is sent into a country town under conditions that put him at a disadvantage, it is the responsibility of his Department to make good his loss. It is the business of the Government to construct cottages at Canberra as cheaply as possible, consistent with suitability and efficiency, and if an officer suffers any disability through residing there, it should be rectified by the Department to which he belongs.

81. *To Mr. Mackay.*—A charge of £2 5s. or £2 7s. per week at the hostel for officials seems very reasonable. The hostel must be run as economically as possible, and if, in the opinion of the Public Service Commission, any officer who is transferred to Canberra is making a pecuniary sacrifice, he may, or may not, recommend that such loss be recouped. If satisfactory management by a lessee can be obtained, I think that is the best method of conducting the hostels, otherwise the Government will have to manage them. Tenders for a lease of the hostels should certainly be invited.

(Taken at Sydney.)

THURSDAY, 26th APRIL, 1923.

Present:

Mr. GRAYSON, Chairman;
 Senator Newland | Mr. Blakeley
 Senator Plain | Mr. Cook.
 John Shannon Cormack, Director of New South Wales
 Tourist Bureau, sworn and examined.

82. *To the Chairman.*—I have under my charge hostels at Jenolan Caves, Mount Kosciusko, Yarran-gobilly, and Wombeyan. At Jenolan we have accommodation for 165 persons, but at Christmas and Easter we have taken in as many as 220. Kosciusko has accommodation for 60 guests. I know Canberra well; some of the conditions that will obtain there exist at Jenolan, but I should think that Canberra would require a hostel more like the hydro conducted by the Water Conservation Commissioners at Leeton. They conduct three establishments, but they are run on simpler lines than are the hostels conducted by the Tourist Department. We run our establishments for profit, but the Water Conservation Commissioners do not; they conduct a simple hostel for the convenience of officers and the public. The hydro can accommodate 84 persons. The charge for ordinary guests is 1s. per day, or £1 1s. per week, but officers of the trust for whom the hostel was originally constructed, pay £3 3s. per week, or for board without apartments, £2 16s. Of course we could conduct Jenolan more economically if we were catering for a regular number of guests all through the year; it is the constant coming and going of guests, the daily fluctuation in the catering, that causes the high expense. At Kosciusko there is a loss even on trading accounts, apart altogether from the heavy cost of maintenance. Roughly speaking, on the capitalized value of all my undertakings a profit of 34 per cent. is returned to the State. I submit to the Committee copies of our trading accounts. The plan of the proposed officers' hostel at Canberra impresses me at first sight as being very well thought out. The heating will be a factor to be considered at Canberra. With steam heating in the main block you will give excellent conditions to your staff which will be a factor of great importance, and with electric radiators in the bed-rooms the guests will be admirably served. At Kosciusko we charge 2s. 6d. per night for a radiator, and we take good care that the housemaids visit the bed-rooms during the dinner hour to see that all the radiators are switched off. We know through the switchboard that very few of the radiators are switched

on before 10.30 or 11 p.m., and we can slow the current down so that if the radiators are used later they do not take much current. I cannot say that we find the radiators satisfactory; they are very delicately poised, and the elements are fine and easily damaged. Radiators do no more than fill a gap. Our experience favours the installation of a hot-water service, but hot water is subject to so much variation. You must see that the employee is of a certain standard, otherwise you have to pay very high wages, and in the hands of careless people radiation of every description is difficult. Some of the work incidental to a steam plant calls for a first-class engineer, and it is very hard to get a man who will do both electrical and steam work; the hotel engineer has yet to be born. I prefer steam to electrical heating, but at Kosciusko the hydro-electric scheme gives us power much cheaper than you will be able to get it at Canberra. At Jenolan the charge for accommodation is 18s. per day, and there is only one class. The house has a wine-licence. The tariff at Kosciusko varies according to the season, but a fair average is £1 per day throughout the year. In summer it is £5 12s. 6d. per week, but in July and August, when we have hundreds of people applying to go there, we make a 10 per cent. surcharge. As at all hotels, the best rooms command higher prices; we let some rooms at 22s. 6d. per day, and charge 5s. per day extra for rooms with a bath attached. I should say that, at Canberra, accommodation could be provided for about £3 5s. per week. We have been able to pay 0 per cent. interest on the total capital invested in our hostels. Last year we wrote off £5,228 for depreciation. That 0 per cent., of course, includes the cave fees, which is a very remunerative return, quite out of proportion to capital value. The Jenolan-Cave House, apart from the cave fees, pays a dividend of 6.1 per cent. on the capital invested, after paying interest on capital at 5.036 per cent. The cooking is done by steam. I had an extremely good offer of electrical stoves and installed them, but, sad to say, they have not proved the success we expected. One trouble with them is that the chef requires to have a fairly good working knowledge of electricity, otherwise he does not know when his fuses are out of order or how to repair them. We are a long way off absolute certainty in connexion with electrical cooking. I have considered the heating of water with electricity. We have insufficient water in the head dams at Kosciusko, but I have permission to spend another £2,000 in increasing the supply. It is hoped that when that supply is available we shall be able to allow the machinery to run all night, and it will not matter whether the people use the radiators or not. During the night, when neither heating nor lighting is required, the current can be passed through huge calorifiers containing 1,000 gallons of water, so that in the morning there will be plenty of water available for both cooking and baths. We are able to consider that only because our electricity is generated cheaply. As a matter of fact, the annual wood bill at Kosciusko runs into something like £20. I recommend the use of electric motors in the laundry. I do not know whether the Government ought not to consider the establishment of a separate laundry at Canberra. At Jenolan, for 165 guests, staying on an average only four days, which means a complete change of bed linen about twice a week, we have hydro-extractors for washing, and a steam-heated mangle. At Canberra there will be two hostels; presumably Yarralumla House will continue, and Parliament House itself will create a lot of laundry work. In the circumstances a centrally situated laundry would be better than a separate laundry for each institution. That matter is worthy of the most careful consideration. The installation of a laundry is expensive; a three-roller steam-heated electrically-driven mangle will cost £200. I should recommend that the hostels be leased with proper safe-

guards; alternatively, the officers' hostel could be run non-operatively, like a mess. At one time Jenolan Cave House was leased, but it is so intimately bound up with the caves, which are a national park, and with the roads running to it, that it does not lend itself to leasing. I think the establishment is helped by the wine licence. We get a good class of patron partly by reason of the fact that they can order wines with their dinner. At Kosciusko we stock the highest class of liquors, and they sell well. At Jenolan the average cost per guest per meal is 1s. 8d., including provisions and service, but not rent and maintenance. If the officers' hostel, at Canberra, is to balance its accounts on a charge of £2 5s. 6d. per week the dietary scale will require to be very low.

83. *To Mr. Blakeley.*—I do not think that private enterprise could give as good service as the Tourist Department is giving at the hostel under its control. Our places are widely scattered, and, therefore, difficult to administer from Sydney. Private enterprise prefers to have its business close at hand. It might be argued that where establishments are close together, permitting of direct administration, they can be run as efficiently and economically by the Government as by private enterprise, but there is an undoubted incentive in household management, which is lacking in Government control. If the Government decide to directly control the hostels at Canberra a system of accounts, similar to that operated in our Bureau, would be serviceable. They represent the experience of Government account-keeping applied to a commercial undertaking.

84. *To Mr. Cook.*—From a catering point of view Canberra is more favorably situated than Jenolan, which is separated from the rail head by 30 miles of mountainous road, traction over which is very heavy. The charges for meals at Jenolan are—Breakfast, 5s.; lunch, 3s. 6d.; dinner, 5s. The hydro, at Leeton, is very well and economically run, notwithstanding that it shows a loss on the trading accounts. It does not pay interest on capital, and is more analogous to the proposed hostel at Canberra than is the Jenolan Cave House.

85. *To the Chairman.*—For depreciation on furniture and equipment, including cutlery, linen, dining-room and kitchen ware, we allow 8 per cent. Last year we spent on replacing linen and crockery, at Jenolan, £555. The amount is about the same each year. For depreciation and breakage of silver and glass ware we allow 10 per cent. The machinery and kitchen plant would carry a lower rate of depreciation than crockery and cutlery. On some of the buildings, particularly those at Kosciusko, the depreciation rate is very high—3 per cent., I think—but the situation is very exposed and the maintenance is considerable. I am looking forward to the time when Canberra will supply me with tourists for Kosciusko. We are in communication with the Tararaki (New Zealand) Chamber of Commerce in regard to a party of 75 persons who want to make a round trip taking in Canberra and Kosciusko. A great number of other people express a desire to see Canberra, and we are continually arranging visits to that place.

(Taken at Melbourne.)

TUESDAY, 1st MAY, 1923.

Present:

Mr. GRAYSON, Chairman;
 Senator Plain | Mr. Jackson
 Mr. Blakeley | Mr. Mathews.
 Mr. Cook
 Thomas Hill, Chief Engineer, Department of Works
 and Railways, recalled and further examined.
 86. *To the Chairman.*—During the last few years the Commonwealth Department of Works and Railways has installed a number of kitchens and laundries

for various Commonwealth activities. Twelve kitchens have been installed in military and repatriation hospitals; twenty-one domestic hot water services have been put in for the Defence, Navy, and Repatriation Departments, and thirteen laundries, all of the most modern type, have been fixed up in various hospitals and quarantine stations. The whole of these plants are on a large scale, and they are all better equipped than any the Committee saw yesterday on its tour of inspection. We have installed twelve hot-water systems for heating buildings in some of the largest buildings in Australia. That in the Melbourne General Post Office cost £20,000. With all this experience we cannot be said to be approaching the question at Canberra with insufficient knowledge. I have prepared a design showing the hot-water systems proposed to be installed in the officers' hostel. It is similar in many respects to that which the Committee saw yesterday, but it will operate under better conditions. For instance, our kitchen will be on the ground floor. The sole use to which the basement will be put is to have the boiler and calorifier there. The kitchen floor will not be encumbered with coal other than for the island kitchen range which it will be imperative to have at Canberra, no provision having been made for a supply of gas. It will not be necessary to establish a high-pressure boiler to generate steam, not only for hot-water service, but also for the kitchen. We do not think that that method would prove economical. We believe that we shall have better conditions at the hostel in Canberra than those which the Committee saw yesterday at the Commercial Travellers' Club, in Melbourne, where a high-pressure boiler is used for a hot-water service for heating the building as well as for kitchen purposes. Under the method employed at the Commercial Travellers' Club the water rises from the boiler to the roof, and returns to the basement. This causes a considerable loss of heat. On the other hand, we shall work direct from a boiler in the basement at a low pressure right through the radiators, and for circulation we shall install a small electrically-driven centrifugal pump. We shall gain a distinct advantage in economy. The fuel consumption will be less. Furthermore, we shall be able to regulate our temperatures in the building more advantageously. The moment the fire is lighted we shall begin to take off heat from the boiler for warming the building, instead of having to wait until there is sufficient steam pressure. This will enable us to regulate the temperature in the rooms better. The other process which first requires you to make steam before you can heat the building is not more reliable than the method we propose, in as much as there is a distinct loss straight away in the calorifier, and in the piping conveying the steam from the boiler to the calorifier. We shall work direct from the boiler to the radiators, and thus save that loss which is very considerable. I am speaking now of heating the building by installing a separate low-pressure boiler. That system will lead to saving money and fuel, and will prove to be better than the method of having a high-pressure boiler for a heating service. It is not necessary to have steam pressure to heat a building. You can easily work from a boiler at 180 degrees or 200 degrees Fahr., and if you want to increase the temperature in a building by 2 degrees only you can regulate your boiler accordingly. The great point is that the moment the fire in the boiler is lighted heat can be circulated by means of a pump, whereas, under the other system, steam has first to be raised before any heat can be distributed through the building. To my mind, a separate boiler system for heating purposes is preferable. In any case, the boiler required for heating would only be in use for a few months in the year. For cooking and hot water there will be a separate unit in the hostel at Canberra going the whole year round. The steam will be taken direct from the boiler in the basement to the copper, pans, pots, cookers, and

hot plates, and any steam that is not used, will be returned to the boiler. From the same boiler we shall also convey steam to the calorifier which will heat the water for the sinks, baths, and lavatories. All the steam and all the hot water used for these appliances, except that which passes through the steam cooker will be returned to the boiler. At the Commercial Travellers' Club it is returned to a receiver, and then to the boiler. We shall return it direct to the boiler, because a receiver radiates heat, causing loss. We shall not return anything from the steam cooker, because that which has been used for boiling cabbage or fish will retain grease which is capable of fouling the system generally. We, therefore, return that steam by a separate waste into a grease trap, where we catch the grease, and from that point we allow it to escape into the sewer. All other steam or heat that is not used is returned back to the boiler. I am not condemning the system employed at the Commercial Travellers' Club, where they are faced with conditions quite different from those we shall have at Canberra, but I may say that we did have their system of heating in the Commonwealth Offices, and effected a saving of £150 a year by altering it and installing a circulating pump. The manager of the club in question may claim economy for the system he employs in regard to the heating of the building, but not in respect of cooking. At the Club the steam is conveyed to the top of the building, where the water is heated in a calorifier, and then goes down to a receiver into the basement, and from that point into the boiler again. I consider, however, that if they installed a separate boiler for the heating of the building they would save money, as we have done in the Commonwealth Offices, and in other buildings which we have heated. Wherever we have electric power, and can install a pump for circulating the hot water you do not need to wait to get up steam in the boiler before circulating heat. One great advantage of having a separate boiler is that it enables you to get rid of that oppressive green-house smell which used to accompany most hot-water systems. It also enables you to reduce the size of the pipes, possibly from 4 inches to 1½ inches. In every way it is a big improvement to have the separate boiler. I think that our Department can claim to have had the biggest experience of all the ordinary systems of heating used in Australia, and, as a result of many years' experience, we propose to establish at Canberra, for the hostel and the provisional Parliament House the most up-to-date and economical plant available. These installations the Committee saw yesterday have been here for some years. There is now no difficulty whatever in getting such plants made in Australia at even a lower cost than the imported. One man will be able to attend to the boiler for the heating of the building and the boiler for raising steam for cooking purposes, and for heating water for the lavatories, baths, sinks, and laundry. There will be less labour required in having the two systems. The separate boiler for the heating of the building will only need to be charged three or four times a day, except in very cold weather. Coke, with a little mixture of coal, can be used. Of course, wood can be burnt, but it is becoming dearer at Canberra, and, at any rate, it is not an economical proposition when used on a large scale. Coke can be obtained by the truck load just as cheaply as wood.

87. To Mr. Mathews.—Provision is made for installing a laundry in each hostel. In the future we intend to look into the question of having one central laundry just as we have looked into the question of ice making, and come to the conclusion that it will be more economical to make ice at the power-house than to have a number of small plants all requiring attention. The engineers and men on duty at the power-house can run the ice plant without extra cost. It might be better to have one good big laundry instead of three or four small laundries if administra-

tion would permit of it, but assuming that the hostel may be let on lease to some private person or persons it is possible that they might prefer to do their own laundry work as it is done in the Commercial Travellers' Club. For the present, therefore, pending the receipt of definite instruction as to administration we have made provision for a separate laundry in each hostel. It is not advisable to use a hot-water service for heating a room also. For one thing it means increasing the size of the pipes considerably. Furthermore, it is a big economy to use cold water in the pipes instead of the copper piping which must be used for water for washing purposes, otherwise you are liable to get rusted water. A hot water system is not very readily put out of order. The pipes may fill, but iron rust is easily cleaned off. Possibly once a year it might be necessary to overhaul the pump and the electric motor, but it should not take more than a day to rectify matters. The system of heating which the Department advocates is absolute simplicity. There will be nothing to go wrong. At Canberra steam will be used for cooking, but having separate boilers we can use the steam at lower pressure than is necessary at the Commercial Travellers' Club. For instance, 10 lbs. of steam will do ordinarily, but at any rate, 25 lbs. would be sufficient for all purposes. It will enable us to install a less costly boiler, and avoid the use of special joints. The moment you raise steam pressures you begin to add to your troubles. We shall have just about 210 deg. Fahr. The pipes will not be seen in the rooms except the small branches to the radiators or those to the taps in the lavatory. The pipes will go under the floor, but they will be lagged to prevent loss of heat. They can be got at easily. A burst will not cause much trouble, but I have not heard of these pipes bursting. If I were asked to advise the Commercial Travellers' Club I would recommend them to employ steam for cooking purposes and for other accessories, but not for heating the building. I might say that it is some years since their installation was put in, and they are making the best use of what they have got, but there has been a big development in this direction in the last four or five years.

88. To Mr. Jackson.—The Melbourne General Post Office has a very good heating installation. It is even more recent than that which is in the Commonwealth offices.

89. To Mr. Blakeley.—The plate-washing machine inspected by the Committee yesterday was one of the latest design. Galliers and Klers are also making a washing machine. Both designs are very good. There is a plate-washing machine at the General Post Office, Melbourne. It was looked upon with disfavour for some time until the staff got to appreciate its advantages. The Department likes these plants because of the hygienic side. It is a sanitary arrangement to use steam to clean and dry a plate. The constant flow of clean water over plates is much better than dipping them back into the same water, which gradually gets thicker and thicker. If these machines are carefully handled they give very fine results. They do away entirely with wiping or handling. They are made of different capacities, and that is a factor to be kept in mind, because you want a machine that is capable of meeting emergencies. The saving in crockery they bring about is important. The laundry plant proposed to be installed will be of a standard type, Australian made, and well made. There will be no laundry at Parliament House. The work will be done at one of the hostels. It would be more efficient and economical to have a central laundry. We do not propose to have a competent man in charge of each plant. If the plants were combined into one it would pay to employ a man continuously, but under the proposal to have a separate laundry for each hostel it should be quite sufficient to have a man employed, perhaps, for an hour once a week. Two women could

run the appliances quite well. The work of three laundries could be done by one plant at the cost of two.

90. To the Chairman.—The average man who runs an hotel prefers to do his laundry work on the premises. The hospital at Canberra has its own laundry, which arrangement I think is preferable to any other.

91. To Mr. Blakeley.—The walls of the hostel will be covered with cement plaster. The kitchen and bathrooms will be tiled up to a certain height. A vacuum cleaning plant will be installed.

(Taken at Melbourne.)

FRIDAY, 13TH MAY, 1923.

Present:

Mr. GIBBOON, Chairman;

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

(Taken at Melbourne.)

THURSDAY, 17TH MAY, 1923.

Present:

Mr. GIBBOON, Chairman;

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

Justinian Oxenham, Secretary, Postmaster-General's Department, sworn and examined.

92. To the Chairman.—I have not given consideration to the question of whether officers would prefer to be in homes of their own, at Canberra, or whether they would be prepared to live for a period in a hostel. I should think a good deal would depend on the cost of staying at the hostel. You inform me that the charge would probably be from £2 6s. to £2 7s. per week at the officers' hostel. That would be rather expensive for a clerk with a large family. I am not prepared to say off-hand what sum could be paid in board by a clerk on a salary of £200 per year. It seems reasonable that the Government should erect cottages for the staff, and charge a reasonable rental. The rent would have to bear some relation to the cost of the building, and some consideration should be given to the fact that the officers were being taken to an out-of-the-way place where they would have difficulty in obtaining domestic help, for example, and where they would be under other disabilities. If accommodation were not available for them there would have to be a special allowance. At present, when certain postal employees are sent to towns where they cannot obtain accommodation for their families, we have to pay them an allowance until they can obtain that accommodation.

93. To Mr. Mathews.—The proposed hostel might be very suitable for me, but it would not be suitable for one of my clerks if he had a wife and three or four children, and a salary of £300 a year. From an economical point of view two-storied buildings on the ordinary hotel plan might be more suitable than the proposed hostel. It would not be reasonable to send a man to Canberra and charge him £2 for his board if he had to keep his family in Melbourne. Going to Canberra would not materially decrease his expense, but might increase it.

94. To Mr. Cook.—I cannot say off-hand what a married man in the post-office would pay on the average for rent, or how much the average single man would expend in board. Generally speaking, the Government will have to make some special arrangement for the officers who go to Canberra. The cost of living

there will depend, to a large extent, on the population attracted to the new capital. I take it that living will be more expensive there than in Melbourne or Sydney. Speaking from memory, the average wage of postal employees is about £171 per year, without allowances.

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

95. To Mr. Mathews.—A hostel built somewhat on the design of public offices would be a little cheaper, but as residential quarters it would be unsatisfactory in such a place as Canberra, where we should aim at getting the garden feeling into the residential buildings. Accommodation for 100 persons in one block with corridors and bedrooms on each side would partake very much of the nature of a barracks. In a building which is likely to be the permanent home of people that is a plan that ought, if possible, to be avoided. I prefer to see the hostel planned on the lines submitted to the Committee, namely, with separate pavilions. The persons in charge of the hostel could thus keep together people in affinity with one another. Another feature of the plan is that it is capable of being added to at will. Our proposal is to provide for 80 people now, but the building can be extended to accommodate 120, and the extension can be carried out with very little discomfort to the people already in residence. I do not think that there would be any appreciable difference in the cost of the building if it were made one block; at any rate, the accommodation would not be the same. There would not be much pleasure in living in such a building as compared with that which has been suggested to the Committee, and it would not fit into the landscape of Canberra so well. In fact, it would be a huge bulk in the residential quarter that would be right out of scale with the other buildings.

96. To the Chairman.—The type of building suggested by Mr. Mathews would provide accommodation at a smaller rental. If it were necessary to provide accommodation for 100 people two blocks, each providing for 50, would reduce the scale a good deal. Of course, you could not provide the same lavish sitting accommodation as would be available in the hostel utilized by the higher-grade officials. In these directions a saving might be made, but I would not advocate the erection of barrack-like buildings on the site selected for the hostel. I do not know quite where the reduced-price hostels might be situated, but I take it that their site would not be so prominent in the landscape as that recommended for the hostel, just under Kurrung, and seen from every point. No doubt the question of providing accommodation at about 35s. per week will have to be considered, and I think hostels of that nature will have to be placed in the civic centre. It is a problem facing us. We must provide accommodation at Canberra where people can live at a cost of 30s. to 35s. per week.

(Taken at Jenolan.)

SATURDAY, 26TH MAY, 1923.

Present:

Mr. GEORGE, Chairman;	
Senator Foll	Mr. Cook
Senator Newland	Mr. Jackson
Senator Plain	Mr. Mackay.
Mr. Blakely	

Frank Ronald O'Grady, Manager of Jenolan Caves House, sworn and examined.

97. *To the Chairman.*—We have a summer and a winter season for visitors to the Caves House. During the summer season the traffic is regular, but in the winter months it is not. With a regular traffic all the year round the cost of management would be reduced. Rainy weather, for instance, affects our returns. The staff has to be maintained at its normal level, and when, in consequence of a run of bad weather for a month, there is a falling away in the number of tourists our returns are, of course, affected. I think the arrangement of the bedrooms, shown on the plan of the proposed hotel at Canberra, is good. All the bedrooms are detached from the main building, and the scheme provides for good natural light. Such an arrangement would not, in my opinion, lead to any increased staffing costs. I observe that provision is made for a large common-room, a reading-room, and a smoke-room, with lavatories for the convenience of the guests. I understand that there will be a certain number of ladies, as well as gentlemen, occupying the hotel. The dimensions of the reading and smoking rooms are ample. The common-room could be used, as in the case of the Jenolan Caves House common-room, for dancing purposes; but, in my opinion, it is not large enough to provide for 110 guests. Our common-room is larger, but, when we have a concert or a fancy-dress ball, it will not nearly accommodate all our guests. I do not think the common-room, shown on the plan, would accommodate more than 60 or 70 persons. No doubt, as Canberra develops, there will be outside places of amusement, but meantime there must be ample accommodation in the hotel itself. It would not be convenient to provide for an occasional dance in the dining-room by removing the tables and chairs. The situation of the dining-room and the lavatory arrangements, as shown on the plan, is satisfactory. My own view is that at Canberra the staff should be accommodated in rooms apart from the house altogether, and not as proposed on this plan. I do not think it would be wise to have the staff bedrooms over the dining-room. At night time, the staff, having nothing to do, might be disposed to be noisy, and the comfort of the guests might be interfered with. The staff, for instance, might want to have a dance. As to the suggestion that the situation of the staff bedrooms over the dining-room is so good that it will appeal to the waitresses and other employees, and induce them to remain in the service of the hotel, I can only say that my experience is that girls come to Caves House under the impression that they are coming here for a holiday. They sign on for four months, and, although they are well provided for, they do not, as a rule, stay after the four months' term has expired. Canberra is even more isolated than Jenolan. Here we are within five hours' journey of Sydney. We have provided for our staff an amusement hall which is entirely apart from the main Caves House, and members of the staff may invite their friends to entertainments and dances held in that hall. I think it would be better to set apart a separate building for the staff, and use the rooms above the dining-room for guests. I strongly stress the point that it would be wise to have a separate building for the accommodation of the staff, for when free from duty your employees must

have some form of amusement, and if housed in a separate building, no annoyance would be caused your guests. I notice that provision is made for built-in wardrobes and for wash basins in all the bedrooms, the dimensions of which are 13 feet x 10 feet. In the circumstances I think that the rooms might reasonably be reduced to 10 feet x 9 feet. The plan provides for common rooms for male and female guests. If it were possible, I would reserve a part of the building solely for ladies. There should be a bathroom for every twelve or fourteen guests.

98. *To Mr. Jackson.*—Attached to each set of bedrooms I would have cubicles for those who merely desired to have a shower. The inconvenience and delay caused by those who shave in bathrooms could be overcome by providing a sort of annex filled with mirrors. A couple of cubicles for shower baths, and two bathrooms on each landing, would be very suitable.

99. *To the Chairman.*—It would be a decided advantage to have hot and cold water provided in every bedroom. After the initial outlay such a service would involve no extra expense. I notice that no provision is made for fire-places in the hotel—that it is proposed to heat the building with hot-water radiators. I have had no experience of buildings so heated. At the Kookako Hotel there is a steam-heating service. There are fire-places in the public rooms, and in some of the sitting rooms, but not in the bedrooms. The steam-heating service there is confined for the most part to the corridors. Some of the bedrooms are so heated, but the majority are not. In a building like the Caves House fire-places would be better than radiators. I know of many people of a good class, who would come here from Sydney during the winter months if the bedrooms were heated. We have steam-heating arrangements here for heating water and cooking. If we were putting hot-water radiators through the building, we would heat water by steam. The water supplied to our bathrooms is heated in that way. I do not think any saving would be effected by the use of a separate boiler for the hot-water radiators alone. A steam service, in my opinion, would be cheaper. Having regard to the size of the hotel, the store-room attached to the kitchen is very small. Here we have, adjoining the kitchen, an issue store, which is about 24 feet x 16 feet. We also have a bulk store of about the same dimensions, as well as a meat store, which is refrigerated. In the case of the hotel provision has wisely been made for a vegetable store. During the best part of the season we have to provide on the average for about 275 visitors a day. There are days when we have as many as 550 or 600 visitors. On such occasions we would have about 200 guests actually staying in the house, and 400 day visitors for whom we have only to provide lunch. Having regard to the size of the hotel, and the fact that I am told that it may be extended to provide for twenty more guests, I think that the kitchen—20 feet x 22 feet—is rather small. It should be larger. It is a decided advantage to have plenty of room in your kitchen. Our kitchen walls are tiled. That also is an advantage, since it means that the kitchen can be readily washed down and very easily cleaned. Another consideration is that when the whole of the walls are tiled they have not to be painted every year. The kitchen at the Canberra hotel should be completely tiled. I think it would be most convenient to have the whole of the laundry work for the several hotels to be erected at Canberra carried out in one laundry attached to one of the hotels. If it was the intention of the Government to lease each hotel, it would be an advantage to the lessee to have his own laundry, but if these hotels are to be controlled by the Government it would be better to have a general laundry attached to one of the hotels. I do not think it would be wiser to have a laundry separated entirely from the hotels. If the general laundry were at-

tached to one of them there would be a saving in cartage in respect of the linen to be washed for that hotel. The plant that we have at the Caves House would be sufficient for one general laundry for the hotel, but a room of the size shown on the hotel plan would not accommodate it. We have a washing machine, hydro extractor, tumbler drier, and a one-roller steam mangle. A two or three roller mangle would be more effective, but a good machine with one roller is sufficient for this place. From the point of view of the guests at the hotel, I think the best service would be secured if it were conducted by the Government. Allowing for 8 per cent. to cover interest on capital cost, depreciation, water, sewerage, and lighting, which represents £60 a week, I can only say that I should not like to pay £80 a week for the rent of a hostel with an average of 80 guests. If I had to provide a service equal to that of a superior boarding house, I should not like to run it for less than £4 4s. or £4 10s. per week per guest. At present prices the food supplied to guests at the Caves House costs us about 7s. per head per day. That estimate includes the cost of serving the meals.

100. *To Mr. Mackay.*—I am referring now only to dining-room service, and the cost of carrying on the kitchen. Here we have one waitress to every fourteen guests. So far as the bed-room service is concerned one girl can look after 22 or 23 beds. That does not mean that she would be able to attend to 22 or 23 bedrooms. On our top floor we have nineteen rooms in which there are altogether 51 beds. Two girls attend to the whole of that floor. Taking the service at per room, I do not think that a girl could look after more than fourteen or fifteen bedrooms. For a moderately well-conducted boarding house I think that 15s. per week for food per guest without service would be too low an estimate. The cost, I should say, would be £1 or 2s. 6d. each. The freight on all food supplies to Canberra will be fairly heavy. The supplies of milk, eggs, poultry, &c., would, no doubt, be obtained locally. Breakages involve considerable loss. The extent of the breakages depends largely on the staff and the way in which they are handled. We make a percentage allowance for breakages. Our working expenses provide for the maintenance of everything according to a proper working standard. New plant is provided for out of capital, but the cost of any repairs comes out of working expenses. In my estimate of 7s. per day per guest for food, I include the cost of laundry work for the dining-room.

101. *To Mr. Blakely.*—The plate-washing machine in our kitchen is satisfactory for the cleaning of small articles, but I am led to believe that it does not work as effectively as some that are installed in Sydney houses. We use it for cleansing bread and butter plates, cups, and saucers, and small glass dishes. The manufacturers of the machine claim that it takes only two minutes to wash the 30 bread and butter plates which we can put into it at a time, but our experience is that the time involved is 7 or 8 minutes. The additional time may be due to low steam pressure. We flush the plates with hot water, after which we rinse and take them out. The heat of the water is sufficient to cause them to dry almost as soon as they are removed from the machine.

102. *To Senator Newland.*—I have been manager of the Caves House for two years and three months. During that time I have had no difficulty in obtaining supplies. I secure the bulk of them from Sydney. We purchase locally live stock, vegetables, and all the poultry we require. Canberra, I presume, will be surrounded by a better farming district than we have here, and the managers of the hotels should be able to make considerable purchases locally. If they are able to do so that will materially reduce the cost of living. It would be more economical to have one re-

frigerating plant for the Parliament House and the hotels, but separate bulk stores for each would permit of better handling.

103. *To Mr. Jackson.*—Most of the rooms below the bedrooms set apart for the hotel staff would not be used at night when the staff was off duty, but they overlook the guests' rooms. If the staff were accommodated in a separate building the rooms now proposed to be allotted to them could be set apart for guests. If I had to provide for 80 or 100 people, who wanted to be accommodated as reasonably as possible, I should not erect a £40,000 building for the purpose.

104. *To Mr. Cook.*—Attendance on 80 guests would necessitate a staff of about 30 employees. Of these seven would be waitresses. The male employees would be paid the basic wage; and the waitresses and housemaids would receive 7s. or 2s. per week. Of the staff of 30, about fifteen or sixteen would be females. Five males would be employed in the kitchen, and yardmen and porters would also be necessary. I think that about £75 or £80 per week would cover the wages bill. Here we require members of the staff to sign an agreement to serve for four months. A week's notice has to be given on either side. If they leave before they have served four months we forfeit their forward travelling expenses. Nothing would be gained by offering the staff a twelve months' engagement. Those whose services are satisfactory can remain here as long as they please. Our tariff is 18s. per day. I think we could provide a good, wholesome, three-course meal, including service, for about 30s. per week. I do not say that I could do that at the Canberra hotel if I had to pay £80 per week by way of rent. Our general provisions are obtained in Sydney and sent by rail to Mount Victoria. Thence they are transported by motor lorry to the Jenolan Caves. These purchases include all our grocery lines, meat, and fish, portion of our fruit and vegetable requirements, and a portion of other perishables such as butter, eggs, and bacon. We are able to buy some eggs, fruit, and vegetables here, and our pork and poultry requirements are also obtained locally. If the Canberra hotels were controlled by the Government I would recommend the appointment of a general manager. I am the manager of the Caves House, and do not work under a directorate. I am responsible only to the Director of the Tourist Bureau, Mr. Cormack, and I have a free hand in the management of the house. The audit office has an effective check over our purchases. It watches our accounts very closely. We have to put through a voucher for everything we obtain. When I set out to make purchases locally I take with me a supply of vouchers and cash, and make out on the spot a voucher for what I buy. The farmer from whom I make a purchase signs the voucher, and I pay him at once. When that is done the voucher goes through our cash-book and is sent to Head Office. The power given me to make purchases in this way enables me to save money for the Government. I would recommend that the general manager of the hotels at Canberra should be given such a free hand to make local purchases. A complete check can be kept over such purchases in the way I have described.

105. *To Senator Foll.*—I do not think the cost of staffing the hotels would be reduced by having all the accommodation in a one-story building. The same number of housemaids would be necessary, whether the rooms were on one, two, or three different floors.

106. *To Senator Plain.*—I said that it would be more satisfactory from the point of view of the guests if the hotels were run by the Government. From the point of view of economy the Government might do better by leasing the hotels, but I do not think the guests would get for their money the value that they would obtain if the hotels were controlled by the Government. The service would not be so good. I do not suggest that if

the hostels were controlled by the Government a certain proportion of the cost would be passed on to the general taxpayers. Each hostel would have to pay its way. If it were controlled by the Government, the guests would have to pay, perhaps, a little more, but they would get a better service. A lessee would want to make more out of the venture than would the Government. As to the possibility of an ordinary public servant being able to live in a hostel of this kind, and to pay his way, I would remind you that, at Leeton, on the Yanko Irrigation Scheme, the Commission's

officers are provided for at a special rate. The hostel there does not show any profit.

107. *To Mr. Cook*.—If the hostel were conducted by the Government I think it should be controlled by a manager, who should be responsible to the head of his department. I favour the system we have in force here. It is inadvisable that there should be too many directors. I am responsible only to Mr. Cormack, the Director of the Tourist Bureau, but, of course, above him again there are the Under Secretary and the responsible Minister.