

1925.

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC WORKS.

REPORT

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

RELATING TO A PROPOSED NEW SCHEME FOR THE

ERECTION OF A BUILDING IN BRISBANE

FOR THE

ACCOMMODATION OF COMMONWEALTH DEPARTMENTS.

Presented pursuant to Statute; ordered to be printed, 25th September, 1925.

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No. 69.—F.13591/24.—PRICE 1s.

(Fourth Committee.)

Senate.

House of Representatives.

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

* Ceased to be a member of the Senate, 30th June, 1923.

† Appointed 5th July, 1923.

† Resigned 28th June, 1923.

INDEX.

	PAGE
Report	iii
Minutes of Evidence	1

EXTRACT FROM THE VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, No. 64,
DATED 29TH MAY, 1924.

11. PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE—REFERENCE OF WORK—COMMONWEALTH BUILDING, BRISBANE.—Mr. Stewart (Minister for Works and Railways) moved, pursuant to notice, That, in accordance with the provisions of the *Commonwealth Public Works Committee Act 1913-1921*, the following proposed work be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for their investigation and report thereon:—Erection of building in Brisbane for accommodation of Commonwealth Departments (in lieu of the offices, the erection of which was reported on by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, on 28th October, 1922), upon a site embracing portion of the site referred to in the report of the Committee dated 28th October, 1922, and land adjacent thereto.

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

Question—put and passed.

LIST OF WITNESSES.

LIST OF WITNESSES.		PAGE
Cameron, Colonel Donald Charles, C.M.G., D.S.O., M.P. for Brisbane, Queensland .. .. .	.. .. .	11
East, Hubert Frazer, State President, Returned Soldiers and Sailors' Imperial League of Australia, Queensland Branch .. .. .	.. .. .	16, 24
Hinton, John Edward, Chief Officer, Metropolitan Fire Brigade, Brisbane .. .. .	.. .. .	17
Jolly, William Alfred, Mayor of Greater Brisbane .. .. .	.. .. .	25
Murdoch, John Smith, Chief Commonwealth Architect and Director-General of Works, Department of Works and Railways .. .. .	.. .. .	4, 8, 13, 23
Pye, Thomas, Architect, Brisbane .. .. .	.. .. .	20
Warrick, William Mitchell, Property Officer, Lands and Survey Branch, Surveyor-General's Department .. .. .	.. .. .	1
Wilson, Thomas, Deputy Mayor, City of Brisbane .. .. .	.. .. .	18
Wilson, Ronald Martin, Architectural Engineer, Representative of the Town Planning Association, Brisbane .. .. .	.. .. .	22

COMMONWEALTH OFFICES, BRISBANE.

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 a building in Brisbane for the accommodation of Commonwealth Departments (in lieu of the offices the erection of which was reported upon by the Committee on 28th October, 1922), has the honour to report as follows :—

HISTORY OF THE PROPOSAL.

In 1910, the Commonwealth Government appointed a committee of officials to attempt to forecast development of building schemes to meet Commonwealth requirements in Brisbane. The committee consisted of the State Under-Secretary for Public Works, the Deputy Postmaster-General, Brisbane, the Chief Postal Inspector, and the Chief Commonwealth Architect. Amongst other matters dealt with, the committee reported that Commonwealth land, having a frontage of 132 feet to Adelaide-street by a depth of about 295 feet extending to Ann-street, was not being adequately used, carrying only a small drill hall; and that it should contain a Postal stores branch and accommodation for Commonwealth Departments other than the Customs, Defence, and Postmaster-General's. Shortly afterwards, the Chief Commonwealth Architect suggested to the then Minister for Home Affairs (the Hon. King O'Malley) the possibility of the development of the whole area bounded by Adelaide, Edward, Ann, and Creek streets as an ornamental square at the railway entrance to the city. The Minister arranged for the delay of the proposed building scheme, and negotiated with the State Government in regard to making available its land.

2. In 1916, the State Government suggested that—

7th July, 1916.

- (a) it should make available about 160 feet of the area of the Normal School Ground from Adelaide-street to Ann-street opposite the Central Railway Station;
- (b) the Commonwealth should contribute about 40 feet of the drill ground area;
- (c) these strips should be united to make a public square through which there should be adequate access from the railway station to Adelaide-street;
- (d) the making and ornamentation of such square and provision for access to be carried out by the Brisbane Municipal Council;
- (e) the Commonwealth to purchase land adjoining the drill ground between Ann, Creek, and Adelaide streets for its future requirements;
- (f) a strip of ground 14 feet wide from all the properties fronting Adelaide-street to be granted to the Brisbane Municipal Council for the purpose of widening that street.

3. At that time, the private property 295 feet by 132 feet fronting Ann, Creek, and Adelaide streets was valued at about £18,600, and was rented under building lease at 4 per cent. of the value stated. It had various commercial buildings erected thereon, valued at about £19,000; these buildings were removable by the lessees at the termination of the lease (which was for a period of 21 years from 1st July, 1912), for which buildings and all rights under the lease the lessees asked £25,000.

4. Unfortunately, the war was then at its height, and the Treasury was not agreeable to making available funds for the purchase of land which it was unlikely that the Commonwealth would require for a great number of years.

1917.

5. In 1917, the Chief Commonwealth Architect, at the request of the then Minister for Works and Railways (Hon. W. A. Watt), prepared an imaginative sketch showing what would be the effect of the whole scheme, and this was referred to Mr. Hardacre, then Minister for Public Works in Queensland.

22nd November,
1920.

6. On the 22nd November, 1920, the House of Representatives, on the motion of Mr. Groom, referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works the question of the necessity of acquiring any land for future building requirements of the Commonwealth in Brisbane, "more particularly the advisability or otherwise of acquiring certain land in Adelaide-street, Brisbane, and co-operating with the Queensland Government in a scheme of creating an Anzac Memorial Square."

7th July,
1921.

7. On the 7th July, 1921, the Committee recommended in its report to Parliament that—

(a) the whole of the Commonwealth land be re-transferred to the State in exchange for a suitable area in an approved position for the erection of Commonwealth Offices ;

(b) failing that, that the Commonwealth surrender 40 feet of its land if the State Government surrender 160 feet to make a square 200 feet wide ; and

(c) that the Commonwealth surrender to the Brisbane Municipal Council a strip of land 14 feet wide on Ann and Adelaide streets for the purpose of widening those streets.

6th December,
1921.

8. These proposals were ratified by the House of Representatives on 6th December, 1921, on the motion of the Honorable A. Poynton, then Minister for Home and Territories, and necessary action taken to dispose of 34 feet (which was found to be all that was required) to the Government of the State for dedication as a public park under the control of the Brisbane Council, and also to transfer the 14-ft. strips to the Brisbane Council for road purposes.

27th
September,
1922.

9. On the 27th September, 1922, the House of Representatives asked the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to report on a proposal to erect a building for Commonwealth purposes on the residue of the Commonwealth property in Adelaide-street, having frontages of approximately 99 feet to Ann and Adelaide streets by a depth of 269 feet.

10. The Committee recommended to Parliament that the building be erected ; also suggested that consideration be given to the advisability of acquiring the privately-owned area adjoining the Commonwealth property in Adelaide, Creek, and Ann streets. Subsequently the Parliament approved of these recommendations, and plans and specifications were prepared for the purpose of erecting the building.

1923.

11. During 1923, however, representatives of the citizens of Brisbane waited on the Acting Prime Minister, Dr. Earle Page, and asked that the erection of the building should not be proceeded with, because they desired to endeavour to get a larger square.

October,
1923.

12. In October, 1923, the Brisbane City Council acquired the land facing Creek-street, the property of the Presbyterian Church Trustees.

1st March,
1924.

13. On 1st March, 1924, a conference took place in Brisbane between the Minister for Home and Territories (Senator Pearce), the Minister for Public Works, Queensland (Hon. J. Forgan-Smith), the Mayor of Brisbane (Mr. H. J. Diddams), at which were also present the Under-Secretary for Works, Queensland (Mr. Quinn), the Acting Director-General of Commonwealth Works (Mr. J. S. Murdoch), and the Commonwealth Property Officer (Mr. Warrick). At this meeting a proposal was put forward that, additional to the land already agreed to be ceded by the Commonwealth and the State Governments for the purpose of a Square, a further cession of land by the State Government of approximately 18,000 square feet (i.e., 67 feet frontage to Adelaide-street) should be agreed to, provided the Commonwealth Government would cede a further similar area of its property. To compensate the Commonwealth Government for this proposed cession, it was proposed that the Brisbane Council should donate to the Commonwealth a similar area of 18,000 square feet from the property acquired from the Presbyterian Church Trustees ; provided also that the Commonwealth would acquire from the Municipal Council the area of the church land extra to the 18,000 square feet proposed to be donated, the price to be paid by the Commonwealth Government to be one-half of the amount which it cost the Municipal Council for the acquisition of the land.

14. The Minister for Home and Territories pointed out that to put this matter on a legal footing it would be necessary to refer it for the consideration of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

15. On the 29th May, 1924, Parliament carried a resolution on the motion of the then Minister for Works and Railways (Hon. P. G. Stewart) that the matter should be referred to the Commonwealth Public Works Committee; and investigation of the proposal was commenced by the Committee on the 26th August, 1924.

16. On the 22nd October, 1924, the Committee, taking evidence in Brisbane, was informed by the Deputy Mayor of Brisbane (Mr. Wilson) that the existing Municipal Council was not favorable to the scheme discussed by the conference of 1st March, 1924, and had decided to go on with the Square having a frontage of 200 feet to Adelaide and Ann streets.

17. On the 30th March, 1925, the Town Clerk, Brisbane, telegraphed to the Secretary, Commonwealth Public Works Committee, intimating that the Council had disposed of the church property fronting Creek, Ann, and Adelaide streets.

18. Early in 1925, a Greater Brisbane Council was formed with the idea of taking over all Local Government bodies within a 10-mile radius of Brisbane.

The Committee called as a witness in March, 1925, the Mayor of Greater Brisbane, but in view of the fact that the Greater Brisbane Council will not assume control until October, 1925, was unable to obtain any official pronouncement of the action which the Council intended to take.

19. The Committee has delayed the completion of its report for some time awaiting further information from Brisbane as to the likely turn of events; but recent press notices and unofficial information received indicate that the State Government has definitely announced that it will not make available further land for the ornamental square.

20. Under these circumstances, the Committee recommends that no alteration be made in the position as existing in 1922.

DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE.

21. The decision arrived at by the Committee is shown in the following extract from its Minutes of Proceedings :—

Senator Reid moved—

That in the opinion of the Committee the recommendation of the Committee contained in its report of 28th October, 1922, be re-affirmed.

Seconded by Mr. Mackay.

Carried unanimously.

H. GREGORY,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Federal Parliament House, Melbourne,
24th September, 1925.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

(Taken at Melbourne.)

TUESDAY, 26TH AUGUST, 1924.

Present:

Senator LYNCH, in the Chair;	
Senator Barnes	Mr. Jackson
Senator Reid	Mr. Mackay
Mr. Cook	Mr. Mathews.

William Mitchell Warrick, Property Officer, Department of Home and Territories, sworn and examined.

1. To Senator Lynch.—The block of land bounded by Edward, Ann, Creek, and Adelaide streets, Brisbane, having a frontage of 660 feet to Adelaide and Ann streets and a depth of 297 feet, was originally held by three owners. The Presbyterian Church authorities owned the block fronting Creek-street. The Commonwealth held a frontage of 132 feet to Adelaide-street, running through to Ann-street; and the balance of the land was held by the State Government. When the proposal was made to have an Anzac Memorial Square, the State Government granted to the Anzac Memorial Square Committee a piece of its land with a frontage of 166 feet to Adelaide-street and Ann-street. The Commonwealth Government granted 34 feet of its frontage to those streets in order that the square should be in front of the Central railway station, and a frontage of 100 feet on each side of an imaginary line taken from the clock on the tower of the station. In addition, both the Commonwealth and State Governments gave a strip 14 feet wide in Adelaide and Ann streets to enable those streets to be widened. In order to carry the alignment through to Creek-street, the council of the City of Brisbane had to resume the Presbyterian Church property. The price to be paid for that resumption has not yet been decided. Subsequent to the resumption, Mr. Diddams, then Mayor of Brisbane, who was president of the Anzac Square Memorial Committee, wrote to the Commonwealth suggesting that the square be widened by another 66 feet on each side. Senator Pearce, Mr. Murdoch, and I went to Brisbane and interviewed the council. The following letter will place before the committee the facts in relation to the matter:—

ANZAC SQUARE, BRISBANE, QUEENSLAND.

The Secretary.

1. In connexion with the above, a conference took place in the State Public Works Offices, Brisbane, on 1st March, 1924, between the Right Honorable the Minister for Home and Territories, Senator G. F. Pearce, P.C.; the Honorable J. Forgan-Smith, M.L.A., Minister for Works, Queensland; Mr. H. J. Diddams, C.M.G., Mayor of Brisbane.

2. The meeting was attended by Mr. R. A. F. Quinn, Under-Secretary for Works, Queensland; Mr. J. S. Murdoch, Acting Director-General of Works; and myself.

3. The latest proposal in regard to this subject put forward by the Anzac Square Committee was discussed, viz., that additional

to the land already agreed to be ceded by the Commonwealth Government and the State Government for the purposes of this square, a further cession of land by the State Government, approximately 18,000 square feet, would be agreed to, provided the Commonwealth Government would cede a further similar area from its property, and that to compensate the Commonwealth Government for this proposed cession the Municipal Council of Brisbane should donate to the Commonwealth a similar area (18,000 square feet) from the property facing Adelaide, Creek, and Ann streets, which the council had recently acquired from the Presbyterian Church trustees, and provided also that the Commonwealth would acquire from the municipal council, the area of the church land extra to the 18,000 square feet proposed to be donated by the council as abovementioned.

4. The Minister for Home and Territories intimated to the conference that, whereas it could not be strictly regarded as a function of the Commonwealth Government to find land for city improvement, still, after a study of the problem on the site, he was of opinion that the proposal contained elements, having regard to future Commonwealth requirements, which might be considered a justification for the Commonwealth Government to agree to the transaction.

5. The Minister for Home and Territories further pointed out that as the Commonwealth Parliamentary Committee on Public Works had already advised Parliament to proceed with the erection of the building for Commonwealth purposes on the site now in possession of the Commonwealth, any amendment of that proposal would legally have to be referred to that committee for its further consideration and advice to Parliament. The Minister for Home and Territories, in pursuance of this position, undertook to recommend reference of the case to the Parliamentary Works Committee accordingly.

6. The Minister for Home and Territories also referred to the lines of the design for the lay-out of this proposed civic improvement which was submitted by the State Government and Anzac Square Committee (see helio "C"), and mentioned that he thought that, in the event of the scheme reaching finality, it should be re-planned upon certain lines according to a plan which he submitted.

7. This plan marked "D" (copy of which was left with the Minister for Works) was favorably regarded by that Minister and the Under-Secretary of his department, who appeared to consider the scheme would be superior to the original one.

8. As to the financial aspect of the proposal, the Minister for Works and the Mayor were of the opinion that probably the best way of arriving at the compensation money to be paid by the Commonwealth under the proposal would be by an opinion to be obtained from the State Land Court.

9. However, as it seemed to be necessary to reach some definite figure to be placed before the Works Committee, the Minister instructed me to ascertain what the probable cost of the resumption by the council would be, and also what proportion of that cost should be paid by the Commonwealth in the event of the scheme being approved.

10. The Anzac Memorial Committee's report came before the Brisbane City Council at its meeting on Monday, 3rd March, and was adopted, the council thus signifying its approval of the proposed transfer to the Commonwealth of portion of the land resumed from the Ann-street Presbyterian Church, and the re-sale to the Commonwealth of the remainder of the resumed area.

11. The area under consideration resumed by the council is owned by the Presbyterian Church trustees, and is leased to J. T. Isles, Jas. Love, and F. A. Isles, for a period of 21 years, from the 1st July, 1912, at a rental of £744 per annum, until 1st July, 1926, from which date there is an additional rental equal to 4 per cent. per annum on the unimproved value of the demised land on 1st May, 1926, so far as such sum exceeds (if at all) the sum of £744 per annum.

12. The council have appointed three firms, viz., Messrs. Camerson Brothers, Messrs. Isles, Love, and Company, and Messrs. Charlton Brothers, to value all lands recently ac-

quired by the council for the purpose of widening Adelaide-street, these valuations to be used in connexion with the settlement of claims in respect of the resumptions.

13. The above firms have valued the church property at the corner of Adelaide, Creek, and Ann streets, as follows:—

Presbyterian Church ..	£31,859
Isles, Love, and Company leases	25,000
Total ..	£56,859

The Federal Land Tax Valuer estimates the property at—

Freehold, Church ..	£40,000
Leasehold, Isles, Love, and Company ..	10,000
Total ..	£50,000

14. In order to ascertain the proportional amounts of the compensation to be awarded by the court in respect of the resumption of the church property to be paid by the council, and by the Commonwealth respectively, I discussed the matter with the Mayor and with the City Valuer, Mr. W. M. Ludwig. I proposed, and it was agreed to, that the value of the unencumbered fee of the church property be first estimated, and next the value of the area, it was proposed, should be ceded by the Commonwealth, thus determining the proportions of the award that should be borne by both parties. The following estimated values were then mutually agreed upon:—

Presbyterian Church Block.

Adelaide-street—132 feet by 165 feet deep, at £165 per foot ..	£21,780
Creek-street—132 feet by 132 feet deep, at £85 per foot ..	11,220
Total ..	£33,000

Commonwealth Block.

Adelaide-street—67 feet by 134 ft. 6 in., at £150 per foot ..	£10,050
Ann-street—67 feet by 134 ft. 6 in., at £110 per foot ..	7,370
Total ..	£17,420

If the matter reaches finality the council (to whom the above figures were submitted by the Mayor) has agreed to transfer the recently-resumed church property, less the 14 feet strips required for the widening of Adelaide and Ann streets, in consideration of the Commonwealth transferring to the council for the purposes of a site for a war memorial, certain land having frontages of 67 feet to Adelaide-street and to Ann-street, and paying, in addition, a sum equal to 15,580 of the awards by the court, as compensation to the owners, the Presbyterian Church, and to the lessees, Messrs. Isles, Love, and Company.

15. Assuming the total amount of such awards to be £60,000, that is, £35,000 to the church, and £25,000 to the lessees, the amounts, according to the above arrangements, that would be paid by the council and by the Commonwealth respectively, are £31,673 and £28,327.

16. Should the scheme be adopted the Commonwealth would have an island block having a frontage of 163 feet to Adelaide-street, 269 feet to Creek-street, 163 feet to Ann-street, and 269 feet to Anzac Square, at a total cost of about £50,000 made up as follows:—

Amount due on transferred property ..	£20,000
Part payment of resumption of church property, say ..	30,000
Total ..	£50,000

17. The Acting Director-General of Works, Mr. Murdoch, is of the opinion that only a portion of this area, viz., 163 feet to Ann-street, by about 100 feet to Creek-street, or about two-fifths of the whole block, would be sufficient for Commonwealth requirements for the next 50 years. The remaining three-fifths, costing about £30,000, could therefore be leased on a building lease similar to the Perth General Post Office land for a term of 50 years. In connexion with this suggestion I may state that Mr. Isles, when discussing the matter with me, offered, in the event of the Commonwealth acquiring the church property, to lease for a term of 50 years the portion not immediately required by the Commonwealth to erect thereon a building of first-class modern construction in accordance with Commonwealth design and requirements, such building to become the property of the Commonwealth on the termination of the lease, and to pay a rental of £1,800 per annum, which is equal to 6 per cent. on the estimated cost of the property to be acquired from the City Council.

18. In my opinion, when the property reverted to the Crown, on the termination of this suggested building lease, it will have attained a very great value, as compared with its purchase price. The property is in the centre of Brisbane, and its particular locality will be greatly aggrandized by the important civic improvement which is primarily the purpose of the proposed transaction.

19. In view of the fact that the proposed exchange would mean to the Commonwealth—

- A better building site than the present area, it being larger and possessing the advantage of being lighted on all sides;
- Provision for future expansion of Commonwealth activities in Brisbane; and
- That a fair return would be received for all moneys that may be expended on land that is not immediately required for Commonwealth purposes;

I consider that the proposal can be recommended to the Parliamentary Committee on Public Works for favorable consideration.

W. M. WARRICK,
Property Officer.

20th March, 1924.

Seeing that we did not know what the award of the court would be, I considered it wiser to come to a mutual arrangement as to the relative values of the property owned by the Commonwealth and by the city council in order to decide upon a fraction which would represent the proportion of the award to be borne by the Commonwealth. If the values had been exactly equal it would have meant the adoption of a fifty-fifty basis. When I suggested to the Mayor that, without going too closely into the matter, I thought that that would be a fair basis, he pooh-poohed the idea. He wanted to place a relatively greater value upon the city council property than upon ours. At two or three interviews I persisted in claiming that ours had a relatively greater value, because, eventually, it would be the main entrance to the railway station. I pointed out that the residue of our property had an enhanced value because of the fact that when we granted that strip of 34 feet to Adelaide-street, we really created another frontage. He eventually gave way and the values mentioned in that letter were mutually agreed upon. The Commonwealth originally gave £20,000 for its land, and £2,188 for the buildings upon it. It was a property transferred from the state at the time of Federation.

2. *To Senator Reid.*—Under the present proposal the Commonwealth will have to purchase half the church property. In return for the strip of land with 67 feet frontage to Adelaide and Ann streets, comprising an area of about 18,000 square feet, the council will give us half the church property, comprising a similar area. We would still retain a strip of our present holding with a frontage of 31 feet to Adelaide and Ann streets.

3. *To Senator Lynch.*—If we did not buy the other half of the church property we would have an L-shaped piece of land. The council has stipulated that that other half must be purchased. It would not, from our point of view, be a good proposition merely to exchange portion of our land for the top half of the church property with frontages to Ann and Creek streets, because the bottom half is much more valuable.

4. *To Mr. Mackay.*—The council has not indicated which portion of the church property will comprise the 18,000 square feet that will be exchanged for our land.

5. *To Senator Lynch.*—I assess the value of half the church property at £30,000. That £30,000 does not apply to either the top or the bottom half; it is merely half the value of the whole. The £60,000 is the value I estimate for a block with frontages to three streets. Our block originally had only two frontages, and, therefore, would not have as great a value. The value of our block would not have increased at the same rate as the corner piece if the Anzac Square proposal had not been made. The surrender by us of a strip of land 34 feet in width enhanced the value of the residue of our property. The council has agreed to sell to the Commonwealth the

other half of the church property upon payment of 16/33rds of whatever sum is awarded as compensation by the land court. I have just received a letter from Brisbane in which it is stated that the church authorities have submitted a claim for £50,155 for the whole block, including improvements. Isles, Love, and Company, the lessees of the portion fronting Adelaide and Creek streets, have not yet submitted a claim. Both cannot claim on account of improvements. The council is going to make the church authorities prove their claim in court. There is no difference of opinion between our department and the council regarding the value of the respective properties. Unless it is intended to purchase the other half of the church property, I do not think that the Commonwealth should entertain the idea of affecting an exchange. The department does not stand to lose any money under the agreement arrived at with the council. There is only one proposal, and that is for the Commonwealth to acquire the whole of the church property—one-half by way of exchange and the other half by way of purchase. It would be unthinkable to exchange portion of our present holding for the top half of the church property fronting Ann and Creek streets.

6. *To Senator Reid.*—If the proposal is finalized the idea is to erect Commonwealth buildings on the top portion of the land and lease the bottom portion, which is considered to have a greater value.

7. *To Senator Lynch.*—The only condition on which the council will agree to an exchange is that we purchase the other half. I have a knowledge of the provision that is at present made for the Commonwealth staffs in Brisbane. Some of that provision is good and some is bad. In Desmond Chambers we have 18,000 square feet, but that is a very bad fire risk. The total accommodation in Brisbane is 44,290 square feet, for which we pay £7,070 per annum, an average of 3s. 2d. a square foot. Larger and better office accommodation is required. We have nothing to do with the lessees of the church property. The court will deal with that matter and fix the compensation.

8. *To Mr. Mathews.*—Isles, Love and Company will lodge a claim for compensation for the determination of their lease. That will be decided in the same way as the claim of the Presbyterian Church authorities.

9. *To Mr. Mackay.*—If the Commonwealth acquired the church property it could make an arrangement with Isles, Love and Company to leave them undisturbed.

10. *To Senator Reid.*—Isles, Love and Company are willing to enter into a lease and to erect a modern building upon the land after compensation has been paid in respect to the termination of the present lease.

11. *To Senator Lynch.*—If the Commonwealth came to an agreement with the city council the land would be handed over unencumbered, and no legal obligation or litigation would fall upon the Commonwealth. The land would be handed over upon the Commonwealth paying its fraction of the total amount of compensation paid to the Presbyterian church authorities and to Isles, Love and Company.

12. *To Mr. Mathews.*—At present no one can say what the amount of compensation will be, and the Commonwealth's share cannot, therefore, be determined. I have assumed that the amount will be £60,000. If the larger amount is awarded it will increase the Commonwealth's proportionate share. If the amount is £60,000, the Commonwealth will be called upon to pay approximately £30,000; if it is £80,000, the Commonwealth's contribution will be approximately £40,000.

13. *To Mr. Mackay.*—The proposal resolves itself into this; the council will transfer to the Commonwealth the whole of that area in consideration of the Commonwealth transferring a strip of its land running through from Adelaide-street to Ann-street, with a frontage of 67 feet to each street, and paying approximately half the compensation that is awarded to the

Presbyterian church authorities and to Isles, Love and Company.

14. *To Senator Lynch.*—I think that under this proposal the Commonwealth will be getting a fair deal. The portion of the Presbyterian church property that would be most suitable for Commonwealth offices is that at the corner of Creek and Ann streets. The remainder of the land could be advertised for leasing for a period of 50 years. The reason I advocate acquiring the whole of the land is that the council will not give us only half. That is a fixed condition of its proposal. We would not, in any case, entertain a proposal to take only half, because it would leave us with an L-shaped piece of land. There would be no illegality in the Commonwealth becoming a landlord. That has been done in Western Australia. The two cases are parallel. In order to get what we wanted in Western Australia, we had to take a certain area. The residue not required for Commonwealth purposes was leased. In this case, in order to get what we want we have to take more than we require. One half the area of the church property will be sufficient for Commonwealth requirements for the next 50 years. I consider that that site is the most suitable in Brisbane for Commonwealth offices. The transfer of the 34-ft. strip has not yet been effected. It has been approved, and the council has been advised to that effect. We are committed to it. I consider that the committee is entitled to regard the provision of office accommodation in Brisbane as an urgent matter. It is not advisable to have rented premises in any capital city; they are scattered and inconvenient.

15. *To Senator Reid.*—From the Commonwealth's point of view I think that this proposition is a good one.

16. *To Mr. Jackson.*—The Commonwealth will be asked to pay about £30,000 for land that will have to be leased for 50 years. The council will not entertain a proposition that does not include the purchase of the other half of the church property. This will benefit mutually the state, the Commonwealth, and the city council.

17. *To Mr. Mathews.*—I have not considered the advisability of disposing of the property at present held by the Commonwealth on this site and purchasing elsewhere. The arrangement includes the granting of a strip of land 14 feet wide in Adelaide and Ann streets for street widening. Mr. Murdoch has also suggested that, if the state will grant a strip in Edward-street between Adelaide and Ann streets, the Commonwealth should do the same in Creek-street. I think that £60,000 is a fair value for the church property.

18. *To Senator Barnes.*—Our opinion will be subject to whatever award is made by the court. I do not think we would consider the proposal if the award were twice as great as we anticipate. It would be wiser to wait for the award of the court before going on with the matter.

19. *To Mr. Mathews.*—I do not know when that award will be given. Nothing definite has yet been done.

20. *To Mr. Mackay.*—The council did not give any reason for stipulating that the Commonwealth should purchase the other half of the land. I do not know of any reason for that stipulation. The Commonwealth is not being asked to make any concession to the council. I consider that the residue of the block is enhanced in value by granting a strip 14 feet in width for street widening purposes. Anything up to £60,000 would be a fair value for the increased area. Having purchased that land it would be in the discretion of the department whether it should be sold or leased. It would be optional whether we built on Adelaide-street or Ann-street. If it is not desired that the Commonwealth should become a landlord, the portion not required could be sold. I have not heard any objection raised by the people of Brisbane to this proposal. So far as I know, everybody is favorable to it. I say definitely that, apart from the award of the court, the Commonwealth will not be concerned in

any compensation that may be paid to Isles, Love and Company, or to others who hold leases. The letter which I received from our representative in Brisbane reads—

The council have not yet finally considered this claim, but the city valuer informed me that most probably they would ask the church to prove their claim in court.

That is the last intimation that I have received; it is dated 19th August, 1924. The church has made a claim for £37,350 on account of the land, £12,305 for improvements and £500 for re-investment; a total of £50,155. No written agreement has been entered into by the department. This is merely a proposal between the city council and the department. We can turn it down if we like.

21. *To Mr. Cook.*—It would be very much better to await the decision of the court before going to Brisbane to investigate the matter. The council has agreed to give us that piece of the church property if we will give them a strip 67 feet in width to enable Anzac-square to be widened. That meets with the wishes of the people of Brisbane, and, in my opinion, every effort should be made to bring it about, provided that the Commonwealth does not lose on the transaction. Mr. Murdoch's view is the same as mine.

22. *To Mr. Mackay.*—In the first place the state gave 166 feet and the Commonwealth 34 feet. The present proposal is for the state also to give an additional 67 feet.

23. *To Senator Reid.*—Apparently the church authorities have placed an extraordinary value upon their property, because the council is taking them to court. To their valuation must be added the claim by Isles, Love and Company.

24. *To Mr. Mackay.*—Isles, Love and Company's claim will be that of a lessee. It will be for the Commonwealth to decide whether they shall continue in that capacity if the Commonwealth acquires the land. At present the amount of compensation to be paid is a matter for decision between the city council and the lessee. If the Commonwealth does not proceed with this proposal the council will have to pay the lessee for the determination of the lease.

25. *To Senator Reid.*—There is ample room for the building suggested by Isles, Love and Company without interfering with the Commonwealth buildings. The only improvement at present on the 31-ft. strip of Commonwealth property running through from Adelaide-street to Ann-street is a miniature rifle range. The buildings upon the land at present leased by Isles, Love and Company will have to be pulled down to enable Adelaide-street to be widened.

26. *To Senator Lynch.*—The Presbyterian church are claiming £50,155. The three valuers appointed by the city council agreed upon a value of £31,859 for the church property, and £25,000 for the leases held by Isles, Love and Company; a total of £56,859.

27. *To Mr. Mackay.*—Isles, Love and Company's claim is on account of a lease that has nine years to run.

28. *To Senator Lynch.*—I cannot see how the council could make any profit out of this transaction. If the Commonwealth goes through with the proposal, it, and the council will have to bear proportionately the compensation awarded by the court. I do not think that rents have increased by 100 per cent. in Brisbane during the last 24 years. The value of £60,000, which I estimate, includes improvements and lessees' interest. The whole of that block is built upon, whereas only a small portion of the Commonwealth block is built upon. If this proposal is not agreed to the present ambitious scheme for an Anzac Memorial Square will be spoilt. If we built on our present block it would make the square lop-sided. The Anzac Memorial Committee is responsible for the present scheme. I do not know of any other occasion when the Commonwealth has purchased land and surrendered part of it by way of endowment for public purposes.

29. *To Mr. Mackay.*—I would not say that the Commonwealth will make any concession to the council by

agreeing to this proposal. I consider that this is a good business proposition for the Commonwealth.

30. *To Senator Lynch.*—This proposal does not mean any further surrender by the Commonwealth. Under the first proposal we apparently surrendered something, but we got it back in the enhanced value gained by the residue of the property. The area of land at present held by the Commonwealth is sufficient for its requirements, but it is not as suitable as the new block would be. The present block would have a dead wall along one side of it. The Presbyterian block is much better lighted. The Anzac Memorial Square Committee is the instigator of the proposal, the idea being to have a square of a much greater width than is at present possible.

(Taken at Melbourne.)

WEDNESDAY, 27TH AUGUST, 1924.

Present:

Senator LYNCH, in the Chair;

Senator Barnes,	Mr. Jackson,
Senator Reid,	Mr. Mackay,
Mr. Blakeley,	Mr. Mathews.
Mr. Cook,	

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

31. *To Senator Lynch.*—Parliament, in 1921, agreed to a recommendation of the Public Works Committee that the Commonwealth Government should cede to the Brisbane Municipal Council an area of land in Adelaide-street, in connexion with the proposed Anzac Memorial Square in that city. Subsequently, in 1922, it was also approved by the House, upon a recommendation of the Public Works Committee that erection of Commonwealth offices in Brisbane be proceeded with on the remainder of the land owned by the Commonwealth in Adelaide-street. Since that date representations have been made by the municipal authorities that the Commonwealth should agree to vary the proposal with a view to improving the memorial square, and at the same time giving the Commonwealth certain advantages with regard to frontages, &c. The latest proposal in regard to this subject put forward by the municipality of Brisbane was that, additional to the land already agreed to be ceded by the Commonwealth Government and the State Government for the purposes of the square, a further cession of land by the State Government of approximately 18,000 square feet would be agreed to, provided the Commonwealth Government would cede a further similar area from its property, and that to compensate the Commonwealth Government for this proposed cession the Municipal Council of Brisbane would donate to the Commonwealth a similar area (18,000 square feet) from property facing Adelaide, Creek, and Ann streets, which the Municipal Council had recently acquired from the Presbyterian Church trustees; and provided also that the Commonwealth would acquire from the Municipal Council the area of the church land extra to the 18,000 square feet proposed to be donated by the council as above mentioned. In the event of its being approved to accept the City Council's offer of an equivalent area of land from the church property for a surrender of a similar area of Commonwealth land, and that the Commonwealth should purchase the remainder of the council's land, the whole underlying idea of the project is that the Commonwealth will hold the fee simple of the complete site in perpetuity. I consider about one-third of the area of such site may be sufficient for an office building, in which Commonwealth departmental operations could probably be carried on for 40 or 50 years. The remaining area of the site, say two-thirds, would thus be available to be let on building lease for, say, 50 years, the lessee being required to erect a building on the same

lines as the building which the Commonwealth will erect, and which would become federal property at the expiration of the building lease. In that way, government departmental requirements in Brisbane would be met for very many years. When this subject was previously considered by the committee, it was arranged that a square 200 feet wide, with the railway station tower as its centre, would be donated partly by the Queensland State Government and partly by the Commonwealth Government, the frontages of land being 166 feet and 34 feet respectively. At that time the committee was able to gauge that the public mind in Brisbane was rather intent upon having a larger square, and, although the State Government at that time had, in the way of giving a donation, gone the full distance that it intended to go, yet the local municipal council and the soldiers' memorial committee again approached the Premier of Queensland, asking for a further donation of an area of land equal to 18,000 square feet, provided that the Commonwealth Government donated a similar area from its land, to balance the square. If that were done there would be insufficient left of the Commonwealth land upon which to erect buildings. The frontage left would be about 31 feet. The Brisbane City Council very magnanimously wrote to the Commonwealth Government, stating that it realized that if this proposal were agreed to, the land left to the Commonwealth would be of no use for building purposes, but as they had acquired the Presbyterian Church land which adjoins the Commonwealth land on one side, down to the alignment of Creek-street on the other side, if the Commonwealth Government would agree to give up an area of its land equal to the donation of the Queensland Government, they offered to the Commonwealth Government an equal area of its municipal property, provided that the Commonwealth Government purchased the remainder of that property. If that were done, the Commonwealth Government would have a site of 165 ft. 7 in. frontage to Adelaide and Ann streets, and 269 ft. 2 in. frontage to Creek-street, including the frontage of 31 feet that would be left to the Commonwealth Government if it agreed to the proposal. If this suggestion were carried out, I take it that a strip of land facing Creek-street of 14 feet, equal to 14 feet proposed to be given up for the widening of Adelaide and Ann streets, would also be given up. This has never been mentioned before. I mention it now because it would probably be done, as being a distinct improvement to the building proposed, and, of course, the whole civic scheme. Under the old scheme, which everybody thought was definitely settled, the square measured 200 feet by 269 ft. 2 in. Provided advantage is taken of the new State donation, and the Commonwealth agrees to donate a similar portion from its property, the new square will be 332 feet by 269 ft. 2 in. Under the old scheme the actual Commonwealth building site was 98 feet by 269 ft. 2 in., and under the new proposal the building site will be 151 ft. 8 in. by 269 ft. 2 in. We would have not only a much larger building site than formerly, but also a superior site, inasmuch as it will be an island site, with a frontage to four streets, and, of course, light from all sides. From the standpoint of the Commonwealth future requirements, it is a much more valuable site. I am not in a position to give particulars of the terms on which the land can be acquired, or of the economy or otherwise of the proposed transactions, but I can give the committee some information regarding the effect that the proposal would have upon a possible building scheme. When the building scheme was first placed before the committee, it provided for a construction which would give 86,000 feet of floor space, and the price of the building in brick and stone was estimated at £127,000, or in concrete at £115,000. The committee recommended the latter proposition, and the Department proceeded with the preparation of plans for a concrete plastered building. It was arranged that the matter should be con-

sidered in consultation with the Queensland Government, with a view to getting that Government to erect on its side of the square similar buildings to those that would be erected on the Commonwealth side of it. The State authorities were keen on having a stone building. Just at this time the new suggestion in regard to the square was brought forward. My department, at that time, was quite ready to call for tenders for the work, and we proposed to invite tenders in two alternative forms, namely, for a concrete plastered building and for a stone-fronted building.

32. *To Mr. Mathews.*—I do not know whether the State authorities would be prepared to pay the difference between the cost of a concrete plastered building and a stone building. That would be a matter for discussion between the two Governments. Personally, I think that a plastered building would be suitable enough, and if the difference between the cost of the two classes of buildings was as much as £12,000 or £15,000, I should favour the plastered building.

33. *To Senator Lynch.*—Since the Anzac-square building project was before the committee an amalgamation of the Federal and State Taxation Departments has been arranged, which has reduced the Commonwealth office requirements in Brisbane to a considerable extent, and I think a smaller building would now suffice. On comparing the building space which would be afforded by the sites proposed under the former arrangement and the new one, the committee will find that under the new scheme we should have a site of 151 feet by 269 feet, which, of course, is a much better site than the smaller one. If the new site is acquired, I suggest that the Government should build on only one-third of it, taking the Ann and Creek streets corner.

34. *To Mr. Jackson.*—For the purposes of government offices, that corner would be quite as valuable as the other one. The Government could let the other two-thirds of the site, on, say, a 50 years' building lease. It could make a much better bargain with that portion of the site than with the Ann-street corner, for it lends itself to the erection of shops. If a seven-storied building were erected on one-third of the land, it would provide 76,000 feet of working space. That would be 11,000 feet less than is provided for in the former scheme for which I have drawn plans.

35. *To Mr. Mackay.*—I ought to explain that, although the committee recommended the construction of a five-storied building, with provision for the addition of two stories when necessary, I discovered on going into the figures that it would be better to build only two-thirds of the structure that was then proposed, but to build it seven stories high, and leave one-third of the building to be added later for the full seven stories, than to erect the proposed building for the complete five floors, leaving for later construction an additional two stories over the whole building. The rearrangement of the plans, with a view to erecting two-thirds of the building for seven stories rather than the complete building for five stories, gave us an additional 1,000 feet of floor space.

36. *To Senator Reid.*—The proposed building, with a floor space of 76,000 feet, would give the other departments more liberal space than they would have had in the 87,000-ft. floor space structure if the Taxation Department had not been amalgamated with the State Taxation Department. The Government could safely let the Adelaide-street corner of the land on a 50 years' building lease. If the necessity arose for extra accommodation in Brisbane over and above the capacity of the building I am proposing, it could be found in the proposed new general post-office. That matter will come before the committee shortly for its consideration. For once we are tackling a post office problem in a big way. I have a great opinion about the possibilities of the future growth of Brisbane. I think it will ultimately be a very large city. If the Commonwealth Government built on the Ann-street corner of this proposed new site, it would have

76,000 feet of net working space at a cost of approximately £114,000, with the possibility of a future extension to take in the whole of the land down to the Adelaide-street corner. If it be decided to build on one-third of that whole site and let the other two-thirds on a building lease, on the condition that the lessee should construct a similar building, the cost of the Commonwealth building, with a net working space of 76,000 feet, would be about £114,000, and the cost of the building to be erected by the lessee, which would give a space of 147,000 feet, would be about £220,500. The adoption of the new scheme would not involve a very great alteration in the present plans, and would make possible a much better lighting arrangement. I produce a plan showing the proposed lighting arrangements under the present scheme. It will be seen that it provides for a corridor to run along the side of the building nearest Creek-street, with an arrangement for two light areas to give light to the corridor, and also to the sides of the intervening blocks. This is a typical plan for the upper floors, but for the lower floors it is not proposed that we shall sacrifice so much space for lighting purposes. I produce a plan which will show the arrangement for the lower floors. Under the present scheme we shall have a building with a frontage of 98 feet, but if the new scheme is adopted the frontage will be 151 feet.

37. *To Mr. Mathews.*—The lighting arrangement under the new scheme will be similar to that under the old scheme, except that the corridor, instead of running along the side of the building, will run along the centre of it, and branch two ways from the centre. I produce a plan showing the arrangement in respect to the ground floor, and the first and second floors, and another showing the arrangement for the upper floors. It will be seen that we do not need to sacrifice so much space for the ground floors.

38. *To Senator Lynch.*—I take it that the Home and Territories Department is dealing with the land proposition. When the proposal was first made, I discussed the matter with the Minister for Home and Territories and the property officer of that department. The Queensland Minister for Works suggested a revised plan for the square, according to the new arrangement, but it did not suit us, and I was able to propose improvements which were admitted to be more satisfactory. If a scheme were agreed to by the Railway Department to harmonize its buildings with the Government schemes, the whole locality could be dealt with in such a way that a most impressive design could be achieved. There are magnificent possibilities in the proposition, but it seems to me to require direction by one mind. It is a pity that such a multiplicity of interests are concerned in the project. Not only have Commonwealth and State Government interests to be borne in mind, but also municipal and railway interests. If the whole plan could be co-ordinated under one competent expert, there are great possibilities in the scheme. I produce a rough draft design showing the difference in bulk in the building which could be erected on the present frontage at the disposal of the Commonwealth Government, and that which could be constructed on the proposed 151-ft. frontage. The development of Brisbane is going on at a tremendous rate. According to the last census there was an increase of 51 per cent. in population over the previous figures. I understand that such a great amount of building is projected in Brisbane that sufficient skilled workmen cannot be obtained to begin it. Very shortly the committee will have placed before it proposals for a new general post office in Brisbane, which will also provide for a new automatic telephone exchange. At present the Brisbane General Post Office is housed in a number of buildings which have been erected in a haphazard way during the last 60 or 70 years, and the accommodation is no longer suitable. The new proposals will be of such a scale that they will probably meet requirements for at least three or four generations, and provi-

sion will be made for additions as they become necessary. I have come to the conclusion that the post office business is so large and so rapidly expanding that it is a fair thing that the postal authorities should be housed in their own building, and should be separated from other departments. It is proposed that the new general post office shall be erected on the present site.

39. *To Mr. Mathews.*—The building that I have in mind will be an immense structure. Taking a long view of the requirements of the Commonwealth, I cling to the idea of having separate offices for the other departments. Of course, the committee knows the central character of this Adelaide-street site. It is in the heart of the City of Brisbane, and in time it will become an exceedingly valuable property. The building site under the new proposal would be far superior to the present site. It would become an island site with access and light from four streets. It faces three important streets and also the square. Its value as a business and commercial site would undoubtedly be far greater. The convenience of the public would be better served if the proposed site were acquired and one-third used for Commonwealth purposes and the other two-thirds leased to private persons. Under the new proposal the building would be a little more expensive, to the extent of about 1s. per super. foot of floor space, because four frontages instead of three would have to be dealt with. There would be compensating advantages in the position and accessibility of the building. Commercially the new site would be much superior. I have not altered my opinion that the Commonwealth building should be constructed of concrete. I still consider that the lower floor should have a granite veneer, and the upper floor be plastered with imitation freestone. If the State Government desires to erect a stone building, alternative tenders could be invited. If the difference in the two classes of building were very great, I should accept the lower tender, but if it were not very great, I might be inclined to erect a stone building. In view of the merging of the taxation offices, I think that the 76,000 super. feet of space would be more satisfactory than the 86,000 super. feet as previously suggested. We based our calculations on requirements for fifteen years hence. Of course, private companies leasing the Commonwealth's land would erect a similar class of building to that of the Commonwealth. It would be a complete building right from the beginning, but private enterprise would build two-thirds, and the Commonwealth Government one-third. It would be two and a half years before the building could be erected. It could not be started before the middle of next year, and it would take about one year and nine months to complete. It is quite legitimate for the Government to lease portion of its land to private enterprise. We have done so at Perth. The Commonwealth post office there is situated on very valuable land, and the whole of it will not be required for quite 50 years. It is wise for the Commonwealth Government to provide for its future needs, and the land cannot conceivably be left idle. The best thing to do is to lease it for a considerable term, and when the lease is determined the building on the land reverts to the Crown. It is the most sensible thing to do.

40. *To Mr. Cook.*—The life of the building would be more than 50 years; in fact, it would be quite 100 years.

41. *To Senator Lynch.*—The acquisition of the municipal land would be largely influenced by the amount of revenue to be derived from the leasing of two-thirds of it. Of course, the value of the building and its reversion to the Crown in 50 years would have to be considered. The building constructed by private persons would have to be of the same design and construction as that of the Commonwealth, otherwise the proposition should not be considered. If the Government could see a fair return for its money, I think that it would be a good thing to acquire this land,

because that property in the next 50 years would, perhaps, be several times its present value. Of course, the proposed new post office at Brisbane could not only supply its own needs, but also provide sufficient accommodation to meet the requirements for which the building under discussion is proposed to be erected. On that account I would advise the committee to hold its hand in considering this project, until the proposal for the new post office is before it, so that both may be considered simultaneously. The committee should know the capabilities of other Commonwealth properties in Brisbane. The general post office scheme will not yet come before the committee, but the necessity to erect a new telephone exchange is urgent, and that proposal must come before the committee within the next week or two. This proposal will hinge on the new post office, and the whole scheme must be placed before the committee. I am now making preparations to do that.

42. *To Senator Reid.*—As the post office business expands, either the building would have to be extended, or the other departments housed in it accommodated elsewhere. Of course, the committee might possibly find a solution of this problem in the proposal for the new post office, but as a government officer, with the interests of the department at heart, I should be sorry to see the development of a separate office building similar to this project abandoned. It is desirable that the committee should have knowledge of every aspect of the subject.

43. *To Mr. Mackay.*—I do not think that the placing of other departments in the post office building would lead to congestion. The Perth Post Office is at present filled with other Commonwealth offices.

44. *To Senator Reid.*—The postal land at Brisbane is very extensive, and an immense building could be erected on it. My advice to the Government will be to commence on lines that eventually will produce an extensive building, and I intend to prepare drawings to show the accommodation that is possible on the site. It is difficult to prophesy how soon the Postal Department would require to occupy the whole of the post office building, but the building I have in mind would probably meet the postal requirements for the next 100 years or so.

44A. *To Senator Lynch.*—It is a great convenience to have departments housed in one building. From the point of view of inter-departmental communication the closer the departments are to one another, the better it is for all concerned. One good thing about the site under discussion is that it is three minutes' walk from the Brisbane Post Office.

45. *To Senator Reid.*—If there were a prospect of the Government getting a reasonable return for the expenditure of money on this scheme, I should strongly advise the acquisition of this land. Even if the return were of low percentage, it would be a good proposition, considering the future convenience of having this property, and the great value that would accrue to it in years to come. I believe that the cost of the original site in Adelaide-street when taken over by the Commonwealth was £20,000. Mr. Warrick, in conversation, told me that the Presbyterian church had made a claim, with which the municipal council was dissatisfied, and that the land court was to decide the matter. The Commonwealth land in Adelaide-street since its transfer might possibly have doubled in value. The proposed site is very much superior to the present one, and as a business proposition it would pay the Government to carry out the suggested scheme rather than the old one. Of course, the usefulness of the old fire brigade building near the corner of Edward-street and Ann-street will come to an end. In the solution of a civic scheme of this description it would not matter whether it was removed in 20 or 40 years, so long as the principle of removing it at some time was fixed. The State Government has agreed with the municipal council and the Commonwealth Government to widen Ann-street 14 feet, and I believe it is understood that the removal of the building at the corner

of Ann and Edward streets would not be involved until a suitable time. The State Government will use the Edward-street frontage, which has been set back 14 feet. The frontage at the corner of Adelaide-street has already been set back. If this proposal is agreed to, I am anxious that all four surrounding streets shall be set back to enable trees to be planted along the footpath in each street. This would beautify the whole scheme, and is quite as important to a degree as the building itself. The state is anxious to have a stone building, but I do not despair of getting it to change its mind. It has a quarry of its own, from which very fine stone is taken. A concrete building is quite beautiful, as long as it is treated diplomatically, taking due cognizance of the material. I would build as cheaply as possible. The estimates that I have given to the committee to-day are based upon veneered stone. The days of bonding stones to the walls are gone, and other expedients are being resorted to to overcome the cost. I would be very disappointed if this scheme were not carried out.

46. *To Mr. Mathews.*—I have not gone into the financial aspect of the proposed exchange of land at all. I have confined my attention to the building side of the matter. I do not see how the committee can come to any decision on the advisableness or otherwise of the proposal until it knows how much money will be involved in paying compensation claims and so on. It will be necessary to have the actual figures before a determination can be reached. I do not propose to proceed with the preparation of new plans under the scheme until some more definite information is forthcoming. I admit that, if the scheme can be arranged as has been suggested, it will be superior to the previous proposal. We are taking care to ensure that reasonable provision should be made for light courts. We propose to build back from the Ann-street frontage, but will not build back to any extent from the Creek-street frontage. I do not know whether the 14 feet that has been proposed should be used for street widening has been taken into consideration in the suggested exchange of 18,000 feet. The street widening scheme is primarily important to Brisbane, and I think the local authorities should reasonably bear any expense attached to it. I do not know whether that point has been considered by anybody. I have not considered it, but it is most important. If an exchange of land is arranged between the Commonwealth and the Queensland authorities, it should be on a net and not on a gross basis, in my opinion. That is to say, the Commonwealth Government should not be asked to sacrifice 14 feet of land to give effect to the Brisbane street-widening scheme. I shall suggest to Mr. Warrick to give consideration to this aspect of the matter. While negotiations are being carried on with respect to this new scheme the committee will have an opportunity to consider the proposals for the new general post office in Brisbane. I understand that if the proposal is agreed to it will not be difficult to find investors who will erect a building on the two-thirds of the land which it is proposed to lease. Some investors have already intimated their willingness, not only to erect a building of the same class and design as the proposed Commonwealth building, but also to build according to our plans and specifications. Consideration has been given to a proposal to remove the Brisbane General Post Office to the Anzac-square site. At one time I was rather favorable to it, but I have since altered my mind, and I now consider that it will be better to leave the General Post Office where it is. The site is very suitable for both the post office work and the proposed new automatic telephone exchange. It might be possible to erect on the proposed new Anzac-square site a post office which would meet requirements for the next 20 or 30 years, but that is all. The development of the post office business generally emphasizes, to my mind, the necessity for looking well ahead. Other Government departments should only be permitted to occupy post office premises on sufferance, and

on the understanding that as soon as the space so occupied becomes necessary for post office purposes they must find accommodation elsewhere.

(Taken at Melbourne.)

THURSDAY, 28TH AUGUST, 1924.

Present:

Senator LYNCH, in the Chair;	
Senator Barnes	Mr. Jackson
Senator Reid	Mr. Mackay
Mr. Blakeley	Mr. Mathews.
Mr. Cook	

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

47. *To Mr. Blakeley.*—The proposed new site would not be sufficiently large to permit of the development of a new general post office in Brisbane. Therefore, it should be ruled out as a possible site for a post office. The other departments of the Commonwealth, outside the post office, would be more conveniently accommodated on the Adelaide-street site than in the projected new general post office built on the present site of the post office. I take a long view of the development of Brisbane, and I think the post office site should be left absolutely clear for postal development. From what I have learned of postal development in other cities, I realize more than ever that the Government cannot take too large a view of the possibility of development continuing. That being so, every possible consideration should be given to a very large eventual postal development on the land already occupied by the Postal Department in Brisbane. From the point of view of convenience—whether it would be more convenient to have all the ordinary departments, outside of the post office, located in the post office building, so that all Commonwealth activities might be under the one roof, I would point out that the Adelaide-street site is only three minutes away from the post office, so that the inconvenience caused to the public or to the Commonwealth service by such a slight severance is hardly worth taking into account. I know the feeling of the Postal Department on the matter. Evidence has already been given to this committee that the department considers that it should be left in undisturbed possession of its present site for future development. Within the next week or two, when a proposal to build a new telephone exchange in Brisbane is brought forward, the committee will have the opportunity to estimate the postal development of the city, and to determine the necessity for developing the post office site for postal purposes only. A great deal of new light will then be thrown upon the subject. The present post office site should fulfil the postal requirements of Brisbane for more than 50 years. Brisbane is better off for land for postal purposes than is any other capital city in the Commonwealth. Largely on my advice the Government, when land was cheap in Brisbane, bought two properties in Elizabeth-street adjacent to the post office, and thus augmented the original site to such an extent that the department is in a first rate position in the matter of land. First of all I induced the Government to buy the adjoining block on the western side for a telephone exchange, and later the block on the eastern side was acquired for a parcels post office. The post office site and the Adelaide-street land should fulfil the requirements of the Commonwealth in Brisbane for probably 100 years. Of course provision would not need to be made on either site for the Trade and

Customs Department, which has its own Customs House, or the Department of Defence, which also has its own property. The Commonwealth has a frontage of 98 feet to Adelaide-street, but if the proposed scheme is carried out the frontage will be 165 feet. If a strip 14 feet wide along Creek-street be utilized to widen the thoroughfare, which I strongly recommend, there would be an effective building frontage of 151 feet, sufficient to enable us to adopt an exceedingly superior plan in comparison with what was projected for the original site. For instance, we can have a corridor through the centre of the building instead of one at the side, which we would have been compelled to have on the original site. I am in favour of exploiting both the post office site with its adjacent blocks, and the Anzac-square block for Commonwealth purposes rather than one site only. The Customs and Defence Departments are adequately provided for in Brisbane. Probably within the next fifteen or twenty years it may be necessary to make additions to the Customs House, but there is sufficient land on the present site on which to provide that further accommodation. In order to ascertain the extent to which the Customs House should be developed on the existing site, I should need to prepare plans, but having worked on the drawings of the present building when I was a young man, I know that it is capable of considerable expansion. The Customs Department is not a sensational department like the post office in the matter of development. It carries on year after year with just a slight increase in staff, and its work in Brisbane will be carried on for many years with an extension of the present building. I should not be surprised if the Defence Department's activities were within the next ten or fifteen years moved out of the city to Enoggera, where there is plenty of land available. This has already been found necessary elsewhere. Of course, for the convenience of the public, the accounts branch and other services might have to be located in the city, and I have not overlooked the possibility of the head-quarters of the Defence Department in Brisbane being located in the Commonwealth offices fronting Anzac-square.

48. *To Mr. Mackay.*—I am not favorably disposed to the housing of Commonwealth departments in a new post office building, but that course might be followed and I only mentioned it so that the committee might have all possibilities before it in order to deal with the problem. A telephone exchange for Brisbane is an urgent matter, and I understand that if a new automatic service is not provided within three years, or even within less time, extreme disability will be suffered by the Brisbane public. As it will be a big installation with the building costing between £70,000 and £80,000, we cannot get on with that work too quickly. But it would be built as an exchange only, and not as part of a new post office which may not be required for some years. It would take a long time to house the ordinary departments in a new post office. The Commonwealth is now paying annually some £7,000 for office accommodation in Brisbane, and £3,500 for storage accommodation. Therefore, a large saving in rent would be effected by getting ahead with the new building scheme speedily, a factor which no doubt has a big financial bearing on the subject. If the committee suggests that the ordinary departments should be housed in a new post office, I do not think they could be so accommodated within the next six years, whereas under the scheme proposed they could be accommodated in Commonwealth offices on Anzac-square within two and a half years. It is an urgent matter to provide office accommodation in Brisbane. The departments are now working in accommodation which is not only unsuitable but costly. The area now held by the Commonwealth in Adelaide-street is 132 feet by 297 feet, exactly the same area as is now held by the city council. Under the last proposal the Commonwealth was prepared to surrender

34 feet towards the formation of Anzac-square, and the State Government proposed to surrender another 166 feet for the same purpose. That surrender would have been of material advantage to the proposed Commonwealth building, because the lighting of the structure would have been improved. Under the present proposal the State Government are offering to surrender the same 166 feet and a further 67 feet, or 233 feet in all. If the 34 feet to be given by the Commonwealth for the formation of Anzac-square is deducted from the 132 feet now held, the balance available will be 98 feet. By the original surrender of land the Commonwealth, I think, secured a value in excess of what it gave. I refer particularly to the advantage of better lighting and ventilation. Similar advantages are to be found in the new site now under offer to the Commonwealth. That scheme is much more favorable to the Commonwealth than was the old one, but it is conditioned by a stipulation that the Commonwealth must purchase the 18,000 feet on the corner of Adelaide and Creek streets. The question to be determined is whether the Commonwealth is justified in buying that half block from the city council. If the purchase price is reasonable, and a study of the financial aspects shows no probability of a loss, the Commonwealth would be justified in making the purchase. The land offered by the city council to the Commonwealth is more valuable than that which the Commonwealth is asked to give in exchange, but there is the over-riding condition that the Commonwealth must take the whole of the block comprising 36,000 feet. The value of the extra 18,000 feet, which the Commonwealth is required to purchase, will depend upon the use that can be made of it. I understand that there is a possibility of letting for 50 years on satisfactory terms, the area which the Commonwealth will not require immediately, and if there is such a prospect the proposal is fully justified. In effect the Commonwealth as the landlord would insert in the lease certain building conditions. Unless the financial aspect of the proposal is outrageously adverse to the Commonwealth, I think favorable consideration should be given to the City Council's offer. The whole scheme is governed by the price of the land which the Commonwealth is required to purchase from the council. From a building point of view the new site will probably present no greater disabilities than the area at present owned by the Commonwealth, where the foundations would have to be carried 25 feet below the street level, because the building would be immediately above an old watercourse. On the Ann-street frontage I would expect to find better foundations than on the Adelaide-street frontage. On the corner of the present site, nearest Edward-street, the foundations would have to be taken down 20 feet below the street level. I do not anticipate any greater trouble with the foundation on the corner of Ann and Creek streets. If the scheme now before the committee is adopted, the Commonwealth block of buildings will occupy a frontage of about 151 feet to Ann-street and 100 feet of the frontage to Creek-street. I do not think there are any existing leases on that area which would present serious difficulties. It is impossible for the committee to come to any conclusion upon this proposal until it knows the finding of the Land Court which will fix the prices of the land and the compensation to be paid to lessees. I advise the committee to report to the Department of Works and Railways that no recommendation can be made until the Brisbane City Council supplies the committee with exact information regarding the financial aspect of the proposal.

49. *To Mr. Cook.*—An arbitrator might adjust the purchase price more expeditiously and sensibly than a land court, but an arbitrator's award would not be legally binding. If the proposal were unduly adverse to the Commonwealth from a financial point of view, it might not be worth while to proceed

with it, but if it is likely to be moderately favorable, having regard to the necessities of Commonwealth departments and the increasing value of property, the proposed purchase might prove a very good investment for the Commonwealth. However, the matter cannot be determined until definite information is available regarding the amount of money involved. Probably, the public of Brisbane regard this committee as an obstacle to a settlement, but that is not so; the proposal cannot be intelligently considered until the committee is supplied with more information regarding the probable cost. The population increase of Brisbane was, I believe, greater than that of any other capital city in Australia in the last census period. I do not think that the government offices should be combined with a new post office. The Postal Department is opposed to sharing a building with other departments, and such a proposal should not be considered unless investigation indicated that separate accommodation could be provided only at an undue cost. Brisbane has a large population and is entitled to generous consideration by the Commonwealth. The scheme before the committee has been approved by both the State Government and the City Council, and the Commonwealth has asked this committee to advise what steps should be taken to meet the suggestions of the State Government, combined with the proposal of the City Council and the request of the Returned Soldiers' Association, which desires the creation of a suitable square in which to erect a public memorial.

50. *To Mr. Mathews.*—The Commonwealth's block of land running through from Adelaide-street to Ann-street is quite suitable for departmental requirements, but the block offered by the council is better, inasmuch as it would put the Commonwealth in a safer position by giving it a larger area of land. The original site has a frontage to Adelaide and Ann streets of 132 feet by a depth of 269 feet 2 inches. The Commonwealth arranged to give up 34 feet of that land for which it received more than a *quid pro quo* in the form of a frontage to a square. That left the Commonwealth with a block of 98 feet by a depth of 269 feet 2 inches. Fourteen feet has been taken from that area in accordance with the arrangement with the State Government and municipal council to widen Ann-street, and if the proposal now before the committee is adopted, and 14 feet is taken from the Creek-street frontage also, the Commonwealth will then have a frontage of 151 feet 8 inches to Adelaide and Ann streets by a depth of 269 feet 2 inches along Creek-street. The suggestion that the 34 feet surrendered by the Commonwealth might have been retained and added to the light area provided in the design for buildings on the original block is not sound. That building would not give an artistic elevation to the square and it would not be so suitable from a utilitarian point of view, because there can be no comparison between a building lighted from an inside area, and a building which gets direct outside light from three sides. It is true that by having a 40-ft. light area the Commonwealth might save money, but the building would be unsatisfactory because it would be only imperfectly lighted from an inside court, whereas the scheme now before the committee will make possible a building with direct light and air on all sides. In a climate like that of Brisbane it is not desirable to have offices with no outlook but a blank wall and no ventilation but that from an inside area. For the sake of light it would be advisable to have an area on one side of the building or the other. Sufficient light and ventilation would not be given by a centre area. The difficulty, of course would be overcome if the building were facing two streets along its greatest length, but in Brisbane the position is reversed, and we overcome the trouble by having intruding lighting areas thus enabling the blocks of offices to have light and air on three sides. If the 34 feet proposed to be surrendered were retained a larger lighting area in the centre would certainly give light and plenty of air, but the building would

not be so satisfactory. If the property were my own I would gladly give up the 34 feet for the privilege of having one side of the building facing Anzac-square. If the whole block proposed to be acquired from the Presbyterian Church is worth £60,000, and the Commonwealth is asked to contribute £30,000 towards its cost, it means that the Brisbane City Council is contributing the other £30,000. The council's action in this respect is strikingly good. If we did not surrender the 34 feet and put up a building with a large central area it would not be satisfactory in a place like Brisbane. In any case, for the sake of getting light, a lane at least 20 feet wide would be needed along the side of the building, leaving available only 14 feet of the 34 feet frontage not surrendered; but our offices, instead of overlooking a square which will be one of the beauty spots of Brisbane, would overlook that lane. The Government are getting more than a *quid pro quo* for their donation of 34 feet of land. It is hard to estimate in money to what extent the building would be enhanced from an architectural point of view by facing a square.

51. *To Mr. Jackson.*—The Commonwealth Government inherited the land in Adelaide-street; it was a transferred property. Other sites in Brisbane might be used for Commonwealth offices, but I do not think a more favorable site could be secured than the one on which it is proposed to erect this building, unless one were chosen in George-street amongst the State Government offices. The price of land in Brisbane is rapidly becoming such that to purchase a suitable block in George-street would be a costly matter. Brisbane is extending rapidly, and in a few years, any spot within a radius of half a mile of the actual centre of the city will be regarded as central. If the new scheme is not adopted the Government will doubtless proceed with the old scheme. With two Governments holding blocks on each side of a square there is a reasonable probability of having what has not happened anywhere else in Australia—buildings actually balanced architecturally facing the square. Private people could not be induced to do this. If the scheme is not carried out the beautification of Brisbane will suffer. The proposed building will provide only 76,000 square feet as against the 87,000 square feet which would have been provided under the previous scheme; but as there has been a considerable reduction in the Commonwealth staff in Brisbane, the 76,000 square feet should be sufficient. If the present site were transferred and another site secured, I would not be favorable to transferring it at its transferred property value. The Brisbane City Council is insisting on the Commonwealth taking all the land held by the Presbyterian Church, because the whole scheme of the square would be defeated if one authority did not hold the whole of one side of the square. I am looking at the matter purely from the architectural point of view. The City Council is wise in trying to get a symmetrically beautiful square. The Queensland Government proposes to build offices on the other side of the square on exactly the same lines as ours. The difference in level between the corner of Ann-street and Creek-street, and the corner of Adelaide-street and Creek-street is about 24 feet. Until the foundations are investigated it is impossible to say that it will cost more to build on the new site than on the old. The extra cost of foundations will not be a serious item. The proposition put before the committee previously was to have either a stone building or a brick and stone building, that is to say, brick with stone mouldings and ornamentations, the estimated cost of which was £127,000. The committee, however, ascertained from me that if the building were constructed of concrete with the lower stories veneered with local granite, which is of good quality, and the other stories plastered to imitate stone—there are plenty of examples of such buildings in Adelaide and Sydney—the estimated cost could be reduced to

£115,000. The committee in its report recommended the lower figure, but also suggested that the State Government should be consulted as to its view upon the matter. That consultation was held. It was found that the State Government was looking forward to the time when it would build offices in stone, and it was rather insistent on the Commonwealth doing the same. In those circumstances I thought it better to call for alternative tenders for both methods, a veneered stone building and a concrete building with plaster. We were just about to call for tenders to see what the result would be when Mr. Theodore put forward the proposition that the Commonwealth should give up the extra land, and that upset the whole of the arrangements. My estimate of £115,000 was on the old plan. The new plans are not so extensive. My present estimate is based on the supposition that a stone-faced building will be erected. It should take about 21 months to erect it. Allowing for preparation of plans, &c., that would mean about two and a half years from now. I prefer the new scheme. It will give an island site with air and light on all sides. It will be a seven-story structure. I think it better to finish the building vertically to the height that will ultimately be required and leave one of the blocks to be built on subsequently, than to cover a larger area at first and have the subsequent inconvenience of adding further stories. The £30,000 required to acquire the land facing Creek-street, will not be a big item. It will not mean more than £2,000 a year against which a saving in lighting will be effected, and there will be better ventilation for the offices. There is no comparison between the two schemes. I think it a distinct advantage to have an island site among trees in what would be the most picturesque spot in Brisbane.

52. *To Senator Reid.*—The Adelaide-street block was a transferred property. The Queensland Government have not been paid for it, but the Commonwealth is paying interest on it in perpetuity. It was taken over at its transferred value.

53. *To Senator Lynch.*—The estimate of £114,000 for the new block of buildings does not take into consideration the cost of the demolition of the existing buildings, because it is generally allowed that the material recovered counterbalances such cost. I understand that about £7,000 per annum is being paid by the Commonwealth Government for the rent of offices in Brisbane, and £3,000 for the rent of stores. We anticipate that that £7,000 will be saved by the erection of a new block of buildings, but the existing stores will remain. For the sake of the appearance of the square it will be necessary that any building erected by or for a private lessee on the corner of Adelaide and Creek streets shall be of the same design as the government offices, and shall be easily convertible into public offices. The basement of the government building will be required for the storage of departmental records. It would not be profitable to house postal and ordinance stores, and telegraph and telephone workshops in a building of this character. If the proposed building should cost £114,000 and the extra land is obtained for £30,000, the total cost to the Commonwealth will be £144,000. Interest on that sum at 6 per cent. will amount to £8,640, and $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. sinking fund on the building will mean a further £570, making the total annual outlay £9,210. The direct saving in rents will be £7,000 per annum, leaving an apparent debit balance of £2,210, but whereas the Commonwealth now occupies a floor space of only 42,000 square feet at an annual rental of £7,000, it will have in the new building, 76,000 square feet of space, besides the apparent deficit would be counterbalanced by the rents received from the areas leased to private tenants. There will be no difficulty in letting that extra space, and if the land should be acquired for £30,000, the position of the Commonwealth will be extremely favorable. Regard must be had also to the steadily increasing

value of property in Brisbane. The committee has seen the unsatisfactory conditions under which the departments are accommodated in the leased offices in Brisbane at the present time, and if the increased efficiency of the officers in a modern building be capitalized, it will be found to represent a considerable sum. At present the sick leave granted to girls employed in the existing offices is a heavy annual drain upon the departments. I consider that by surrendering 34 feet of the present block of land to the State Government, the Commonwealth has received advantages which more than compensate for the loss. If that 34 feet of land had not been surrendered the proposal that is now before the committee would not have been possible. It is a desirable scheme, and we have only to discover whether it is sound financially. It appears to be an exceedingly good one for the Commonwealth.

(Taken at Melbourne)

WEDNESDAY, 1st OCTOBER, 1924.

Present:

Mr. GREGORY, Chairman:

Senator Barnes

Senator Reid

Mr. Cook

Mr. Mackay

Mr. Mathews.

Colonel Donald Charles Cameron, C.M.G., D.S.O., Member of the House of Representatives for Brisbane, sworn and examined.

54. *To the Chairman.*—I strongly approve of this proposal that the committee is investigating. The Commonwealth has been asked to assist the council of the City of Brisbane to meet the desire of the people of Brisbane to provide a suitable memorial to the Queensland members of the Australian Imperial Force who fell in the war. It is also desired at the same time to establish a square in the city, which is growing very rapidly, and which, unfortunately, is not well provided with breathing spaces. In that respect it is probably worse off than any other city in Australia. That fact, however, is not an argument in favour of the Commonwealth going to the assistance of the city. The principal reason for asking for assistance is the desire to establish this memorial square in the centre of the city, which, I consider, is the best tribute that could be paid to the fallen soldiers. The actual memorial in the square will be erected from funds publicly subscribed. Already a commencement has been made to collect the necessary funds, but the matter has not been pushed earnestly because of the uncertainty as to whether the square will be established. I do not think it probable that similar requests would be made by other cities in Queensland if this were granted. I have not heard of any such suggestion. There is no other city in Queensland in which the people are anxious to establish a similar square. The land in question is held partly by the State Government, partly by the Commonwealth Government, and partly by the Brisbane City Council, which resumed its portion from the Presbyterian Church authorities. The original proposal in 1915 was that the whole of the land bounded by Edward-street, Ann-street, Creek-street, and Adelaide-street should be turned into a square. The Commonwealth Government could not agree to that because on its portion of the land it intended to erect Commonwealth offices. In 1919 another proposal was put forward for a square flanked on either side by Commonwealth and State buildings. This committee considered that proposal, and in 1921 recommended that the Commonwealth should grant a piece of land 34 feet wide, the State Government to give the balance to make a width of 200 feet. Approval was given to that by the Commonwealth Parliament. Last year, however, representatives of the citizens of Brisbane waited

on the Acting Prime Minister (Dr. Earle Page) and asked that that proposal should not be proceeded with, because they desired to endeavour to get a larger square. The State Government offered to increase its area, and the proposal put before the Commonwealth was that it should give 18,000 square feet of its land in return for a similar area of the church property, with the further condition that it should purchase the balance of the land resumed by the Brisbane City Council from the Presbyterian Church. The first gift of a strip 34 feet wide by the Commonwealth conferred on it the advantage of considerably enhancing the value of the remainder of the land that it held. That would apply also if this proposal were acceded to. The only reason that it is not possible to ascertain what it will cost the Commonwealth to purchase the balance of the church property is that the City Council do not yet know what compensation it will have to pay to the church authorities. This committee sent to the Brisbane City Council a letter pointing out the delay that was taking place in arriving at a decision, and when the Mayor of Brisbane was in Melbourne recently I made representations to him, and he assured me that the matter would be expedited in every possible way. Unfortunately he became ill in Sydney on his return journey, and has not yet arrived back in Brisbane. Yesterday I sent to the Town Clerk in Brisbane a wire stating—

Called as witness by Works Committee to-morrow *re* Anzac Square. Can you inform me by urgent wire how matter stands *re* determination of compensation to church authorities or when to be dealt with by court?

A reply has been received in the following terms:—

Complete claims only recently received from church trustees. Claim of lessees' building rights still hanging fire. Matter somewhat complicated. Understand both parties conferring regarding joint claim. Not yet referred Land Court—may be possible negotiate and settle without. Regret delay.

TOWN CLERK.

It would be a wise move on the part of the Commonwealth Government to acquire the municipal land in the same way as it acquired land for the Perth General Post Office. The proposed site is in the centre of the City of Brisbane, and it will certainly increase in value. The population of the city has increased two-fold in twenty years, and ultimately the Commonwealth will require room for expansion. This is a suitable site for the future housing of the various Commonwealth departments. The present Commonwealth housing in Brisbane is deplorable. The Commonwealth departments, with the exception of the Customs Department, are scattered throughout Brisbane. I do not think this land would be required for Commonwealth expansion so soon as fifteen or twenty years hence, but if the present proposed building were erected the rents accruing from the leasing of portion of the unused land would cover the actual interest on expenditure for the next 50 years. By that time the Commonwealth would need to expand its departmental accommodation in Brisbane. I certainly think that it would be wise to concentrate the Commonwealth departments as much as possible in one area. In view of the growth of Australia there is no doubt that ultimately that land will be required by the Commonwealth for building purposes. There would be every opportunity of utilizing a building erected by the Commonwealth on this site for leasing purposes. I have no objection at all to this principle. Apparently the church authorities and the City Council have been unable to come to a determination respecting the claim for compensation. If the decision is left to the Land Court, I understand that its decision would be final.

55. *To Mr. Mackay.*—The ex-service men, as represented by the Returned Sailors' and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia, the Anzac Memorial

Square Committee formed of prominent citizens and members of the league, and the public generally, are all very keen to have a memorial square established on this site. A conference was held early in the year between Senator Pearce, the City Council, and the State Government, at which the proposal was exhaustively dealt with. The City Council then in existence is not the City Council of to-day. I have no reason to believe that the present council is not as keen to carry on this work as was the late council. In fact, the Mayor of Brisbane, when in Melbourne recently, told me that he would do everything possible to expedite the decision of the Land Court respecting the valuation. One of the reasons for the Anzac Square proposal was that the State and Federal Governments own portions of the site. The State Government has acted generously and sympathetically in this matter. I do not think the Commonwealth is being asked to give anything away under this proposal, because the land to be acquired has a frontage to Creek-street, Ann-street, Adelaide-street, and to the square. The Brisbane Central Station is opposite, and for many years to come it will be used as the centre for passenger traffic. This site is very valuable. Any expenditure that the Commonwealth now incurs in acquiring the municipal property will be returned later by the increase in the value of the land. In my opinion the Commonwealth Government is giving nothing away. The present scheme of widening Adelaide-street is already increasing the value of this land. I know of no other site in the city of Brisbane suitable for a memorial square, and this fact accounts for the enthusiasm manifested by the Brisbane people in securing this site for a memorial square.

56. *To Senator Reid.*—I should not like to say whether the matter of determining the claim for compensation by the church authorities will be left entirely to the Land Court, but if it is, I understand that the decision of the court will be final. All the resumptions of land, not only for this proposal, but also for those taking place along Adelaide-street up to George-street, and probably beyond, are dealt with by that court if necessary. I do not think that the Commonwealth, in agreeing to this proposal, will be giving anything away, as in years to come it will require room for expansion. It would be just as wise to acquire this site as it was to acquire the additional land for the Perth General Post Office. This would be a sound business investment, and give the Commonwealth Government a complete island property. A new Commonwealth departmental building is urgently required in Brisbane. Yesterday I wired Brisbane asking whether any conclusion has been reached in regard to the claim for compensation by the church authorities. I have already told the committee that the Mayor of Brisbane informed me that he was doing everything to expedite the matter. The City Council are acting in a very generous way, and the State Government is anxious to do everything possible to establish the square, recognizing that apart from a memorial it would confer a great benefit upon the city. The State Government and the City Council will make practically nothing out of this scheme, except the satisfaction of having the square established and the city improved. I do not for one moment believe that the State Government and the City Council have tried to take advantage of the Commonwealth Government. As far as I know the original proposal which was considered and recommended by this committee, and ratified by the Federal Parliament, would have been carried out had not the people of Brisbane themselves requested that the area of the square should be increased. They considered that a square of 200 feet wide would be unsatisfactory.

57. *To Mr. Cook.*—In 1910 Commonwealth officers visited Brisbane and investigated a proposal to erect a Commonwealth building on this site. They reported favorably on the scheme. In 1915 it was proposed that a square should be there established. I do not suppose that it was proposed to be a memorial square, because

the war was then in its early stages. In 1919 it was proposed that a memorial square should be established, the Commonwealth and State Governments contributing the whole of their land to the scheme. This would have necessitated the abandonment of the Commonwealth Government's proposal to erect a building on this site. The Commonwealth did not agree to this suggestion. In 1920, when I was returned to this Parliament as a member for Brisbane, I became fully acquainted with the various proposals which had been strongly recommended by my predecessor, Mr. Finlayson. I wrote to the Prime Minister, the Minister for Works and Railways, and the Minister for Home and Territories asking them to consider the matter of establishing a memorial square, and at the end of that year the proposal for a square of 200 feet was submitted to the Public Works Committee, and in 1921 ratified by Parliament. Last year the proposal now before the committee was first submitted. I would not say that there has been delay in this matter, because the proposal was not submitted to the Public Works Committee until 1920. There was no strong desire for the memorial square until 1920. If the original proposal had been proceeded with very likely the square would have now been established. From press reports in Brisbane it would appear that there is a feeling there that the Federal Parliament is responsible for delay in establishing the memorial square. I do not think that the Federal Government has been unduly lax in this matter. The Public Works Committee has certainly not delayed this proposal. The people of Brisbane realize that it was impossible for the committee to visit Queensland to investigate the proposal during the present session. Headway can be made there by thoroughly investigating the proposal and arriving at the value of the property. It would then be necessary for the committee to await the determination of the amount of compensation payable, and to decide whether it was just and fair from the point of view of the Commonwealth. I do not think that the amount of compensation payable is likely to prove unacceptable to the Commonwealth Government, because the Presbyterian Church authorities would not make anything but a reasonable claim for compensation.

58. *To Mr. Mathews.*—I am not aware that negotiations respecting this proposal were entered into between the City Council of Brisbane and the State Government fourteen years ago. I do not agree that the City Council and the State Government are using the Returned Soldiers' League to force the Federal Government to do something which they should do themselves. In the early negotiations the returned soldiers were keen to have a memorial building, but now they are just as keen to have a memorial square, with a cenotaph erected therein. Personally, I should like to see the whole area devoted to the square, but that would be an unreasonable request to make to this Government and to the State Government. Failing that, I think that the erection of buildings of architectural beauty on either side will give a finer appearance to the square. The apparent lack of keenness in the collection of funds for the erection of the memorial has been due to the fact that the people of Brisbane have not known definitely whether the square was to be established. I am quite convinced that if the Commonwealth agrees to this proposal, and it is definitely decided that there should be a square, no difficulty will be experienced in raising the necessary funds, and I am sure that there will not be a cooling off of the enthusiasm of the people. Even though that should happen in connexion with the actual memorial—which I do not for a moment admit is likely—the desire to have the square in the city will certainly remain. I have not heard it suggested that a fair basis of valuation cannot be reached. That matter at present rests between the church authorities and the City Council. The City Council will notify the Commonwealth Government of the valuation that

is fixed. I understand that when Senator Pearce was in Brisbane there were prolonged negotiations, and an agreement was come to fixing the proportion of the cost of resumption that should be borne by the Commonwealth and the City Council. I do not think that the people of Brisbane would ask the Commonwealth Government to pay more than a fair valuation.

59. *To the Chairman.*—I do not think that the buildings to be erected on either side of the square should be of too great a height. There should be architectural uniformity to add to the beauty of the square. I understand that the State Government has agreed that whatever buildings the Commonwealth erects it will observe architectural uniformity in its structures. The widening of Adelaide-street and the establishment of a memorial square will increase the value of the land.

60. *To Mr. Mackay.*—The proposals of the City Council include the widening of Adelaide-street from George-street to at least Creek-street. The new town hall has been made to conform to the new alignment of the street. The council is resuming a strip of land the full length of Adelaide-street. The resumption from the Presbyterian Church is only a portion of its programme. Some months ago the council informed me that it was anxious to have this matter concluded. Where agreement has not been possible in the case of any resumption the matter has been referred to the Land Court. If it be done in this instance, I believe that the Land Court will take the earliest opportunity to give a decision.

(Taken at Brisbane.)

TUESDAY, 21st OCTOBER, 1924.

Present:

Mr. GREGORY, Chairman;

Senator Barnes	Mr. Jackson
Senator Reid	Mr. Mackay
Mr. Blakeley	Mr. Mathews.
Mr. Cook	

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

61. *To the Chairman.*—The question whether Brisbane will provide itself with the beautiful and convenient square proposed in the centre of the city is one that has had public attention devoted to it from time to time for twenty years. The land which would be dealt with in the suggested formation of the square is that which is bounded by Adelaide, Edward, Ann, and Creek streets. Its devotion to public uses is rendered desirable because it is opposite to the central railway station, which, in all probability, in the future will be a very important station, handling the great bulk of the railway passenger traffic to Brisbane. The land as it stands measures 662 feet by 298 feet. It is not particularly large as public squares or gardens go, but its possible adaptation for civic purposes is greatly increased by the fact that the Crown holds the fee simple of a large portion of the area. The State Government owns the land at the Edward-street end of the area and the Ann-street Presbyterian Church trustees that at the Creek-street end. Between the two the Commonwealth owns the remaining portion, which, up to the present, has been used for defence purposes, and is now no longer necessary for that purpose. The Commonwealth area has a frontage of 132 feet to Ann and Adelaide streets by a depth of 298 feet between those two streets. Originally public opinion in Brisbane favoured the conversion of the whole area to a public park or garden, but when the matter was seriously taken up many difficulties presented themselves, and after considerable delay and negotiation, arrangements were made under which the State Government and the

Commonwealth Government were to give up sufficient of their areas to make a square 200 feet wide, having as a central line the centre of the railway station. Under that arrangement the State was to contribute 156 feet frontage to Adelaide and Ann streets and the Commonwealth 34 feet. From time to time I have read complaints in the public press and heard them in other quarters to the effect that the Commonwealth's contribution of 34 feet was a niggardly one. Such a comparatively small area was given, not because of niggardliness on the part of the Commonwealth Government, but simply because the square had to be central with the railway station.

62. *To Mr. Jackson.*—The Commonwealth Government agreed to give the area for which it was asked. It was essential that the square should be central with the railway station. That is why the Commonwealth's contribution was only 34 feet. I have no authority to speak on behalf of the Commonwealth Government, but I know that the dominating idea was the necessity of having a square the central line of which would be exactly opposite the centre of the railway station.

63. *To Mr. Mackay.*—That contribution of 34 feet made it possible to have an evenly-balanced square.

64. *To the Chairman.*—The contribution of 34 feet reduced the Commonwealth frontage from 132 feet to 98 feet. Any frontage less than 98 feet would not be sufficient for the purpose to which the Commonwealth intends to devote its land. I daresay an additional 5 feet could be spared, but that would make no difference to the square, except to throw it off the centre of the railway station. All arrangements were completed between the State Government, the municipal authorities, and the Commonwealth Government. Last year, however, as the result of local representations, the State Premier agreed to donate a further portion of the State land provided that the Commonwealth Government would contribute a similar portion of its land, in order to make the square 332 feet wide. Had the Commonwealth agreed to that the area that it would still have possessed would have been useless for its purposes, and it would have been compelled to look elsewhere for a site for the proposed new Commonwealth offices. The municipal council saw the matter from the Commonwealth's point of view, and completed arrangements for the acquisition of the land that was privately owned facing Creek-street. It made an offer to the Commonwealth Government to give from that land an area equivalent to that which the Commonwealth would give to enable a square 332 feet wide to be established, provided that the Commonwealth would relieve it of the remainder of the acquired land.

65. *To Mr. Mackay.*—The council asked the Commonwealth to purchase the remaining half of the Presbyterian Church land.

66. *To the Chairman.*—As Parliament had agreed to the former scheme for a square 200 feet wide the Commonwealth Government considered that the matter should again be referred to this Committee to see whether its previous finding should be varied. That is the position in which the matter stands to-day. Looked at from the point of view of the civic improvement of Brisbane, there is no doubt that the original grand idea of a square embracing the whole of the land was the finest step that could have been taken, and was quite commensurate with the importance of Brisbane and the advance that it will presently make in its development. Second only to that, and failing its realization, is this very desirable scheme of a square with a frontage of 332 feet. From the point of view of civic beauty such a square would possibly be better than one embracing the whole of the land, as it would be flanked by buildings exactly similar in architecture, making possible an aesthetic result that so far has not been possible in any capital city in Australia. As the traveller emerged from the railway station he would have presented to his eyes a square 332 feet wide by 298 feet deep, with similarly well designed buildings on each side. The railway station will some day have to

be rebuilt and enlarged, and no doubt private enterprise will carry a street through from Adelaide-street to Queen-street. The Commonwealth Government would be in a position to erect a building on land measuring 149 feet by 270 feet, whereas under the old scheme the area would have been 98 by 270 feet. The smaller building would have been adequate for many years, but in view of the development that has taken place in Australia I should rather see the Commonwealth embark upon the erection of a larger building. Whatever square is decided upon, in my opinion the widening of Adelaide, Edward, Ann, and Creek streets from 66 feet to 80 feet should be undertaken. Round the area on the footpath alignment I consider that ornamental trees should be planted, giving immediately at small cost the idea of beauty that I think should permeate the whole scheme. Incidentally that would have the effect of increasing the width of the streets. Opposite the railway station, in the middle of the area, the width of Ann-street should be increased to 100 feet. Unless these streets are widened they will offer serious hindrance to the development of Brisbane's traffic. Those who have a knowledge of cities that are as large as Brisbane must be impressed with the necessity of undertaking this work. After the arrival of mail trains I have seen two very serious accidents narrowly averted. It is quite unthinkable that present conditions should continue to exist when Brisbane becomes larger than it is now. The vehicular traffic comes out on to Edward-street from the station and meets a stream of tram cars and pedestrian traffic in a street that is only 66 feet wide. It is not easy to conceive how such a state of affairs can have been allowed to go on. The railway traffic in Melbourne is becoming hopelessly congested, and the width of Spencer-street at the station is 100 feet. There is talk of providing elevated roads or taking the traffic underground. If it is bad in Melbourne with a street 100 feet wide and several entrances to the station, how much more difficult will it be in the future in Brisbane? The position is aggravated by the steep gradient of Edward-street. Now is the time to make arrangements for effecting civic improvement by widening these streets. If large buildings are erected up to the existing alignment of the streets the difficulty will be increased immensely. Had it not been that this square suggested itself fourteen years ago to persons having no more interest in the matter than a desire to advance the welfare of Brisbane the Commonwealth would have erected on its land a comparatively ungainly-looking building for stores, and that would have rendered impossible the carrying out of any such scheme as this except at very great cost. The Commonwealth Government was held off that scheme by the thought that the erection of such a building would, for all time, have prevented the attainment of this civic improvement. I do not think that I need dwell upon the backwardness in this connexion of Brisbane compared with the majority of large capital cities in the world, including the capital cities of Australia. In the centre of the city it is most deficient in respect to conveniently-reached resting places for those who come to the city from the suburbs to do their shopping. Many women are accompanied by children, and if, on completion of their shopping, they have an hour to spare before catching their trains for home, the only place to which they can go is the Botanical Gardens or the small park in Wickham-terrace. This site is right amongst the shops, on the level ground, contiguous to the railway station. It would provide an admirable resting place for that class of people, and it would be a pity to allow any consideration to prevent its accomplishment. If it is not now established the people of Brisbane will regret it in future. As a citizen of Australia, who desires to see Australia develop along the æsthetic lines that are being followed by other countries, I am intensely anxious to see something of this sort accomplished. Commonwealth interests, or any other interests, count for nothing in a matter of so much con-

cern to the city. I have prepared a plan showing what would be possible under the latest scheme. It provides for streets 80 feet wide around the square and 100 feet wide immediately opposite the central station. In the whole of the negotiations concerning this matter I have never been able to understand why the railway authorities have not, in their own interests, taken a more prominent part. The principal people who would benefit from this scheme, apart from the poorer classes of the citizens, are the railway authorities. The access that would be provided to the station by the widening of the streets and the establishment of this square would be of inestimable value to them. Something of the sort will have to be done in future, possibly at very great expense, if the land is disposed of for commercial purposes and built upon. The Commonwealth has refrained from utilizing this land because of its desire to advance the interests of the people of Brisbane. I think that the City Council adopted the right attitude when it acquired the Presbyterian Church land and offered to the Commonwealth an area equivalent to any further land given for the purposes of the square. Taking the long view, it would not be too big a thing for the Commonwealth to relieve the Brisbane City Council of this land and proceed with the erection of its building upon it in order to make possible the fulfilment of the latest scheme. The Commonwealth has land at the site of the proposed square. For economic reasons it desires to have its own offices in Brisbane. The area which it has there is the best site for the purpose, as it is in the centre of the city and convenient to everybody. The only reason for the Commonwealth being drawn into this matter of the square is that it holds this land. But for that fact the matter would have been one purely for the State Government and the City Council to deal with. I take the view that the Commonwealth would be justified in going a considerable way in the direction of rendering assistance to this scheme. The people of Brisbane, who are directly interested, comprise a considerable proportion of the citizens of the Commonwealth, and naturally it should be the desire of the Commonwealth to do all that it can to advance the scheme. Apart from that aspect the Commonwealth would not have been interested in the matter if it had not held land at the site of the proposed square. The State Government has not actually approved of the transfer of an area sufficient to enable Ann-street to be widened to 100 feet, but I think there would be no difficulty in getting it to see the advantages of having that width. Both the State Government and the Commonwealth Government have given a strip 14 feet wide in Adelaide-street to enable that street to be widened. One can imagine what the traffic of the central station in Brisbane will be in 50 years. To empty it out on to a street the present width of Ann-street and Edward-street would be tragic, especially in view of the steep grade in Edward-street. The older cities of Europe have spent millions of pounds in providing convenient access to larger railway stations. All the plans that I have prepared embrace the idea of widening the streets. I have no doubt that the State Government would readily contribute its quota to allow that to be done. Apart altogether from public convenience, the property owned by the State would be considerably enhanced in value if it faced a wider street, fringed with ornamental trees. Look at what Sydney had to do to improve the access to its station. A public park was created by a far-sighted statesman 30 years ago. The people at that time objected to the expenditure, but now no one begrudges a penny of it. For some reason or other the railway authorities in Brisbane have persistently kept aloof in this matter. Apparently they do not possess sufficient foresight and imagination to realize what their requirements will eventually be. Under this scheme, before the time arrived for the rebuilding of the railway station, pedestrian subways could be provided from the square right into the station, joining up with the subways that are now under the station. They would provide safe ingress and egress for a large number

of people. I should say that the future development would make necessary an approach to the station level with the square, but under the level of Ann-street booking-offices, left-luggage rooms, and other conveniences, could be provided. There would be a one-way road 32 feet wide, which would increase to 60 feet opposite the station, where cabs and other vehicles could draw up.

67. *To Senator Reid.*—The top street I would have as an auxiliary entrance. The other would be purely for passenger traffic. Any future railway station should be so planned as to give an auxiliary carriage entrance from Creek-street. There would be steps from the square into Ann-street. If you got out of a railway carriage at platforms at the present-day level it would be competent for you to decide whether you would go into Edward-street, Creek-street, or Ann-street, or go down into the subway and out into the square.

68. *To Mr. Mackay.*—I would join No. 1 platform with the subway. The time is rapidly approaching when improvement will have to be effected. It may be 20 or 30 years before a new station will be necessary, but even now the present station appears to be too small. With its back country, Brisbane will be even a larger city than Melbourne.

69. *To the Chairman.*—The Commonwealth is now occupying most unsatisfactory premises. The records are exposed to the possibility of destruction by fire and the offices are not well concentrated. From the points of view of economy, convenience, and security the Commonwealth cannot have its offices erected too soon. They would have been well forward to-day if this second proposal had not been made. We were just about to call for tenders when the City Council came along with the later scheme. The offices that were to have been erected under the first proposal would have been placed 14 feet back from the present alignment of the streets. The same condition would apply under this later proposal. All our quarters are at present rented. Rents are high; the premises are not convenient for our purposes, and the officers are not concentrated. Taxation and other records are not securely housed, and their destruction would be a severe loss to the Commonwealth. It has been arranged that a similar type of building shall be erected by the Commonwealth and the State. That will apply whether the larger or the smaller scheme is adopted. Under the former the Commonwealth would have an island site, from which it would obtain light and air on all sides. Under the latter any buildings that in future are erected on the private land will cut off our building on the Creek-street side. If the smaller scheme is reverted to I recommend proceeding immediately with the erection of the offices that the Commonwealth so urgently needs. The civic improvement under the smaller scheme will be inferior to that which would be possible under the larger.

70. *To Mr. Cook.*—If the land that is now available is built upon it will acquire a relatively much higher value, and if in future it is required for railway improvement the buildings upon it will have to be demolished. In my opinion, the time has arrived for the railway authorities to improve the traffic facilities. Edward-street is narrow and steep, and it carries trams as well as the pedestrian and vehicular traffic that comes out of the station. On one of my visits my cabman nearly ran into a tramcar as he left the station.

71. *To Senator Reid.*—Under the earlier scheme the State Government agreed to observe uniformity in the buildings it erected. There will be no difficulty in that regard if the present scheme is adopted. Under the old scheme the Commonwealth building would have measured 98 feet by 270 feet. Under this scheme it would measure 149 feet by 270 feet. The latter would have the advantage of light and air on all sides, which is particularly desirable. The breezes come from the north-east and the south-east. A building fronting Creek-street would get those breezes. Under the old scheme the building would not have a frontage to Creek-street. There would be a blank wall facing that direc-

tion. The frontages then would be to Adelaide-street and Ann-street. When the land facing Creek-street belonged to the Presbyterian Church authorities the possible widening of that street depended upon their generosity.

72. *To Mr. Jackson.*—I have not noticed that such generosity has been displayed by private owners in Australia.

73. *To Senator Reid.*—The magnificent civic improvement effected in Perth had the assistance of the Commonwealth. It was in the interests of the Commonwealth.

74. *To Mr. Jackson.*—This proposal does not offer the same opportunities from an economical stand-point. The Perth scheme was a highly payable one.

75. *To Senator Reid.*—I do not know of any scheme which would confer upon a capital benefits greater than this proposal would confer upon Brisbane. The area proposed is 332 feet by 270 feet. It could be planted with trees, and seats could be provided for those who frequent it. It has been suggested that a war memorial should be erected in the square, but that is only an incidental and not the primary consideration. Apart from this aspect such a square would provide a good luncheon resort, and in the evenings bands could render selections there. It would become a real civic centre, and would enhance very greatly the value of the railway station. In my opinion the Commonwealth will be adequately compensated for its gift of a frontage of 34 feet to Adelaide and Ann streets, as its building will face an open square instead of a building line that would not admit light and air. By purchasing the remaining portion of the Presbyterian Church property from the City Council the Commonwealth would be laying down a sure foundation for Commonwealth requirements in the next 60 to 70 years, perhaps for a century. The building that it is proposed to erect consists of seven stories. The land not immediately required by the Commonwealth would be leased on condition that the same class of building was erected upon it. We made a somewhat similar arrangement in connexion with the Perth improvement scheme.

76. *To Senator Barnes.*—The idea is that the Commonwealth should build at present about one-third of its buildings. That would possibly meet its purpose for the next 25 or 30 years. I suggest that the remaining two-thirds of the land be let on building leases, private enterprise being allowed to erect buildings on condition that in 50 years the leases will determine and the buildings on the leased land become Commonwealth property, meeting Commonwealth requirements for possibly another 50 years. The class of building put up, with ordinary repairs, would have an indefinite life, alterations and remodelling being carried out to keep abreast of modern conditions. I would even go the length of suggesting that the Commonwealth should build on the whole of the land and let that portion which it did not require. If the capitalist is able to make money out of a building the Commonwealth could do the same. On the other hand, if the land were leased the Treasury would be temporarily relieved from the necessity of providing the additional capital.

77. *To Mr. Mathews.*—The present proposal was the result of a deputation that waited upon the Premier of Queensland requesting the State Government to agree to the donation of an additional area of its land. Mr. Theodore said, "I will give you another 18,000 feet provided the Commonwealth Government gives you a similar area to maintain the balance of the square." The City Council saw that if the Commonwealth had to give up an extra 18,000 feet the area left on its hands would be insufficient for its own building. The council therefore decided to acquire the Presbyterian Church land, and it said to the Commonwealth, "We will give you cut of the Presbyterian Church land an area equivalent to that which we ask you to give us, provided that you relieve us of the remainder of that land." The Commonwealth at present has a frontage of 132 feet. Under this proposal it would have a frontage of 153

feet, and the area would be bigger than that which it originally possessed.

78. *To Mr. Mackay.*—I say definitely that the second proposal was made by the Brisbane City Council to the Commonwealth Government. It was considered by Senator Pearce, the Minister controlling Commonwealth properties. He came to Brisbane with one of his officers. I also accompanied him. We had an interview with the Minister for Works in Queensland and the Mayor of Brisbane. They had put forward a plan showing the manner in which they desired to have the square established. I thought that it was not in all respects a very satisfactory plan, and I drew up an alternative one. The Minister for Works in Queensland, the Mayor of Brisbane, and Senator Pearce agreed that my idea was a better one. The two former said, "If your Government will agree to this proposal we will accept your amended lay-out of the square." Senator Pearce said, "The Public Works Committee have already reported to Parliament their decision in regard to the provision of Commonwealth offices in Brisbane, and before any alteration can be made that Committee must have the matter referred to it for advice as to the wisdom or otherwise of adopting any fresh scheme." The new proposal did not in any way emanate from the Commonwealth Government. Under it the proportion of the cost of resuming the Presbyterian Church property, which the Commonwealth would have to pay, was set out. I think that the City Council did the handsome thing. I cannot say what is the value of the Presbyterian Church property. Its value is increasing every day. The latest scheme will necessitate the Commonwealth dipping its hand further into its pocket than it would under the old scheme. I contend, however, that money spent in the attainment of such an object as this is well worth while. I hardly think that anybody would expect the Commonwealth to donate the whole of its land. Any sacrifice must be made chiefly by those who are particularly concerned in the matter. No further delay should take place in the erection of these Commonwealth offices. There is no proposal to install an air-conditioning plant. I am aware that the Commonwealth is paying for office accommodation in Brisbane approximately £7,000 per annum, and for storage accommodation £3,550 per annum. The sooner that expenditure is saved the better. I am rather glad, however, that the erection of these offices has not so far been gone on with. Until the last few years we have all been taking too small a view of Australia, and probably had this building been erected some few years ago adequate provision would not have been made. I have been greatly impressed with the proposal to build a new post office in Brisbane. Just before Federation the State Government had plans prepared for a new post office to cost something like £150,000. In considering this new scheme I had to look into that proposal, and I found that had the post office been put up at that time, with the structural knowledge that was then available, it would now have had very serious disadvantages, as it could not have been extended without terrific structural alterations. The delay, therefore, has been a great benefit.

78A. *To Mr. Blakeley.*—In considering whether assistance in this direction by the Commonwealth would create a demand by other towns for similar help, I think that you must draw the line between capitals and other centres of population. Public institutions in the capitals are more or less the property of all the people and not solely of the dwellers in those capitals. This matter has opened up many avenues of thought. I think that the Commonwealth is entitled to give it individual consideration. It is, of course, principally a matter of local concern, but, at the same time, the Commonwealth is entitled to take a deeper interest in it than one governed merely by financial considerations. I think that the outlay by the Commonwealth would be returned to it. It is somewhat difficult to get down to a strict calculation; but, speaking generally, I believe

that if the Commonwealth agrees to the proposal the increased value which its property will have will prevent it from being a loser. So soon as the amount involved in the acquisition of the additional land is known it will be easy to calculate the extent to which the Commonwealth will be committed. Under the first scheme the Commonwealth donated a frontage of 34 feet. It was then proposed to erect on the remainder of the Commonwealth land a building divided into three blocks, with recesses between each block for the purpose of letting light and air into the building, which has been so planned that we can afford to do without light on the Creek-street side. My lay-out of the new square could be applied in a modified form, but the advantages of the square would be lessened. I take it that any agreement made with a lessee of whatever portion of land not required by the Commonwealth would contain a provision that the Commonwealth should supervise the erection of any buildings thereon.

The witness withdrew.

Hubert Frazer East, State President Queensland Branch R.S.I.L.A., sworn and examined.

79. *To the Chairman.*—The Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League has, from the outset of this scheme, so far as the memorial part of it is concerned, been in touch with both the Anzac Square Committee and the Brisbane City Council. The proposal has always had our sympathy and help. We were dissatisfied with the first scheme submitted. We considered—and, I think, rightly—that, apart from the question of the establishment of a park, something bigger and more in keeping with the dignity of our city should be provided as a memorial in memory of the men who laid down their lives at the war. The ex-mayor (Alderman Diddams) and the Brisbane City Council whole-heartedly took up the matter, and further negotiations were entered into with the State and Commonwealth Governments, culminating in a scheme that emanated from the Brisbane City Council, which we were led to believe was acceptable to the two Governments concerned and to the council. Unfortunately, within the last few days, it has come to our knowledge that the City Council, as it is now constituted, is regarding the matter very apathetically. The reports of yesterday's meeting of the City Council lead us to believe that the view which it takes is not in agreement with ours or of the people of Queensland generally. We view with concern the action of the City Council in turning down a proposal which would have given Brisbane and Queensland a memorial worthy of such a city and State. Looking at the matter apart from a patriotic point of view, we as citizens feel that our city should be beautified by having a central park. I think this is the only city in the Commonwealth which has not made provision for breathing spaces for its people. There are parks in the suburban areas, but we do not consider that they are sufficient. The City of Auckland has spent £200,000 in providing a museum and cenotaph, and it has in hand a civic square scheme which will cost £500,000. The comparatively small amount of money which this proposed memorial park would cost is merely a fleabite, and I think that the future outlook of the city renders its adoption essential. It is a comparatively small amount for a city like Brisbane to spend in commemorating the deeds of its fallen soldiers. If the original scheme is adopted the area will practically be surrounded by big buildings and it will be absolutely impossible to see the park from either end of the city; whereas if the scheme were adopted in its entirety the park would be visible from almost any portion of Adelaide-street and the surrounding hills. The Queensland Government would benefit by the excellent approach that would be made to the Central Railway Station. We are informed that the City Council has resumed the Presbyterian Church land. We very strongly press for the adoption of the latest proposal. The land which the Commonwealth Government now holds did not cost it

anything; it got it, as it were, "buckshee," but it is hanging on to it for all it is worth. I should like the Committee to back up our request and bring influence to bear upon the City Council. We recognise, of course, that the Committee has to cater for a very wide sphere, and that it may be said that this is the province more of the State Government. Nevertheless, I think it is up to the Commonwealth Government to provide facilities for fitting memorials to the men who stood so ably behind the Commonwealth Government when their help was badly needed. We have not gone into the details of the memorial. Our chief concern has been to get sufficient land for a memorial park. Then the proposal was to erect a cenotaph or something on those lines. The Anzac Square Committee is still in existence, and I believe it has in hand a considerable amount of money which will enable it to go ahead immediately when approval is given to this proposal. In other cities the Commonwealth does not possess land suitable for a memorial, and I do not think that acquiescence by it in this proposal would render it liable to be approached for similar purposes elsewhere. I have studied this matter as it affects the railway authorities. Working in conjunction with my association are town planning and kindred associations. From a town planning point of view, I certainly think that this square would be an advantage to the city.

80. *To Mr. Cook.*—My association has been interested in this matter since about 1919. We have no financial interest whatsoever in it. Our constitution does not allow us as a body to make a contribution, but individually we have worked for it and organized street collections. There are really no memorials in Brisbane that are in proper keeping with the dignity of the city. In the different parks there are memorials, the funds for which have been subscribed by the local residents. They are very nice, but they are not in keeping with the dignity of the city. I think that the people of Queensland are behind this proposal. I had an interview yesterday with the deputy mayor, and his conversation led me to believe that the City Council favoured the original scheme. I am not prepared to say whether the Commonwealth Government is blamed for the delay that has so far occurred. I think it could have given a larger area than the 34 feet it donated towards the original scheme. But in acceding to the request of the ex-mayor it acted in a fair-minded way. In my opinion the feeling generally is very strongly in favour of the latest scheme.

81. *To Mr. Mackay.*—Members of my association regard the gift of 34 feet from the Commonwealth as a niggardly one. They do not realize that that contribution made possible an evenly-balanced square 200 feet wide, or that the Commonwealth would have just as readily donated 40 or 45 feet had that area been required. I am aware that a conference was held in Brisbane between representatives of the State Government, the Commonwealth Government, and the City Council, and that the second proposal was then agreed to. I am led to believe that the City Council approved of the proposal at a meeting held on 3rd March. If the present City Council should turn down the proposal I agree that it would be guilty of repudiation. If it is accepted it will be the duty of the Anzac Square Committee to arrange for the provision of a memorial. The R.S.L. will be prepared to take a certain amount of responsibility for the raising of funds to augment those held by the Committee. It would be necessary to obtain the permission of the City Council before we could erect a memorial. The council deals directly with the Anzac Square Memorial Committee, which, I think, is waiting for this matter to be finalized before going ahead.

82. *To Mr. Blakeley.*—The responsibility for providing a memorial to commemorate the sacrifices made by Queenslanders in the war rests, to a certain extent, upon the Government of Queensland, the public, and the City Council. As space is very limited in Brisbane a certain responsibility also rests upon the Commonwealth Government. I do not think that all cities and

country towns should be helped by the Commonwealth in the establishment of memorials. In this instance I advocate it, because the Commonwealth owns, in the heart of the city, portion of the only land that is suitable for the purpose. I do not contend that, as a general rule, the Commonwealth should contribute towards the provision of breathing spaces for a city or a State. There is not the slightest doubt that this scheme would beautify Brisbane. As the Commonwealth owns land that can be used for the beautification of Brisbane, and as it is responsible for the welfare of the people generally, I think it should not decline to exchange that land for another piece which would serve equally as well for the provision of Commonwealth offices. I do not think it would be creating a precedent. Adelaide, Melbourne, and other capital cities are already provided with ample breathing spaces. The Commonwealth Government does not hold land in the centre of those cities which would be badly needed for parks. There is very little land available in and around Brisbane for that purpose. The City Council, I admit, has the power to resume areas. As Adelaide-street is being widened there is a splendid opportunity to provide a square there.

83. *To Senator Reid.*—I look at this matter primarily from the memorial point of view. The original scheme was not acceptable either to the council or to the Anzac Square Committee. The Commonwealth Government would be a big gainer under the second scheme as it would have property facing three streets. The giving away of the 34 feet enhanced the value of the remainder of the Commonwealth property. When General Spencer Browne was president of the League he put forward a splendid scheme, embracing a circular marble dome with steps leading up to the corner. If the present scheme is adopted the Anzac Square Committee will continue its efforts until it obtains a fitting memorial. If it did not do so I am confident that the returned soldiers would. The original scheme was not acceptable to the City Council, the Returned Soldiers League, or the Anzac Square Committee, because the area was thought to be too small; it would really be only a right-of-way to the central station. If the present council turned down the scheme I should most decidedly regard its action as repudiation. A big majority of the citizens are in favour of it.

84. *To Mr. Blakeley.*—The larger scheme would increase the view to the extent of over a quarter of a mile.

The witness withdrew.

John Edward Hinton, Chief Officer Metropolitan Fire Brigade, Brisbane, sworn and examined.

85. *To the Chairman.*—It is not customary for us to be consulted in regard to fire risks or the provision of proper safeguards against fire when buildings are being erected. The City Council very seldom consults the Fire Brigade Board. There is a by-law which restricts the height of public buildings to, I think, 150 feet. On the low levels our water supply is ample to cope with a fire in a building of that height. From the plans I do not consider that the proposed new Commonwealth offices or the automatic telephone exchange present any difficulties from a fire risk point of view. For such buildings I should recommend the use of reinforced concrete, or of brick with reinforced concrete ceilings over the more vulnerable parts, to which a great deal of damage may be done by a fire. I should also have reinforced concrete floors in the vulnerable portions. It may be advisable to have wired glass on the lane frontage. I understand that the Telephone Department has a very competent staff and sensitive fire alarms, so that it would not be more than five seconds before attention could be called to any outbreak. A new extinguisher has been placed on the market quite recently, and I think it would be very useful in such a place as the telephone exchange. I believe it contains two ingredients, which produce a kind of yeast. A 2-gallon extinguisher will cover with

foam about 4 square feet. The yeast is full of CO₂. You use it in the same manner as you do the ordinary fire extinguisher. It would be wise to have the exchange connected to the fire brigade by automatic fire alarms. The extinguisher I have mentioned would, in my opinion, be better than asbestos sheets. The exchange at present has another good system of hydraulic drums. The drum carries about 100 feet of small hose. It is a one-man tool. He can turn the water on from the nozzle. If you provide a 2½-in. hydrant with canvas hose it would take a man two or three minutes to straighten it out, and then he would be knocked over by the pressure of water, which amounts to 100 lb. or 120 lb. to the square inch on a low level like that on which the exchange stands. I consider that Brisbane is adequately provided with means for meeting an outbreak of fire.

(Taken at Brisbane.)

WEDNESDAY, 22ND OCTOBER, 1924.

Present:

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

Thomas Wilson, Deputy Mayor, City of Brisbane, sworn and examined.

86. *To the Chairman.*—I am aware that the Commonwealth Government has resubmitted to this committee a reference in connexion with what is known as the Anzac Memorial Square. The proposal to provide a square for the beautification of the city has been before the council and the public for many years. When first raised, the proposal was to have an area bounded by Ann, Edward, Adelaide, and Creek streets. Mr. Finlayson, ex-M.H.R., took a deep interest in the matter. In 1921 the State Government and the Commonwealth Government donated a certain portion of their property to provide a square 200 feet wide. The town clerk has forwarded to your secretary, Mr. Whiteford, a copy of the report of the General Purposes Committee of the City Council upon the Anzac Square question, which was presented to and adopted by the council on Monday afternoon, the 20th instant, so that you are already advised of the council's present attitude in regard thereto. The City Council consists of the mayor and fourteen aldermen, and on Monday there were twelve aldermen present. The mayor is in hospital in Sydney, one other alderman was also on sick bed, and the third absentee was out of town on holiday leave. Alderman Wilson presided as deputy mayor. There was but one dissident to the adoption of the report, and we believe that had a full council been in attendance the result would have been just the same. The council is fully alive to the consequences of its action, but, being firm in the belief that the proper course is being pursued, the aldermen are reconciled to the possibility of being misunderstood. It is, however, thought desirable, and, indeed, it is due to you, that the principal reasons which have influenced the decision arrived at should be stated. The question was practically settled last year, the State and Commonwealth Governments and the City Council being virtually in agreement in regard to a "square" having frontages of 200 feet to Adelaide and Ann streets respectively, but a desire to obtain a larger area appears to have brought about further negotiations, giving rise to further delay. The City Council is desirous that finality shall be reached forthwith. The aldermen have visited the ground, have had the measurements set out, and the two schemes fully explained, and have come to the conclusion that the smaller scheme will suffice, though it is quite evident from press reports and com-

ments that there are others of different mind. The City Council considers that the scheme it has reverted to possesses the following advantages:—It will not involve the council in any expenditure for land; it will retain to the council the rates revenue derivable from the lands fronting Creek-street; it will reduce the cost to the council of forming the square; it will enable the Commonwealth Government to proceed at once with its buildings, the plans for which are, it is understood, already in existence; and it will remove the reproach which is already attached to the Anzac Square proposal by the protracted delay in its establishment. On the other hand, the transfer of Creek-street land to the Commonwealth by way of compensation for the Adelaide-Ann streets land will cost the ratepayers of the city not less than £30,000. The council is pledged to the layout of the square, and the increase in size would naturally add to the cost, especially so by reason of the configuration of the ground. The vesting of the Creek-street lands in the Commonwealth by exchange and purchase would deprive the council of rates revenue in perpetuity to the extent of £1,100 per annum, possibly more, as neither State nor Commonwealth Governments recognize liability for payment of rates. The committee of inquiry now sitting will require to present its report to Parliament for adoption, which will entail further delay. The report, if favorable to the scheme, might possibly be thrown out by Parliament; but, if adopted, and supposing the City Council favorable to the larger scheme, which it is not, fresh building plans would require to be prepared, fresh estimates calculated, and a vote of money obtained to allow of the buildings being proceeded with. However, we apprehend that the crux of the whole matter lies in the decision of the City Council, and the council is not in favour of the extended scheme. I am aware that the agreement come to was approved some time ago, and plans were prepared. I have been out of the council, and, therefore, have not followed as closely as I otherwise would the trend of events in connexion with this matter. I realize that this committee is considering the matter as the result of a request that was made by the Brisbane City Council. I quite understand, also, that the Commonwealth Parliament referred the matter to you with a view to falling in with the wishes of the municipality. The personnel of the council, however, is now somewhat different from what it was when that request was made. The council has now decided to go ahead with the previous proposal for a square 200 feet wide, with frontages to Ann and Adelaide streets. I do not think that the matter has been discussed with the railway authorities, but sooner or later they will have to come into it. We know it is stated that Flinders-street station, in Melbourne, gets rid of more people by rail than any other station in the world. The population of Melbourne is greater than that of Brisbane. The State Government acted generously when it made available 166 feet. So far as I can gather, it offered a further 100 feet, provided that the Commonwealth Government also gave an extra area. As members of the committee are aware, differences of opinion always exist in matters of this description. Some people would not be satisfied with less than the whole square. I am afraid that we shall not have any finality in this matter unless we agree to the original scheme. I should like to see the matter proceeded with. As the old scheme has been approved of, there is no need for any further delay. The council is quite prepared to accept the old scheme. Unfortunately, the mayor is very ill in Sydney. Out of fifteen aldermen, only one dissented from the resolution to accept the old scheme. This has been hanging fire too long, and the sooner we get on with it the better.

87. *To Mr. Mackay.*—I do not know that this square will be much of an air space. It would be very nice to have a square something like that in Adelaide, but, unfortunately, those who laid out Brisbane did not take such things into consideration. The City Council has done its best during the last decade to provide lung spaces on the outskirts of the city. We have some

closer than the Botanical Gardens. I was not in the council when the conference was held in March, 1924. I am aware that the second proposal was made as the result of that conference, and that it was endorsed at a meeting of the Brisbane City Council held on the 3rd March, 1924. I believe that subsequently Mr. Warrick visited Brisbane, and arranged with the council as to the proportion which each body should pay in connexion with the acquisition of the Presbyterian Church block. It has been part of the policy of the Brisbane City Council to resume frontages along Adelaide-street. Already 14 feet has been taken off the property along that street. The Commonwealth Government agreed to contribute a strip 14 feet wide along its frontages. That alignment will have to be carried through to Creek-street. In Ann-street, also, a strip 14 feet wide is being taken off, and it means shifting a very big wall, about 35 feet high, opposite the railway station. I remember a wire being received about three weeks ago from Colonel Cameron stating—

Called as witness by Works Committee to-morrow *re* Anzac Square. Can you inform me by urgent wire how matters stand *re* determination of compensation to church authorities; when to be dealt with by court.

The council forwarded the following reply to that wire:—

Complete claim only recently received from church trustees. Claim of lessees building rights still hanging fire. Matter somewhat complicated. Understand both parties conferring regarding joint claim. Not yet referred to land court. May be possible negotiate and settle without. Regret delay.

The Presbyterian Church land was resumed in October, 1923. We do not consider that the Public Works Committee has been responsible for the delay in this matter. The Committee has evidence showing that the Brisbane City Council asked the Commonwealth to hold its hand to enable a further scheme to be put forward. The town clerk, Mr. Shaw, says that the Presbyterian Church property was not resumed for the purpose of the square, but for the purpose of widening Adelaide and Ann streets. The council accepts responsibility for the action it is now taking. We think it is the best move in the interest of the ratepayers and of all concerned to reach finality. The evidence proves conclusively that this committee agreed to the original proposal. We also have evidence from Mr. Bruce that that is as far as the Commonwealth intended to go. We have now reached the stage that this committee is prepared to hear evidence regarding the second proposal, but we have not been informed whether it is ready to agree to it. The council went into the matter thoroughly. The aldermen paid a visit to the site, and had the whole thing pegged out. Both propositions were placed before the Council, and almost unanimously it decided to adopt what you people previously considered was a fair thing.

88. *To Mr. Blakeley.*—When the Commonwealth agreed to the first scheme, plans and specifications were prepared, and everything was ready to go ahead. The Commonwealth was then asked by the City Council to delay the matter to enable the second scheme to be investigated. Any delay from that point is due to the City Council. So far as facility and general convenience are concerned, there is not a very great deal of difference between the original proposal and the new proposal. Under the former we will have a fair little square. We generally hold our big functions in Market-square. Under this proposal the square will be as wide again as Market-square, and the only cost to the ratepayers will be the formation and upkeep, whereas the larger square proposal would cost the ratepayers between £35,000 and £40,000, and we will lose the rates that otherwise would be paid on the property in Creek-street.

89. *To Senator Reid.*—The following wire was sent by the council to the Prime Minister on the 30th August, 1923:—

Referring Anzac Memorial Square, Brisbane, Deane's letter 24th July much regretted. Hope not too late before your departure to give instructions postpone building operations and re-open question for further sympathetic consideration. Public

meeting convened by me 12th proximo responsible influential citizens requisition. Press continued agitation secure whole block for memorial. Returned Sailors Soldiers League determined force issue.

(Signed) DIDDAMS, Mayor.

I cannot say whether the action of the then mayor was backed up by public opinion. Presumably, the mayor thought that he and the council represented public opinion in Brisbane in regard to the square. The reply received from the Secretary to the Prime Minister read as follows:—

Re Anzac Memorial Square, Brisbane.

With reference to your telegram of 30th August urging that a larger area be contributed by the Commonwealth Government towards the creation of the Anzac Memorial Square at Brisbane, I am directed to inform you that this matter has received the fullest consideration, but it is regretted that the decision previously arrived at in regard thereto cannot be varied.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) W. N. ROWSE, Acting Secretary.

The following letter was sent by the Prime Minister to Senator Foll, dated the 3rd August, 1923:—

Dear Senator Foll.

With reference to your letter of 17th July in regard to the establishment of an Anzac Memorial Square at Brisbane, I desire to inform you that this matter has received most careful consideration. The whole question has been fully gone into with my colleagues the Minister for Works and Railways and the Minister for Home and Territories, but the Commonwealth Government regrets that it is unable to see its way to vary the decision already arrived at, namely, that the Commonwealth should dedicate an area of 34 feet wide, subject to the Queensland Government agreeing to contribute an adjoining area of 166 feet in width.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) S. M. BRUCE, Prime Minister.

The Commonwealth gift of 34 feet was not a very great one. It gave them access to the whole park and an easement for 268 feet. That is worth a good deal.

90. *To Mr. Mackay.*—Under the first agreement the Commonwealth was to give 40 feet. You must admit that the Commonwealth got the best of the deal by obtaining access to the whole of its buildings from Adelaide-street to Ann-street.

91. *To Senator Reid.*—I have already explained my personal view. As the committee was in Brisbane, I thought I would try to clinch the matter. The delay has extended over a considerable number of years, and I think it is time that finality was reached. There is a slight hitch in connexion with the Presbyterian Church property, in Creek-street. The lessees of that property say that the lease gives them the right to remove the buildings. Notice of resumption was served on the Presbyterian Church people, and after a lot of delay they put in their claim, not only on account of the land, but on account of the buildings. I can see, therefore, that further delay is likely to occur, and unless a definite move is made I do not know when the matter will be finalized. If the second proposal is likely to cause further delay, I certainly think that it is not worth while going on with it. Personally, I do not think that the extra area will make a great deal of difference. It would involve the council in the expenditure of an additional £35,000 or £40,000, and we are also losing the rates on the Creek-street property. Brisbane is not so badly off in regard to air spaces. In the last twenty years many park lands have been acquired. It may be that in the centre of the city Brisbane is worse off than any other capital in Australia, and if so that is the fault of those who had the control of affairs in days gone by, when we who are in the council now had no say. It must be quite patent to members of the committee that up to a certain date the Commonwealth was not prepared to give any further assistance. The City Council then requested delay, and put forward an alternative proposal, upon which finality has not been reached. One of the suggestions made by the Commonwealth was that it would do a certain thing, provided the state did a certain thing. The state agreed, but you people have never agreed. I do not admit that an agreement was arrived at between Senator Pearce, the state authorities, and the City Council to accept the scheme as it is now presented. I know that

there is diversity of opinion in regard to it. A sort of tentative arrangement was come to. The personnel of the City Council is quite different now from what it was then. There was nothing binding upon any of the parties.

92. *To Mr. Mathews.*—I do not say that this committee has been responsible for any delay.

93. *To Mr. Cook.*—I have already said that the City Council asked the Commonwealth Government to stay its hand so that an effort might be made to obtain a bigger area. That request was evidently prompted by some of the citizens of Brisbane. I cannot say whether, if the old council had still been charged with the administration of the city's affairs, it would have agreed to the amended proposal. Evidently it was negotiating for a greater area. The idea held here is that up till now the Commonwealth Government has refused that greater area. It is difficult to estimate what it would cost in 30 or 40 years to provide the extra space. It is going to cost the council a considerable sum at the present time to have this square. I am inclined to think that Brisbane is making as much headway as, if not greater than, other capital cities. The council has considered every aspect, and from the point of view of the ratepayers we think that the original proposal is the better one. Many citizens may not agree with us. A lot of those who are outside think they can do better than those who are inside. We consider we are doing what is best in the interests of the ratepayers. I am very pleased to hear that this committee has no interest other than a desire to do what is equitable and for the welfare of all. We had the backing of the city when we were returned to the council to represent the citizens. I doubt whether this question was ever raised at the elections.

94. *To the Chairman.*—We have gone into the whole matter, and I can only reiterate my former statement that the present council fully believes that the action it has taken is the right one.

95. *To Mr. Mackay.*—So far as I can gather, it is usual for any deed or grant such as that connected with the gift of 34 feet by the Commonwealth to state the purpose for which the land should be used. A committee is in existence, the object of which is to advance the proposal to have this area made a memorial square. I think that that committee has in hand funds totalling about £2,000. No objection will be raised by the City Council to the terms of recommendation in the report of the Public Works Committee, dated 28th October, 1922.

The witness withdrew.

Thomas Pye, Architect, Brisbane, sworn and examined.

96. *To the Chairman.*—I have been connected with this matter for a long time. I now represent the Anzac Square Committee, of the executive of which I am a member. We have not been called together in connexion with this matter. The mayor of Brisbane is the chairman of the committee and the convener of its meetings. He stated to me his intention to have a meeting, and to send a representative to this committee. I have been in communication with every member of the executive except Canon Garland, who is out of town, and they are all of the opinion that you should have placed before you the objects that the committee has in view, and its feelings upon the matter. I also represent the Returned Sailors and Soldiers' Imperial League and the Returned Sailors and Soldiers' Fathers Association, of which I am a member. All those bodies are of the one opinion, and what I say may be taken as the expression of their ideas. When it was realized that the Commonwealth intended to start building, public opinion in regard to a site for the soldiers' memorial was stirred very greatly. The matter was taken up very strongly by members of the league and of the general public. The result was that the then mayor called a public meeting, at which the Anzac Square Committee was formed. The cry at that time was, "the whole square or none," and it was the whole square that the

committee was asked to endeavour to obtain. I was invited to form one of the executive. It decided that as there was a big probability of failure to secure the whole square, a second proposal should be put forward. I was asked to prepare a plan for a suitable square to exhibit the soldiers' memorial and for building sites for the state and the Commonwealth. My plan was so designed as to make a square flanked by symmetrical buildings. The Committee waited as a deputation upon the Premier of Queensland, and sought to obtain the whole square. Mr. Theodore turned that down immediately, and said that he would not recommend it. The committee then put my plan before him, and asked whether, as an alternative, he would agree to that area being given. It was pointed out to him that two very fine open sites for buildings for the state and the Commonwealth would be provided, a splendid site for the memorial would be given, with a connexion from Edward-street and Creek-street to the central station subway that it was proposed should be erected, and which the state from time to time had signified its intention of providing, in order to have a better approach to the central station. Mr. Theodore was very sympathetic, and said he would see what could be done. The Anzac Square Committee adopted the plan, and it was submitted to the State Government, but that Government did not fall in with the idea of giving away so much land. It made a revised plan, which is a modification of mine, allowing more land for the buildings. That was offered to the committee as the most that the state would give. The committee decided unanimously that it would accept that proposal, and it communicated that decision to the Minister for Works (Mr. Forgan Smith). He said that he was not particular as to the exact shape, but it was to be an understood thing that the area provided was the greatest that the state could give. I understand that there was also a condition that the Commonwealth should give an extra area to balance the square. The following criticism appeared in the magazine *Building*:—

However, on the principle that the proverbial half a loaf would have to suffice, the Anzac Square Committee got busy with plans and the exigencies of the problem of designing a memorial feature in a park with dead ends, were fairly well met in Architect-Colonel Pye's design, which was submitted to the Premier for consideration. The design referred to showed a terraced approach to the memorial—which is on a sloping site—with a wide sweep of easy curving drive around, such as gave almost direct ingress from Edward-street and direct egress to Creek-street, thus obviating the danger of a street opening at right angles on to another and discharging its traffic at a dead end. An additional precaution for facilitating traffic was the rounding off of all angles. A suitable arborial setting was provided and for relieving the utilitarianism of the flanking Commonwealth and State offices, fountains, statuary, &c., offered great possibilities. The cutting off of the corners at Edward and Creek streets was also an inspiration to rectify the absence of axial vistas of the memorial, for by this means it would be visible from numerous points of the city.

Taking the centre of the memorial, and drawing a line from the first point that intercepts the view, it will be found that the centre of the memorial would be visible for a distance of 490 feet from the corner of Edward-street, and the whole square would be visible for a distance of 270 feet. Under the plan, which provides for a 332-ft. square, with buildings on either side coming right up to the alignment, if you take the same axial line you will find that the area of vision extends just to the corner of Edward-street. The memorial would not, therefore, be opened up to your view until you turned the corner of Edward-street, and you would not see the back of it until you were 80 feet down from the corner. If the memorial were placed in a square 200 feet wide, it would not be opened up to your view until you were right opposite to it. Those considerations are very important from the point of view both of town-planning and of the memorial itself. The grade up to the central station is a very important matter, both to the public and to the Railway Department. The present grade from the corner of Edward-street to the corner of Ann-street is about 1 in 11, and that in Creek-street about 1 in 10.7. The grade, according to my plan, to the floor of the proposed subway would

be 1 in 50 on the Edward-street side, and 1 in 43 on the Creek-street side. If the plan prepared by the Commonwealth were adopted, I calculate that in Edward-street the grade would be 1 in 38, and if the 200-ft. square were decided upon the approach to the subway would be about 1 in 25. Traffic considerations also have to be faced. The traffic comes from Edward-street corner to the central station subway, and then runs out to Creek-street. It is a one-way traffic. Under the Commonwealth plan, the traffic would go in at a right angle, and come out at a right angle into other moving traffic, which is one of the worst features. I do not know of any public offices in Australia that have a site as bad as that which is proposed for the Commonwealth offices in Brisbane. The summer breezes are principally north-east and south-east, and if you are unable to get a breeze at the height of the summer you cannot keep cool. The Commonwealth site does not receive the benefit of the summer breezes. On the contrary, it is open to the west, and has all the disadvantages of the winter conditions and the hot winds. The value of a site surrounded by streets is considerably greater. With such a site you would have proper natural ventilation, whereas in the other case artificial ventilation would have to be resorted to, the installation of which would cost a big sum. Apart from the money aspect, the value of an open site, from the point of view of the health and efficiency of the staff employed in the building is very great. A 200-ft. square, we submit, will not give us what we want or what the public expects to get. In fact, it has been stated that it will be only a glorified lane. The Returned Sailors and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia and the Returned Sailors and Soldiers' Fathers Association will be absolutely dissatisfied with the 200-ft. square, and I am quite sure they will be backed up by the general public in their objection. I am prepared to say that the soldiers will not have a memorial in a 200-ft. square. They have said so repeatedly. The action of the City Council in reverting to the original 200-ft. square has absolutely amazed the executive of the Anzac Square Committee and those members of the general public with whom I have discussed the matter, because there was no indication of any such action being proposed; and, as I said before, the mayor himself stated that he was wholeheartedly in agreement with our ideas, and intended to further them. The action of the council was taken without the knowledge of the Anzac Square Committee, and without consulting any individual connected with it. I understand that an offer was made by the council to the Commonwealth, and on that offer the present plan was drawn. I think that the Commonwealth should accept that offer. On behalf of the bodies that I represent, I urge the committee to try to finalize on the 332-ft. basis, which, I think, would satisfy everybody. I think it would be well to submit to a committee of experts the small details connected with the finalizing of the plan. By doing so, many little points would be gained. The idea that we had was to follow somewhat on the lines of the beautiful square in Paris—La Place de la Concorde—which, I think, is a perfect square from a spectacular point of view, and is also a splendid example of the combination of beauty and utility. The Trafalgar Square is somewhat on the same lines. The committee's idea was not to go in for a park, because we have found that city parks are liable to abuse. We thought that a square would be more suitable than a garden as a place of assemblage for the public. If similar circumstances existed in other capital cities, it would only be right for the Commonwealth to assist such a movement. The land in this instance has not cost the Commonwealth anything. It may pay interest to the state, but it has had occupation of the land for many years. I happen to know that the Commonwealth Government has had to buy land for building sites in other states. It had to do that to provide a public street in Western Australia. I do not think that a square 200 feet wide would be adequate for the display of a memorial of a national character. We feel that such a memorial must have a suitable setting. I

believe that the soldiers will declare that they will not have a memorial there. I realize that the square must be used as an approach to the railway station. If the state, however, does not intend to proceed with an up-to-date central station scheme, the square would be useless. To be used as a drive, there would need to be roadways 44 feet wide, and pathways should be 15 feet wide. If the square is only 200 feet wide, there would be practically no space left.

97. *To Senator Reid.*—There must be two roadways and two footways.

98. *To the Chairman.*—In order to take trams through, the width would need to be greater. Personally, I should not like to see trams going through. The Town Planning Association has a scheme for running trams right under the central station, but I am opposed to that, because I do not think it is really required. The only course that now appears to be left open to us is to make representations to the City Council to suggest an alternative scheme. The chances are that there will be a public protest. I should like to know what this committee is prepared to do.

99. *To Senator Reid.*—I am acquainted with the proposals that were made in regard to this matter before the Anzac memorial was suggested. When a width of 200 feet was proposed, the Returned Soldiers' League declared that it would be totally inadequate for a memorial. The Anzac Square Committee, I understand, has in hand £11,000 or £12,000. It was expected that if a good scheme could be agreed upon, a considerable amount of money could be raised very quickly, and a start be made with the memorial. The State Premier granted the additional land for which he was asked. The City Council at the time was absolutely favorable to the amended proposal. Alderman Diddams was very keen on it, and he was backed up by the council. I took no personal part in the conference that was held between the council, the State Government, and the Commonwealth Government.

100. *To Mr. Mackay.*—I suggest that this committee should defer coming to a decision until the public has had an opportunity to make a protest, and see what can be done. I remember a large petition that was signed in the streets of Brisbane some months ago in reference to this square. I think it was presented to the City Council, and it set forth the advisability of having a larger square than was then proposed. I have been informed that the City Council has acquired the property of the Presbyterian Church Trust. That information was conveyed to me by the secretary of the Anzac Square Committee, who is assistant town clerk. I feel quite satisfied that there will be a public protest against proceeding with the smaller square.

101. *To Mr. Cook.*—So far as my knowledge goes, I think that the great majority of the citizens of Brisbane approve of the larger scheme. It would provide much greater facilities for getting in and out of the central station on an easy grade. I notice that Mr. Murdoch proposed that Ann-street should be widened. We suggested that the width should be 80 feet, but he thinks it ought to be 100 feet. I think that he has lost sight of the fact that if there is an entrance to the central station by a subway the greater part of the traffic that now enters the station by way of Ann-street will go through the subway. In view of that fact, I do not think it will be necessary to increase Ann-street to a greater width than 80 feet. I have heard it said that the proposal is to make the principal terminus at Roma-street. I do not think that that would make much difference to the traffic at central station, because that station is essentially one for the suburban and the northern traffic, which cannot have its terminus at Roma-street. I have noted the growth of other capital cities, and I believe that in course of time Brisbane will grow to an enormous size. It has advantages in the way of settlement close to its doors that are greater than those possessed by any other capital city in Australia. North, south, east, and west there is excellent country in the

immediate vicinity of Brisbane, and that must make of Brisbane a very large capital city. Looking ahead, I am of the opinion that as much extra accommodation as possible should be given. That is the view I maintained when I was an officer in the Public Works Department. I then advocated that in constructing our public works we should look ahead at least 40 or 50 years. I have realized the wisdom of that on many occasions. People usually build for 20 or 30 years when they should build for from 50 to 100 years. Every day the difficulty of securing space becomes greater.

The witness withdrew.

Ronald Martin Wilson, Architectural Engineer, representing the Town Planning Association, Queensland, sworn and examined.

102. *To the Chairman.*—I have here a paper prepared for the Town Planning Association as a study of the problem of the traffic to the central station, which I shall read to the Committee.

Brisbane city area will have a day population of 200,000 workers at no distant date.

The greater Brisbane Bill is tangible evidence that this city is expected to carry a large population, extending over an area with a radius of 11 miles.

Although Greater Brisbane will cover this large area it is safe to predict that the financial and business centre will still remain in its present location, as can be illustrated by the examples of London, New York, Chicago, and other cities, and from this area proper means of egress and intercommunication must radiate in all directions with rapid transit facilities.

At the present rate of growth the greater portion of the city area will be covered with business buildings of the eight-story type, which it is estimated could house, say, 130,000 city workers in addition to a floating population of possibly an equal number.

Thus, if this is a correct forecast, it will therefore be necessary to transport every morning and evening approximately 200,000 people to and from the central city area up to a radius of 11 miles.

Experience in many cities has shown that trams can cover a $\frac{1}{2}$ mile radius in half-hour journey, but that with increasing traffic they become so congested as to block the streets.

The railroads can in the same time cover a radius of 15 miles, and by taking people off the streets, greatly reduce the street congestion.

Steam railway stations and lines have therefore been in many instances replanned so as to afford quick and easy access to trains and so encourage their use for local passenger traffic.

Similarly, Brisbane, to avoid street congestion will be compelled in the future to handle a large proportion of the above-mentioned 200,000 people by railway, the nearest point of access to the railway then, as now, for the city area being the central station. To do this effectively ample access to the station must be provided by means of subways in order to avoid danger and confusion from cross streams of mixed traffic. Such subways should open out on a large space in which the streams of foot traffic may converge or disperse without danger from vehicles. It is estimated that 160 feet width of subway will be required for this purpose.

Central station and the Normal school area have all the natural facilities for the development of a gateway to and from the city with proper and separated means of connexion between the streets and the trains for both vehicles and pedestrians, and therefore every effort should be made to prevent the erection of buildings at a spot which should, without doubt, be kept open for the proper facilities demanded to meet the city daily ebb and flow, preferably without any buildings, but otherwise with buildings designed in conformity with such requirements.

In support of the above contentions I quote the following authorities:—

- (1) Mr. Nolan, the eminent American authority on town planning.
- (2) Mr. J. P. Davies, an eminent consulting engineer in United States of America.
- (3) Mr. Unwin, the recognised greatest English authority on town planning.
- (4) Mr. G. Hooker, secretary of the Special Railway Committee of the City Council of Chicago.
- (5) Mr. B. J. Arnold, a leading American consulting engineer.
- (6) Mr. D. L. Turner, an authority on the New York transit problem.
- (7) Mr. S. J. Vickers, designing architect for the subways and "elevated" structures of New York.

A study of the accompanying plan will show that it has been designed to meet Brisbane's future traffic requirements at this gateway of the city as well as the demand for a considerable amount of building area, economically planned for light and air.

This plan is diagrammatic only (and subject to further detailed study) for the purpose of showing the exceptional opportunities offered for the separating of the following streams of traffic at this point:—

- (1) The heavy goods and other vehicles along Ann-street.
- (2) Edward-street, general traffic (on dangerous hill).
- (3) Creek-street, general traffic (on dangerous hill).
- (4) Adelaide-street, general traffic.
- (5) Tram service to station from Adelaide-street.
- (6) Vehicle service to station from Adelaide-street.
- (7) Tram subways along under Ann-street could also pass under the railway platforms when required.
- (8) Cross passenger subways with access to and from the large open square above the vehicle subways and below the railway tracks, and separated for inward and outward flows, and with cloak rooms and ticket offices at that level, thus reducing attendance, would give complete and separated intercommunication between and access from the city to all platforms for both vehicles and trains.
- (8A) Fronting the passageways a number of shops could be constructed under Ann-street, the rental from which would substantially decrease the interest on the cost of the subway construction.
- (9) If the railway tracks were made single using the platform on one side of the train for inward-bound passengers and the platform on the far side of the train for outward-bound passengers, confusion on platforms at entrances to platforms and to trains would be completely eliminated.
- (10) By placing vehicle entrances under the buildings, space would be saved and safe access to the buildings provided from either the street or the square.
- (11) By placing a passenger subway under the buildings at either end of the square protection would be provided in wet weather.

We claim that unless Brisbane's transit problem be now planned for there will arise conditions of congestion and discomfort which will even outrival those of Sydney to-day. The focal point of this problem will be the access to central station, which should now be planned and developed as necessity demands.

APPENDIX.

EXTRACTS FROM AUTHORITIES QUOTED RE TRAFFIC DEVELOPMENT.

22nd October, 1924.

The Transit Commissioner for Philadelphia in a report says—"All real estate which will be needed by the city in the near future for the development of rapid-transit facilities and which is likely to be improved by the construction of expensive structures thereon, should be secured without delay."

B. A. Haldeman, Assistant Engineer of the General Plans Division of the Bureau of Surveys of Philadelphia, says—"The strict differentiation of the service of rapid-transit lines and street surface lines—one being express and the other local—with a proper co-ordination of the entire system, would result in the establishment of numerous centres of importance."

Good city development can only be accomplished where adequate facilities for circulation exist.

Cities have not nearly reached the limits of their accomplishment in any direction. It is pretty generally assumed that they will continue to grow quite as rapidly in the future as they have in the past."

Mr. J. P. Davies, an eminent consulting engineer in United States of America states—"Steam railroads can operate through trains at an average speed of 45 miles per hour, while their suburban service operates at speeds of 30 to 35 miles per hour, street tramways in light traffic 11 to 12 miles per hour, in congested parts 8 miles per hour. On a complete run tram could be expected to average $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles per hour."

In all cities the aim of rapid transit has been to connect the business district with the outlying suburban districts. Thus furnishing means of transportation to the central business district undoubtedly to a large extent fixes its location for all time.

Lines should extend in from the outer districts, pass through the business district, and extend out again to the exterior parts of a city, avoiding terminals."

Mr. Unwin, the greatest English town planning authority, states—"Too often the station is entirely obscured by the buildings in front, but one can imagine other treatments of railway stations, with ample space in front for traffic, and with hotels (or other buildings) flanking the entrance, leaving the opening of the station with some genuine suggestion of a gateway (or entrance to the city)."

Mr. G. E. Hooker, secretary of the Special Railway Committee of the City Council of Chicago, in a report published on this subject in 1914, after several years of study, urged the necessity for linking up the steam lines and developing their use for through route local passenger traffic.

Mr. B. J. Arnold, a leading American consulting engineer, after studying Chicago's problem for ten years, issued a report with plans, in which he states—"My recommendations are for the adoption of a plan which will form the nucleus of a comprehensive subway system for the entire city, constantly tending to enlarge the present business district, capable of gradual development and of unlimited expansion, involving no grade crossings, no grades, except where necessary to pass under the river and to avoid grade crossings and few, if any, intersecting switching points, and also to begin the construction of such a system with a reasonable investment at first, which initial investment need not exceed the amount now available by the city for subway construction."

In New York the providing of rapid-transit facilities has been studied since 1847, and in 1914 work was being planned and constructed to give communication between all sections of the city and the business centre at a cost of \$330,000,000.

Speaking of this Mr. D. L. Turner, in a report on the development of a city plan for New York, states—"Never before in this city, and, as far as I know, in no other city in this country has it been possible to develop the transit facilities in their proper relation to the other features of the city plan."

The use of the city centre increases in an increasing ratio to that of the increase of the population. In this connexion Mr. D. L. Turner states—"Manhattan, the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, and Richmond—the five boroughs which constitute the greater city—although separated from each other physically, form a city approximately included in a semi-circle of 18-miles radius. Each borough, to a certain degree, maintains its individuality, and within its boundary contains its particular social and commercial districts; but the great majority of the borough activities are concentrated in one area used by all of the boroughs in common."

Mr. S. J. Vickers, designing architect, speaking of the stations on the recently constructed elevated lines which are built above the streets in New York, in the *Public Service Record*, January, 1916, states—"Our stations are now of the mezzanine type. That is, the base of rail is kept sufficiently high to allow the construction of a mezzanine story underneath the main structures to take care of the control. This is a distinct gain in appearance and economy of operation over the old type, where the ticket house was constructed on the platform level projecting into the side streets."

(This mezzanine space referred to is above the street roadway and below the elevated tracks.)

I realize that this is a matter for the municipal authorities to handle, and I simply desire the Commonwealth to co-ordinate in any action that is taken. I have studied the matter from the traffic point of view. Stress has been laid upon the fact that Brisbane is short of areas for the parking of motor cars. An open space like this could very well be used for the parking of cars on ordinary days and for civic purposes at other times. That is why I favour an open space.

103. *To Mr. Cook.*—It would be a step in the right direction to provide the greatest space possible. I have been working with the Town Planning Association for four years. We have worked hard for various schemes, and everybody, I think, will agree that this is the right thing to do. My association believes in the scheme. Brisbane has a big back country, and it is the only harbour for a long length of coastline. The traffic at Central Railway Station is congested at the present time. A woman crossing Ann-street is in danger of losing her life. Every one must cross that street to get to the station. I do not know what will happen if improved facilities are not provided. The present conditions should not be allowed to continue. This scheme would afford relief to pedestrian traffic. It would give improved facilities, be the means of paying respect to the soldiers, and result in the saving of a large sum of money in the future. The Town Planning Association will do all that it possibly can to assist the citizens.

104. *To Senator Reid.*—I have put before the Engineer for Railways my proposals in regard to the traffic. The railway authorities have not approached me in regard to their proposals for dealing with the traffic, and they have not confided their intentions to us. We know that they have some big scheme in regard to Roma-street. I have also heard mention of a station at the site of the old Trades Hall. Personally, I think that that would be a mistake.

(Taken at Brisbane.)

THURSDAY, 23RD OCTOBER, 1924.

Present:

Mr. GREGORY, Chairman;

Senator Barnes
Senator Reid
Mr. Cook

Mr. Jackson
Mr. Mackay
Mr. Mathews.

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

105. *To the Chairman.*—When the original agreement was tentatively approved I prepared a plan for the erection of public buildings on the land between Ann and Adelaide streets. The building was to have a base of granite. Above that there was to be a special plaster imitating stone work. The Committee supported that idea with a view to saving £15,000. The Committee also reported that arrangements should be made with the State Government to ensure that its building on the opposite side of the proposed square should match our building. The State Government greatly favoured a stone building above the granite base. The Commonwealth Department of Works and Railways is arranging to call for alternative tenders embodying the plaster idea and the stone idea to see whether the latter is worth the extra cost involved. That is the proposed composition of the building on the Ann and Adelaide street frontages, and for the full length facing the proposed square. On the opposite side of the building there will be a blank wall. We must expect that at some future date—it may be next year, or it may not be for 50 years—a private owner will put up a building, perhaps even higher than ours, with the principal frontage to Creek-street. Then, of course, we would lose the advantage of light and air on that side. There is to be an entrance from Ann-street and from Adelaide-street, with a corridor the full length of the building between the two streets. Certain light areas are provided, after the style of the Union Chambers in Sydney. Instead of having a central court to give light to the building, light areas are provided to allow of the entry of light from the outside. Architecturally the building will look well. Freedom of air circulation is necessary in Brisbane, and this design will enable us to have light and air on three sides of our working blocks. Corridors will run from one end of the building to the other upon each floor. There will be no difficulty in regard to communication from one portion of the building to another, and from one floor to another. There are two sets of lifts and two staircases from the ground floor to the roof. The lifts will be between the blocks at the north-eastern end of the light areas. There will be elevated tanks for fire extinguishing purposes. They will fit in architecturally with the design of the building. The offices will be of such a type that they can be conveniently subdivided into smaller rooms, if necessary, or be used as one large room. There will not be a large number of small offices with permanent walls. If a building as high as or higher than ours is built with a frontage to Creek-street it will destroy our light on that side. In that respect we are not worse off than many other city buildings. We were not thinking of making preparation for artificial ventilation, but it will be possible to install such a system. Personally I should like to see it done. So far an air-conditioning plant has not, I think, been installed in a commercial building in Brisbane. In this building there will be less necessity for it than there is in any building that I know of in Brisbane, because each block of offices will have large windows on three sides. I am not antagonistic to the idea of having a plant installed. I should like very much to see it put in, in order to have the most modern type of building. The lavatories will all be isolated. To get from an office to a lavatory

one will have to pass through the open air. That is a valuable ventilating safeguard. I shall have an estimate prepared of the probable cost of such an installation. It is proposed to use the floor below the roof as a luncheon room and the roof in the central block for promenading purposes. If the proposal in regard to Anzac Square is not proceeded with I recommend the erection of a building with frontages to Ann and Adelaide streets.

106. *To Mr. Mackay.*—Very valuable records will be stored in this building. Recently, at the All Australian Manufacturers' Exhibition, in Melbourne, steel shelving was exhibited. Consideration has not been given to the type of shelving for this building, but I should say that that would be a very good type to put in. I have had information regarding those shelves for some years. I wanted to introduce them into the Defence Stores in Sydney, but I could not get them for anything like the price of timber.

107. *To Senator Reid.*—The reason that one of the blocks has a flat roof is that after this Committee considered the work the Department of Home and Territories communicated with the Department of Works and Railways and said that it would require to have quarters and observing stations for the Meteorological Department. It is a considerable distance back from the parapet, and being in the central block it will be all right architecturally. There will be sufficient room on the roof to provide living quarters. I think that the appearance of the building will be improved rather than detracted from. The towers between the blocks will be 10 feet away from the north-eastern alignment. The front of the towers will be 70 feet from the front of the building facing the square. We will have an abundance of light, but it will not be possible to get the benefit of the north-east breezes. There will be windows in the back wall that will serve until we are built out on that side. They will commence at the third or the fourth floor, as it is anticipated that a building at least three stories high will be built facing Creek-street. The towers will be finished in exactly the same way as the building itself. The Meteorological Department will be able to make use of the towers for their anemometers. If the latest scheme for the establishment of a square were dropped it would pay the Commonwealth Government to give 34 feet for a city square on account of the light and air that would be obtained for the Commonwealth offices. It is estimated that the building will take over two years to erect. If the latest square proposal is adopted this plan will be worthless.

108. *To the Chairman.*—Colonel Pye's plan is a very fine one, but under it a greater sacrifice of land, both by the Commonwealth and the State, would be involved. The area of land which it would leave for the Commonwealth would be too small for its purposes, and I would not recommend that we should proceed with the erection of our building upon it. I am quite satisfied that it would not give us sufficient space for Commonwealth requirements. We would need to have an inner area to give us light and air. Under my plan a greater area is available. The moment you depart from rectangularity you lose light and air. Colonel Pye has told me of another idea he has for subdividing the property and laying out the square, which appears to be on good lines. The suggestion, I believe, is to have a memorial the replica of that at Whitehall, which has a base of probably 40 feet by 20 feet. Personally, I hope that there will not be a replica of any memorial, but that new ground will be broken. I should say that the dimensions should be 40 feet by 40 feet. That would leave room for pathways and lawns.

109. *To Mr. Mackay.*—It is most regrettable that an arrangement cannot be come to between the State Government, the Commonwealth Government, and the City Council for a square of the size desired by the people of Brisbane.

110. *To Senator Reid.*—All that would be necessary is a roadway 32 feet wide for one-way traffic. If 40 feet is taken from the 200 feet for the memorial there will still be 80 feet on each side. By taking 32 feet for a roadway 48 feet would be left for footpaths.

(Taken at Brisbane.)

SATURDAY, 21st MARCH, 1925.

Present:

Senator LYNCH, in the Chair;	
Senator Reid	Mr. Cook
Senator Barnes	Mr. Mackay.
Mr. Blakeley	

Hubert Fraser East, State President, Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League, Brisbane, recalled and further examined.

111. *To Senator Lynch.*—Since giving evidence before this Committee a few months ago on the Anzac Square proposals, I have obtained further information, which I think will be interesting. I am representing the Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League of Australia, and the Anzac Square Committee. Your Committee was good enough at its last meeting here to inform one of our representatives, Colonel Pye, that if we could arrange for the views of the public generally to be ascertained on the Anzac Square proposals you would withhold any decisions on the matter until such views were ascertained. Following on that, we decided to test the public feeling by means of general publicity through the press, and by holding public meetings. Through these efforts we found that we had the support of the citizens generally throughout Queensland. We judged that by the very large number of resolutions which came in from our branches in different portions of the State. The public generally in the City of Brisbane and the people in Queensland look upon the Anzac Square proposition as the Queensland national memorial. In our efforts to ascertain the public mind we had assistance from the press generally. The *Daily Mail* conducted a very lively campaign on behalf of the larger square. The result of the plebiscite conducted by that paper for some weeks was that an overwhelming majority of votes was cast in favour of the larger scheme. The voting was: For the larger scheme, 3,887 votes; for the smaller scheme, 131 votes. The majority in favour of the larger scheme was, therefore, 3,756 votes. The larger scheme is the one with the 332-ft. frontage to Adelaide and Ann streets. We also received public protests against the adoption of the smaller scheme from almost every man of any commercial or professional standing in the city. I produce a book of press cuttings. It contains everything that was published in respect to the activities of the Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League and the Anzac Square Committee since this Committee was last in Brisbane. I shall leave the book with the Committee for the time being, and hope that you gentlemen will make it your business to examine it. It gives the opinions of the leading men in Queensland. You will see that these opinions are unanimously in favour of the larger scheme. Following on our campaign came the election of the greater Brisbane Council. The majority of the candidates returned are pledged to the larger scheme, and I feel certain that when the new council assumes control in October one of the first matters that will receive its consideration will be the finalizing of the larger Anzac Square scheme. The larger square embraces an area of 332 feet frontage, as against 200 feet in the proposed smaller scheme, which was brought forward by the Brisbane City Council, which is now in power. We are satisfied that the larger scheme is the one that is best suited to the needs of the position, especially as we have the promise of both

the Commonwealth Government and the State Governments that buildings of a symmetrical and harmonious character will be built on the square frontages. I feel sure that the Mayor of Greater Brisbane would welcome an opportunity to give evidence before this Committee. Both the Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League and the Anzac Square Committee are asking that the larger square shall be adopted.

112. *To Mr. Mackay.*—One of the prominent questions at issue in the recent Greater Brisbane election was that concerning Anzac Square. We have received every encouragement from the State Government in regard to the larger square, for the Government has increased its offer conditionally on the Commonwealth Government doing the same. So far as the church property is concerned, I know that most of it has been resumed, but there are law cases pending, and nothing will be finalized until something definite is decided in the courts. The whole area on the Creek-street frontage is the property of the Presbyterian Church, and the Council has completed arrangements for resuming it; but the Court has the fixing of the price. Some appeals have been lodged by certain owners and tenants. I do not think that there will be any trouble ultimately over the thing. It is only a matter for negotiation. The property has been resumed, and the details are matters for adjustment.

113. *To Senator Reid.*—I am quite satisfied that the public of Brisbane are still as keen as ever on the larger scheme. In fact, I think they are keener than they have ever been. We are receiving evidence of that every day. The Anzac Square Committee is as anxious as the Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League that the larger scheme shall be adopted.

114. *To Mr. Blakeley.*—We did not appeal to only a section of the public in Queensland when we tested their feelings by our newspaper propaganda. The whole of the newspapers participated. We did not confine the campaign to one newspaper. We got every newspaper to help us all they possibly could. We conducted our campaign not only in Brisbane, but in the country centres as well. We wrote all our country branches about it. All the daily papers in Brisbane were operating, including the Sunday papers, and they all reported our meetings. The *Courier*, the *Mail*, the *Telegraph*, and the *Standard* were all helping us, although the plebiscite was conducted by only one of the papers. If you read the press cuttings that I have produced you will realize how widespread the agitation was. I do not agree that the Commonwealth Government will necessarily be setting a dangerous precedent by assisting in the establishment of this square. The circumstances in the case of Brisbane are exceptional. I understand it is not the general policy, nor would it be right for the Commonwealth Government to give its land away in a careless manner, but the circumstances here are really exceptional. The land which the Commonwealth Government holds in Adelaide-street happens to be in the very centre of the proposed square. If similar circumstances arose at Bourke, or Kapunda, or Kalgoorlie, I think the Commonwealth Government would be justified in helping to achieve such a scheme; but I do not think that circumstances similar to those which face us here are likely to occur in any other town in Australia. The towns you have mentioned are places with open spaces. In all the circumstances, I think we are justified in asking the Commonwealth Government to assist us. I do not think it is one of the functions of the Commonwealth Government to take on the functions of the State Government or civic authorities for city beautification, and I do not think that they would be doing so if they assisted us in the way we desire. The land in question was taken over by the Commonwealth Government originally at the time of federation. I do not think similar circum-

stances are likely to arise in any of the other States. The Greater Brisbane Council is really pledged to the scheme, I think, for the majority of men that have been elected supported it. I think we are really indebted to the late Mayor of Brisbane, Alderman Didams, for bringing the negotiations with Senator Pearce to such finality as has been reached. I understand that for the church property in Creek-street the Land Court valuation was £35,000. The lease value claimed by Messrs. Isles, Love was £57,000.

115. *To Mr. Mackay.*—The Commonwealth Government is not asked to make a gift of any land for the Anzac Square proposal. It is only a matter of exchanging land. I consider that this is one of the best propositions that has ever been put before the Commonwealth Government. Any commercial man would jump at the proposal.

116. *To Senator Lynch.*—We have certain funds in hand for the erection of a memorial in the centre of the proposed square. Those funds were raised exclusively for the purpose of building a memorial. I cannot say the exact amount that is in hand. The money was subscribed some years ago. There is in hand a fairly substantial amount, I think about £2,000, from the Anzac Commemoration Committee, which will be added to the funds already raised by the Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League and the Anzac Square Committee.

117. *To Senator Reid.*—The delay in proceeding with the construction of the memorial has been due to delay in deciding upon a site.

118. *To Senator Lynch.*—The Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League and the Anzac Square Committee will use every endeavour to erect the memorial speedily as soon as operations in connexion with the completion of Anzac Square are entered upon.

The witness withdrew.

William Alfred Jolly, Public Accountant, Mayor of Greater Brisbane, sworn and examined.

119. *To Senator Lynch.*—I am pleased to come before the Committee to-day in connexion with Anzac Square proposals, but I wish to ask for permission to delay giving my evidence until the Committee returns from North Queensland. The Greater Brisbane Council, which has just been elected, will take over all the local government bodies within a 10-mile radius of Brisbane. The new council held its first business meeting yesterday, and, as you can well understand, with such a great deal of business before it, no opportunity was available for ascertaining the definite views of the council on the Anzac Square proposals. I understand that the Committee will return from the north about the 8th April, and if I could defer my evidence until then I could then speak on behalf of the Greater Brisbane Council. I do not wish to express any views here to-day that might not truly reflect the view of the council. The council would greatly appreciate it if you could defer your examination until your return. Personally, I realize the necessity of the Commonwealth Government having new buildings in Brisbane, and I can promise that the council will not delay consideration of this matter. I think it would be a great convenience to the Commonwealth Government if its various offices in Brisbane could be centralized. It would make for economy and efficiency.

120. *To Mr. Blakeley.*—If the taking of my evidence is deferred I will make arrangements to examine the papers that are available in connexion with the business, and I will go into the whole thing thoroughly.

The witness withdrew.

The Committee adjourned.