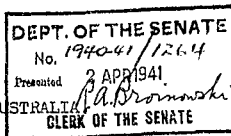


1940-41.



THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

P A P E R

TO BE LAID ON THE TABLE OF

THE SENATE

R E P O R T

of the

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

relating to the erection of

A B A T T O I R S

a t

C A N B E R R A , A U S T R A L I A N C A P I T A L T E R R I T O R Y .

*Brought up by
Senator Brand*

1940 - 41.

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE
ON PUBLIC WORKS.

R E P O R T

RELATING TO THE PROPOSED ERECTION OF

A B A T T O I R S

AT

C A N B E R R A, A U S T R A L I A N C A P I T A L T E R R I T O R Y.

MEMBERS OF THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

(Tenth Committee)

Senator Charles Henry Brand, Chairman.

Senate.

Senator Walter Jackson Cooper.
Senator Charles Adcock Lamp.

House of Representatives.

Albert Oliver Badman, Esq., M.P.
Rowland James, Esq., M.P.
William Alfred Jolly, Esq., M.P.
George William Martens, Esq., M.P.
Thomas Sheehan, Esq., M.P.
Fred. Hurtle Stacey, Esq., M.P.

EXTRACT FROM THE VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
NO. 16,
DATED 14th MARCH, 1941.

8. PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE--REFERENCE OF WORK--ERECTION OF ABATTOIRS, CANBERRA.--Mr. Collins (Assistant Minister) for Sir Frederick Stewart (Minister for Health) moved, pursuant to notice, That, in accordance with the provisions of the "Commonwealth Public Works Committee Act" 1913-1936, the following proposed work be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for investigation and report:--Canberra, Australian Capital Territory--erection of Abattoirs.
- Mr. Collins having laid on the Table plans, &c., in connexion with the proposed work--
Debate ensued.
- Sir Charles Marr proposing to move, as an amendment, That the following words be added to the motion:--"and the Secretariats near Capitol Hill"--
- SPEAKER'S RULING.--Mr. Speaker ruled the amendment out of order as it was not relevant to the motion.
- Debate continued.
- Question--put and passed.

LIST OF WITNESSES.

- Baird, I. A., Secretary, Australian Capital Rural Lessees' Association.
Bock, F. G., Secretary, Monaro South Coast Co-operative Meat Coy. Ltd., Nimmitabel.
Calthorpe, J. H., Stock & Station Agent, Canberra.
Cumpston, Dr. J. H. L., Director-General of Health, Canberra, A.C.T.
Edward, D. G., Architect, Department of the Interior.
Handcock, F. W., Chairman of Directors and Manager, Monaro South Coast Co-operative Meat Coy. Ltd., Nimmitabel.
Marriott, C. H., Accountant and Secretary, Federal Meat Purveyors Ltd., Canberra.
Nott, Dr. L. W., Medical Superintendent, Canberra Hospital & Representative of the Canberra Advisory Council.
Perkins, Hon. J. A., M.P., Canberra.
Poole, A., Auctioneer & Stock & Station Agent, Nimmitabel.
Price, C. H., Director of & Sales Manager, Monaro South Coast Co-operative Meat Coy. Ltd., Nimmitabel.
Rose, A. J., Stock & Station Agent, Nimmitabel.
Wardle, R. N., Director, Division of Veterinary Hygiene, Department of Health, Canberra.
Woodger, T. E., President, Queanbeyan Graziers' Association.
Wright, A. S., Butcher, Queanbeyan.
Adams, T. L., Butcher, Canberra.
Mercival, A., Surveyor-General, Chief Property Officer, Department of the Interior.
Ryrie, M. S., President of the Australian Capital Territory Rural Lessees' Association, Canberra.

ABATTOIRS, CANBERRA.

R E P O R T.

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, to which the House of Representatives referred, for investigation and report, the question of the Erection of Abattoirs at Canberra, has the honour to report as follows:-

INTRODUCTORY.

When the Commonwealth Parliament moved to Canberra in 1927 the City was provided with a slaughtering place of very limited capacity, but at that time it was considered that before long modern abattoirs would be constructed. By 1931 it was found that there was insufficient hanging space in the establishment and no chilling rooms and that what buildings there were were below standard in hygienic essentials; also it was represented that there were no proper facilities for either the disposal of offal or the manufacture of profitable by-products. In addition, the drainage problem was becoming serious and resort was necessary to various devices in order to make the available soil take up the liquid overflow.

Between 1931 and 1933 the problem became so pressing that it was necessary to spend, from time to time, amounts aggregating about £7,000 in order to provide refrigeration and facilities for the treatment of by-products. By 1937, with the gradual growth of the city, the position had become increasingly acute as the early difficulties were intensified. The Government considered the situation and it was decided that plans and estimates should be prepared for new abattoirs. Provision of the necessary funds was made in the draft estimates 1937-38 but, in view of the necessity for economy at that time, this amount was later eliminated.

PRESENT PROPOSAL.

The present proposal aims at the provision of modern abattoirs of conventional standard. The building is to be constructed of brick with concrete floors and walls specially treated to avoid as far as possible the slipperiness caused by fat. The roof is to be framed in timber with a few structural steel members and is to be

covered with corrugated asbestos. The two chilling rooms proposed are to be insulated and cooled by means of four separate units.

Provision is made for the accommodation of the men employed at the abattoirs, together with laundry, shower room, lavatory accommodation, dressing room, individual lockers, and a dining room. Two offices for the Superintendent, with separate lavatory accommodation, are also to be provided. The various pens for cattle, sheep and pigs are proposed to be roofed over to provide protection from the weather while awaiting slaughter.

ESTIMATED COST.

The estimated cost, as submitted to the Committee, was given as £55,000. In the course of evidence, however, the Committee was surprised to learn that no detailed estimates of buildings or plant had been taken out, and it was inferred that the estimate might need revision after further examination.

The Committee regrets this laxity as producing a condition unsatisfactory from the point of view of the Committee, as it might well be to the Minister concerned.

SITE.

The site proposed comprises an area up to 10 acres, situated between the Molonglo River and the Railway to Cooma, adjacent to the Railway line from Canberra to Queanbeyan, and is distant about one-and-a-half ($1\frac{1}{2}$) miles on the Canberra road from Queanbeyan and six-and-a-half ($6\frac{1}{2}$) miles from Civic Centre. The weight of evidence indicated that this locality was eminently suitable as a site for the abattoirs, and under all circumstances should be reserved for that purpose.

COMMITTEE'S INVESTIGATIONS.

The Committee made an inspection of the existing abattoirs at Canberra and viewed the site proposed for the new works. A visit was also paid to the newly-constructed abattoirs at Nimitabel. A close scrutiny was made of the plan submitted for the new structure and evidence was obtained from the Commonwealth Director-General of Health, the Superintendent of the Canberra Hospital, the Director of the Division of Veterinary Hygiene, Department of Health, representatives

of the Department of the Interior, of the Graziers' Association, of the Rural Lessees' Association, and of the Monaro-South Coast Co-operative Meat Company Limited, in addition to local butchering interests, and others.

It was obvious from the Committee's inspection of the existing abattoirs, and from the evidence obtained, that the work was carried out in a very primitive manner, that the establishment was out-of-date and wholly inadequate to supply Canberra's growing demand for beef, mutton, pork, etc.

The plans submitted for the new works are designed on modern lines, and the site selected is such that the various operations can be carried out on a gravitational system with the minimum of inconvenience. The Committee, however, viewed with alarm the estimated cost of the proposal submitted. Inquiries made elicited the information that the abattoirs erected in 1939 at Albury, with capacity for a maximum kill of 80 beef, 620 mutton, and 200 pork per day, cost £12,850, while a similar establishment at Mildura, having a capacity of 20 bodies of beef and 400 sheep daily, was provided in 1937 for the sum of £25,000.

FINANCIAL.

During the course of the Committee's investigations, it was ascertained that it is not the practice to take out a profit and loss account each year for the Canberra Abattoirs. However, inquiries made shew that the result of the operations for the past five (5) years indicate an excess of expenditure over receipts to the extent of £22,167.14.10d. This works out at an average loss over the past five (5) years of £433 per annum. No provision is made for Interest on Capital Expenditure, which now stands at £16,395, and this, at 4%, would add another £656, making a loss of £1,089 per annum, or £22 per week.

If new abattoirs be constructed at a cost of £55,000, with the same turnover and charges for killing, the annual loss of providing at 4% on Capital Cost would be £2,632, or 25¢ per week.

It was ascertained that in the past no provision has been made for depreciation on the existing structure so that, if the present plant be scrapped, a considerable amount would have to be written off. This loss, of course, should be spread over the life of the plant.

Further, no charge is made for supervision and administration expenses of the Health Department in connection with this concern.

It is obvious from this that, unless a considerable increase in the turnover results from the establishment of new abattoirs and the present charges for killing are substantially increased, it is improbable that new abattoirs at the cost proposed could be operated without substantial loss for many years to come.

The Committee considers that Parliament should be in a position to ascertain at any time the financial position of the Abattoirs and recommends that the control of the Abattoirs and of the distribution of meat in the Territory be placed under the control of a Departmental Committee, and that this Committee be obliged to submit each year to Parliament a profit and loss account shewing the financial operations of the establishment.

During the course of its investigations, the Committee was informed that, owing to the restricted markets available, difficulty is experienced in obtaining in sufficient quantities supplies of livers, fries, etc., so essential in hospital diet.

The Committee learned with concern that, while the Abattoirs, with lower killing charges than other establishments, are incurring a substantial annual loss, some of the butchers using the facilities provided are making excessive profits.

It was also suggested that something in the nature of a monopoly controlled the retailing of meat in the Territory.

For these and other reasons the Committee gave some thought as to whether the residents of Canberra might not be better served if it were made possible to obtain their meat supplies from any properly supervised abattoirs outside the Territory.

After discussion the Committee decided, in view of the present loss being incurred and the fact that greater loss might be expected if abattoirs costing £55,000 were provided, that a more modified scheme should be devised, the cost of which should be restricted to £35,000. Failing this, that the advisability of securing meat supplies for the Territory from other approved abattoirs be explored.

The decision arrived at by the Committee in connection with

this matter is shown by the following extract from its Minutes of Proceedings, viz.:-

"Senator Lamp moved: That, in view of the substantial loss being incurred on the present Abattoirs, and the certainty that new works at a cost of £55,000 would result in greater loss, even with an increased turnover and higher charges for killing, the Committee recommends that a modified scheme be devised to provide for a modern establishment at a cost not exceeding £35,000.

Failing the practicability of installing an efficient Abattoirs plant at that figure that the advisability of securing meat supplies for the Territory from other approved Abattoirs be explored.

Seconded by Mr. Martens.

- Mr. Sheehan moved as an amendment: That -
- (a) The existing Abattoirs be abandoned;
 - (b) No new Abattoirs be erected in Canberra for the present;
 - (c) The Meat Ordinance be rescinded to permit of the entry of meat supplies from any source where killing conditions, etc., are under strict Government supervision;
 - (d) Cold storage accommodation be erected in Canberra to take supplies of meat, butter, fruit, vegetables, etc.

Seconded by Mr. James.

The Committee divided on the amendment. Ayes - 3, Messrs. Badman, James and Sheehan; Noes - 6, Messrs. Brand, Cooper, Jolly, Lamp, Martens, Stacey, and so it passed in the negative.

The original motion was then put.

The Committee divided. Ayes - 6, Messrs. Brand, Cooper, Jolly, Lamp, Martens, and Stacey; Noes - 3, Messrs. Badman, James, and Sheehan; and so it was resolved in the affirmative."

With the provision of modern facilities in the new Abattoirs, the Committee is of opinion that butchers outside the Territory should be encouraged to make use of them. It is, therefore, recommended that, on the completion of the Abattoirs, any meat killed there and duly branded with the requisite stamp be eligible for sale in the Territory.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS.

Briefly summarised, the recommendations of the Committee are:-

- (a) That the existing Abattoirs are out-of-date and inadequate to supply Canberra's growing demand for beef, mutton, pork, etc., and should be abandoned;
- (b) That a new Abattoirs be provided, but that the cost be restricted to £35,000;
- (c) That, failing the practicability of (b), the advisability of securing meat supplies for the Territory from other approved Abattoirs be explored;
- (d) That, on the completion of the Abattoirs, any meat killed there and branded with the requisite stamp be eligible for sale in the Territory;

- (e) That the control of the Abattoirs and the distribution of meat in the Territory be placed under the control of a Departmental Committee and that this Committee be obliged to submit to Parliament each year a profit and loss account shewing the operations of the establishment.

SAVINGS EFFECTED BY THE COMMITTEE.

The adoption of these recommendations will, it is anticipated, result in a saving to the Commonwealth of approximately £20,000.

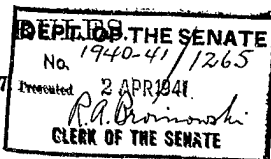
CH Brand

(C. H. Brand),
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary
Standing Committee on Public Works,
Parliament House,
CANBERRA.
31st March, 1941.

STATUTORY

1941. No. 67



REGULATION UNDER THE DESIGNS ACT 1906-1934.*

I, THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL in and over the Commonwealth of Australia, acting with the advice of the Federal Executive Council, hereby make the following Regulation under the *Designs Act* 1906-1934.

Dated this twenty-sixth day of March, 1941.

GOWRIE

Governor-General.

By His Excellency's Command,

W. M. HUGHES

Attorney-General.

AMENDMENT OF THE DESIGNS REGULATIONS 1906.†

Regulation 5 of the Designs Regulations 1906 is amended by *reca.* adding at the end thereof the following sub-regulation:—

“(3) Where any document provided for by the Act or these Regulations is lost or destroyed, and the Registrar is satisfied that its loss or destruction was due to circumstances arising from the existence of a state of war, the Registrar may issue, without fee, a certified copy of the document so lost or destroyed or, if the Registrar thinks fit, he may supply a further document to the same effect as the document lost or destroyed.”

* Notified in the *Commonwealth Gazette* on 27th March, 1941.

† Statutory Rules 1907, No. 61, as amended by Statutory Rules 1913, No. 178; 1930, No. 150; 1934, Nos. 1 and 121; 1935, Nos. 24 and 73; and 1937, No. 53.