

COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT.

DIGEST OF DECISIONS
AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

AND

IMPORTANT SPEECHES

BY

THE PRIME MINISTER
(THE RIGHT HON. J. B. CHIFLEY).

No. 116.

PERIOD, 18TH JUNE, 1946, TO 10TH JULY, 1946.

By Authority:
L. F. JOHNSTON, Commonwealth Government Printer, Canberra
(Printed in Australia.)

K2

MIGRATION.

PASSPORTS—RESTRICTIONS, RELAXATIONS.

On 18th June, 1946, the Minister for Immigration (Mr. Calwell) announced that restrictions imposed under *National Security Act* Regulations on the issue of passports would be lifted from 1st July, 1946. Passports for Japan would be excepted. Any person would then be able to secure a passport to leave Australia by complying with the usual conditions. Restrictions on the issue of passports to doctors and nurses would be lifted. Previously, passports had been issued only to doctors and nurses wishing to do post-graduate courses or gain experience in overseas hospitals. Persons going to Britain must undertake to remain away for twelve months or until shipping facilities became available for their return without inconveniencing persons in the priority classes.

BRITISH MIGRANTS—CHILDREN.

On 2nd July, 1946, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

“ Legal guardianship of British children who were evacuated to Australia during 1940 for the duration of the war was vested in the Minister for the Interior (later changed to the Minister for Immigration), and through him in the various State Child Welfare Departments under *National Security (Oversea Children) Regulations*. Of the 577 children who came to Australia, over 100 are remaining here, some temporarily to complete educational courses or apprenticeships and others permanently.

“ Cabinet decided to-day that, with the expiry of the *National Security Act* on 31st December, 1946, legislation be introduced to enable the Minister for Immigration to continue as the legal guardian of overseas children who remain in Australia and also as the legal guardian of children brought to Australia under any governmental or non-governmental immigration organization.”

INDUSTRIAL.

STRIKES—COMPARATIVE FIGURES.

In Parliament.—On 19th June, 1946, the Minister for Labour (Mr. Holloway) said—

“ The number of industrial disputes and working days lost from 1939–45 inclusive have been—

	Disputes.	Days Lost.
1939	416	459,164
1940	350	1,507,252
1941	567	984,174
1942	602	378,195
1943	785	990,161
1944	941	912,752
1945	945	2,119,641

(For earlier references, please see No. 103, page 30.)

STRIKES—PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH.

In Parliament.—On 4th July, 1946, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

“Rightly or wrongly, and I am not entering into that at the moment, men in Queensland are on strike. I am not attempting to condone the strike; I merely point out that if the men have decided that they will not work, they cannot be forced by law to go to work. What then is the next step? They may be fined, and if they do not pay the fine they may be sent to jail. But the application of such a policy has never been successful in settling an industrial dispute. I defy anybody to prove to me that such action has ever produced industrial peace or effected a settlement of an industrial dispute. I have been associated with many industrial disputes. Even if a mistress has a difference with her house-maid, I am expected to intervene. The Leader of the Country Party (Mr. Fadden) wants me, on behalf of the Government, to intervene in the Queensland meat dispute, although the State Industrial Court is in control of it and the State Government, under its emergency powers, is operating the relevant legislation to deal with it. What form of intervention does he propose? Does he want me to order the men back to work?”

“I cannot visualize the Commonwealth Government intervening in this dispute, regrettable though it is. I do not attempt to condone it. The State Industrial Court, and the State Government with its emergency powers, has all the law that is needed. Will the enforcement of that law bring the dispute to an end? We know that it will not. Intervention by the Commonwealth Government would only make confusion worse confounded.

“All the parties to the dispute have been strong-minded, and have hotly supported the stand they have taken. There is too much strong-mindedness in many industrial disputes. I do not deny that I would have tried to induce the parties to come together. I could not, of course, approach the Industrial Court. I do not know whether the State Government or the Premier would be able to make any approach to the court, because it has made the declaration, ‘You must go back to work before we shall do anything’. The employers say, ‘We will not meet you until you go back to work’. The reply of the employees is, ‘We will not return to work except under pre-strike conditions’. Mr. Fadden has urged that the Commonwealth Government should intervene because of the influence that is being wielded by Communists. I have received hundreds of telegrams from those whom he has described as Communists, asking me to intervene in total disregard of the State Industrial Court and the State Government. To do that would be to destroy the effect of the Queensland law and the judgment of the Industrial Court; not that that would worry me very much, because I believe that there are some faults on that side. In my opinion, had the employers been prepared to give way a little, the strike could have been settled.

“Mr. Fadden wants me to override the State Industrial Court and the State Government, by the exercise of a power possessed by the Commonwealth; in other words, to flout the Queensland law and the State court. We have been unable to discern in what way any law that we could operate would be more effective than the laws which the Queensland Government

has the power to operate. Their application, of course, does not get the men back to work. There is a great deal that I could say about the dispute; but I do not want to add fuel to the fire. I have been very disappointed at the trend of events. As a matter of fact, almost every day since I returned from abroad I have been told that negotiations were proceeding and that the dispute would be settled. Yet it has dragged on from day to day. I do not want Mr. Fadden or this House to believe that I am happy about the position. If the Commonwealth were to engage in a fight not only with the strikers, but also, if you like, with the employers, the Queensland Government and the State Industrial Court, the state of affairs would be akin to legislative anarchy. Had the Commonwealth Government issued an order stating that the meat-workers should return to work under pre-strike conditions, the order would have been obeyed. But that would have been a complete flouting of the Queensland Industrial Court. It would have been totally at variance with the wishes of the State Government and would have been violently opposed by the employers. Merely because we did not wish to flout other laws that were operating in respect of the matter, such an order was not issued.

"The matter does not involve a return to work at award rates. Apparently, some agreements between the employers and employees have been operating for a period of years, giving to the employees considerable benefits which are not provided for in the award. At least, that claim is made by the employers and the court. The matter does not touch the four men who were dismissed from their employment in a bacon factory. I believe that their dispute could have been settled by the court separately. The Communists, near-Communists, or Cryptos—call them what you will—are the very people who have been asking us to step in and override the State laws by saying to the employees, 'Go back to work on pre-strike conditions'. The dispute is most unfortunate. I do not make any apology, nor does the Minister for Agriculture (Mr. Scully), for having asked the Meat Controller to see whether personal contact would produce a better feeling and result in the men returning to work.

"We cannot drive men back to work. They are really in no different position from that of the milk producers who refused to supply milk. Men have the right to refuse to work. I admit that it is unjust to the community. In the final analysis, I suppose men have the right to dispose of their labour just as the man who produces wheat or any other commodity has the right to dispose of it.

"I believe that if suitable action had been taken to bring employers and employees together a settlement might have been reached long ago. However, I cannot see why the Commonwealth Government should attempt to override the State Industrial Court in opposition to the State Government, or why we should attempt to override the State emergency legislation."

UNEMPLOYMENT—FIGURES.

In Parliament.—On 4th July, 1946, the Minister for Post-war Reconstruction (Mr. Dedman) said—

"The total number of persons unemployed in Australia on 21st June, 1946, was 11,100, about 60 per cent. of whom were receiving unemployment

benefit. The other 40 per cent. were receiving a re-employment allowance as ex-servicemen while awaiting employment in the type of work they desired."

PRIMARY INDUSTRIES.

POULTRY FARMING—EGGS, CONTROL, CESSATION FIXED.

On 19th June, 1946, the Minister for Agriculture (Mr. Scully) announced that the control of the egg industry under *National Security Act Regulations* would continue in operation until 31st December, 1946, when the Act expired. It was previously proposed that control should cease on 30th June, 1946, in view of the establishment of a central organization by the several State Egg Marketing Boards known as "Egg Boards of Australia Limited" which intended to take over control of the industry as from 1st July, 1946. Circumstances precluded the company from commencing operations and he had authorized continuance of Commonwealth control until 31st December, 1946, before which date the position regarding the organization should be clarified.

EXPORTS TO BRITAIN—EGGS.

On 19th June, 1946, Mr. Scully announced that exports to the British Ministry of Food from 1st July to 31st December, 1946, would be 1,000,000 cases of eggs, equivalent to 30,000,000 dozen eggs as well as about 20,000,000 lb. of frozen egg pulp, equivalent to nearly 17,000,000 dozen eggs.

COTTON—BOUNTY.

On 2nd July, 1946, the Minister for Customs (Senator Fraser) said that the *Raw Cotton Bounty Act* would expire on 31st December, 1946, and the Government had decided to introduce legislation to extend the operation of the Act so that producers would be guaranteed that the present net return of 15d. per lb. of raw cotton above the grade known as "strict good ordinary" would be continued on cotton produced in Australia during 1947 and each year until 31st December, 1951. The guaranteed net returns would be computed after taking into account the net return from by-products of raw cotton. Raw cotton of "strict good ordinary" or lower grades would continue to receive bounty at half the appropriate rate as provided under the Act. The bounty had been extended subject to the Queensland Government making every endeavour to implement undertakings given during 1939-40 to improve the efficiency of cotton growing.

PARLIAMENT.

BROADCASTING—BILL INTRODUCED.

In Parliament.—On 19th June, 1946, the Postmaster-General (Senator Cameron) introduced the Parliamentary Proceedings Broadcasting Bill. Senator Cameron said—

"The broadcasting of the proceedings of the Commonwealth Parliament has received the careful consideration of the Government, and it has decided that arrangements be made for these broadcasts to be introduced during

the present session. Investigations have demonstrated that it is not practicable to establish a separate network of medium-wave stations to broadcast the proceedings of Parliament. In any case, the establishment of such a network would involve an expenditure in the neighbourhood of £500,000.

"The Government considers that it would be preferable to commence the service on some modified plan which would not cause so much disturbance to existing programme arrangements. The Government has reached the conclusion that the service should be commenced on an experimental basis, the broadcasts of parliamentary proceedings being confined at the outset to the second national station in the capital city of each State and in Newcastle. If, as expected, the innovation proves acceptable to the public, it will be necessary to determine from time to time the extent to which the facilities it is intended to use at first should be expanded. Accordingly, provision has been made in the bill for the employment of such of the other national stations as may be prescribed. Consideration would, of course, be given to the use of short-wave stations.

"The Government holds the view that control of the broadcasts should be exercised by Parliament itself through a joint parliamentary committee. The bill accordingly provides for the appointment of a committee including the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. It will be appreciated that there are a number of details to be settled in connexion with the apportionment of broadcasting time between both Houses of the Parliament when they are sitting simultaneously, and in regard to the rights of members, technical and programme arrangements. It is the Government's desire that the joint committee should examine all these questions and recommend to Parliament the general principles on which the broadcasts should be undertaken. After the adoption of its recommendations by both Houses, the joint committee will control the subsequent arrangements. From time to time questions may arise which will require prompt attention and it is desirable that the joint committee should have authority to delegate, to a sub-committee, its powers to determine the days on which, and the periods during which, the proceedings of either House shall be broadcast.

"The Government accepts the view that the immunities and privileges applying to debates within Parliament should be extended to the broadcasts of parliamentary proceedings.

"The Bill embraces the foregoing conclusions and, in anticipation of it being acceptable to Parliament, arrangements have been made, with the concurrence of the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, for the erection of a control booth in each House and for the installation of such equipment as is necessary to enable the broadcasts to be undertaken. It should be practicable to commence the broadcasting of parliamentary proceedings before the end of the present session, the actual date being determined by the joint committee, which will be selected as soon as the measure becomes law."

In Parliament.—On 20th June, 1946, Senator Cameron moved the following amendment:—

One of the members of the committee shall be the President of the Senate, one member shall be the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and, of the other four members of the committee, two shall be members of, and appointed by, the Senate and two shall be members of, and appointed by, the House of Representatives.

[*The amendment was carried.*]

In Parliament.—On 4th July, 1946, the Minister for Information (Mr. Calwell) moved an amendment to the Parliamentary Proceedings Broadcasting Bill to provide that the Joint Committee on the broadcasting of parliamentary proceedings should comprise nine members instead of six.

[*The amendment was carried and, later, was carried in the Senate.*]

[*The bill was passed.*]

In Parliament.—On 5th July, 1946, the Speaker (Mr. Rosevear), chairman, the President (Senator Brown), Senators Arnold and Gibson, Messrs. Corser, Fraser, Haylen, Holt and Sheehan were appointed members of the Joint Committee on the Broadcasting of Parliamentary Proceedings.

In Parliament.—On 5th July, 1946, the Joint Committee submitted the following report:—

Days on which proceedings shall be broadcast: The proceedings of Parliament shall be broadcast on each day on which either House is sitting.

Period during which proceedings shall be broadcast: The broadcast shall commence on each sitting day at the time fixed for the meeting of the House whose opening proceedings are to be broadcast on that day as determined by the Joint Committee, and shall cease when the adjournment is moved in the House which is being broadcast at that time.

Allocation of broadcasting time between the Senate and the House of Representatives: The allocation of broadcasting time between the Senate and the House of Representatives shall be in accordance with the views of the Joint Committee, or its sub-committee, on the importance of the impending debate and the public interest attaching thereto. The committee recognizes that in practice more time will be allotted to the House of Representatives than to the Senate.

Re-broadcast of questions without notice and answers: Within the limits of time available, questions without notice and answers in each House shall be re-broadcast between 7.20 p.m. and 7.55 p.m. on each sitting day.

Broadcast and re-broadcast through national stations: No broadcast or re-broadcast of the proceedings of either House shall be made except through national broadcasting stations unless the Joint Committee otherwise determines.

[*The report was adopted.*]

PRIVILEGE—PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS.

In Parliament.—On 4th July, 1946, the Acting Attorney-General (Mr. Holloway) introduced the Parliamentary Papers Bill. Mr. Holloway said—

“ This bill proposes to give absolute protection against civil or criminal proceedings, for example proceedings for libel, in respect of the publication under the authority of a parliamentary committee of any document laid before the committee or of any evidence given before the committee.”

“ The *Parliamentary Papers Act*, which the bill proposes to amend, provides, amongst other things, that no action or proceedings, civil or criminal shall lie against any person for publishing any document published under the authority of the Senate or the House of Representatives. The act does not apply to publication under the authority of a parliamentary committee.

but where the evidence given before a parliamentary committee is tabled in either House of the Parliament and ordered by that House to be printed the protection given by the act applies.

"However, when evidence is tabled and ordered to be printed, a large number of copies must be printed to meet the requirements of the circulation list for parliamentary papers. For example, on the tabling of the report of the Standing Committee on Broadcasting regarding proposed staff regulations for the Australian Broadcasting Commission, the number of copies printed was 660. It is considered that the expense of printing the evidence before parliamentary committees as a parliamentary paper is not always justified. As an instance, the Standing Committee on Broadcasting considers that the number of copies of the evidence given before it which, generally speaking, need be printed is about 40. I feel sure that where a committee itself arranges the publication of evidence before it with the object of saving public money, it should not be deprived of the protection of the *Parliamentary Papers Act*. It may be that the publication is already privileged either at common law or by virtue of section 49 of the Commonwealth Constitution, but it is considered desirable to put the matter beyond doubt. The bill is designed to achieve this object and applies to documents and evidence published after 23rd September, 1943."

[The bill was passed.]

ENEMY ALIENS.

OVERSEAS INTERNEES—INQUIRY, MR. JUSTICE SIMPSON'S REPORT.

In Parliament.—On 19th June, 1946, the Minister for Immigration (Mr. Calwell) said—

"Mr. Justice Simpson was appointed by the Government to inquire into the cases of a number of enemy aliens who were still being held in internment. He was asked to report to the Government as to which persons should be released to remain in residence in this country, and as to which persons should be repatriated to their homelands. The Government has decided to carry out Mr. Justice Simpson's recommendations in their entirety. A number of persons are being held in internment pending repatriation; they will be repatriated as soon as shipping is available. If shipping is not available before the expiration of the *National Security Act*, special legislation will be enacted to enable me to give effect to Mr. Justice Simpson's recommendations."

On 2nd July, 1946, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

"When the *National Security Act* ceases on 31st December, 1946, there will be no power by which enemy aliens interned during the war and whose repatriation has been recommended by a Supreme Court judge in the interests of public safety and the defence of the Commonwealth can be repatriated. Further, because of lack of shipping, it may not be possible to give effect to the judge's recommendations before the act expires.

"Cabinet to-day decided that the Minister for Immigration (Mr. Calwell) prepare a bill to provide for the repatriation of aliens who were interned

during the war and after an inquiry by a judicial authority are deemed to be a menace to the security of the Commonwealth; the control of the movements of aliens interned during the war and released while awaiting repatriation following a judicial inquiry which deemed them to be a menace to the security of the Commonwealth; and the repatriation of aliens who, after a judicial inquiry, are deemed to be a danger to the security of the Commonwealth."

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY.

BILL INTRODUCED.

In Parliament.—On 19th June, 1946, the Minister for Post-war Reconstruction (Mr. Dedman) introduced the Australian National University Bill. Mr. Dedman said—

"The Government is anxious that the national university which this bill seeks to establish should be established in such manner that it will bring credit to Australia, advance the cause of learning and research in general, and take its rightful place among the great universities of the world. For this reason I will sympathetically consider any amendments with the object of helping the university achieve these ends.

"Australia has gained a justifiably high reputation in university teaching and research, and the Government believes that the establishment of an Australian national university at Canberra will bring still further credit to our country, not only by the work done within its own walls by its own staff and research students, but also by collaboration and co-operation between its members and the research workers and teachers of the other Australian universities. With the help and encouragement of other universities, and of all men and women of good will, the national university will soon be in a position to take its share in solving many complex problems which are the joint responsibility of all universities.

"The establishment of a university is a matter of considerable complexity and a very great responsibility. For this reason the Government has not acted hastily. I have discussed the problems involved with the Minister for the Interior (Mr. Johnson), with other Ministers concerned, with the Vice-Chancellors of the Universities of Sydney and Melbourne and with groups of distinguished scientists who have been called together by the Inter-Departmental Committee on Education to advise on the general and detailed questions associated with this project. In addition, the Government has had the help and advice of the Canberra University College Council.

"The essence of democratic government is that all national issues must ultimately be decided by the people themselves. To me it is more than ever important at this stage in Australia's development that the Australian people should have available everything they need to permit their decisions to be made wisely and after a full understanding of the issues involved. Both in Australia and in the world at large, innumerable problems await solution if the future is to be made safe and the people placed in a position to enjoy the fruits of the developments in science and in human relationships during the last six years. The first thing that must be done is to

ensure that these developments are studied in relation particularly to their application in Australia. Progress in physical science has culminated in the harnessing of atomic energy and this has brought the world to its final crossroads. Mishandled, these discoveries in the physical world can make peace and prosperity impossible. Properly used they may introduce an era of happiness and prosperity unparalleled in world history. It is essential that Australia, in common with the other nations of the world, should do everything possible to foster that careful research which will allow us to become the masters, not the servants, of our physical environment. In medicine, too, the outstanding achievements of the war years await full and proper application to the civil needs of our people. Once again this implies patient research by all the talent at our disposal and demands the establishment of appropriate institutions at which this research may be conducted. The Government feels that the university now proposed for Canberra is one appropriate place in which this research may be carried out. On the side of human relationships, our continued development, and a full understanding of our problems, requires that we encourage research into the social sciences. Here, more than in any other field of learning, Australia has an outstanding contribution to make to the world at large. In economics, history, law, anthropology, and in all the related social sciences, Australia is in a particularly advantageous position.

"We have also greatly increased responsibility to shoulder in relation to other people, and particularly to those with whom we are associated as a Pacific power. The whole field of Pacific studies awaits fuller development than it has previously received in Australia. Our relations with the East, with the Americas, with the East Indies, New Zealand, New Guinea and all the Pacific islands, must be carefully studied so that they may become friendly and fruitful if our future is to be safeguarded and if we are to make our full contribution in the councils of the nations. Here, our opportunities are unique. Our remoteness enables us to consider the fundamental issues involved, free from the day to day fears and turmoil that beset many of the great Powers. For that reason we have a duty to the world at large which we must recognize if we are to be accepted as a world Power.

"The bill is very straightforward and needs little amplification. It follows in broad outline the general plan of government which operates successfully in other universities, both in Australia and overseas. It will be noted that the functions of the university lay particular stress on post-graduate research and the research schools of immediate importance to Australia are set out, but nothing in the bill prevents the establishment of other research schools that may appear essential to the governing body of the university. It is recognized that facilities must be made available in Canberra to meet the increasing needs for undergraduate studies and for special training for officers of government departments and provision is made to enable this to be done.

"The governing authority of the university is to be a council consisting of not more than 30 members and to be composed partly of elected members and partly of members appointed by the Governor-General and by the

Parliament. The university must be free to administer its own affairs without any pressure from outside, otherwise decisions on highly complex technical matters may be taken which are not in the best interests of the university, and which may prevent it from carrying out its work efficiently. The appropriate safeguards against such outside interference are contained in the bill which specifically refers all matters connected with the government of the university to the council.

"I do not anticipate that the university will be in full operation for some time, but it is essential that as much basic planning as possible be completed so that the necessary plans can be laid for buildings and other essential work. The acute shortage of labour and materials for building will prevent an immediate start being made on any accommodation for the university. I propose that the bill be amended to permit the appointment of an interim council to carry out the work of the council until that body can be properly constituted and appointed, and in particular to undertake the preliminary work relating to the planning of the university.

"The Government is concerned that the university should be able to plan ahead, particularly on its research side, and I propose to provide the university with a grant which will be reviewed every five years rather than to leave it dependent on the funds voted annually by Parliament. The Government proposes to make available in the first five years, commencing with the financial year 1951-52, the sum of £325,000 a year. The amount will be reviewed every five years thereafter. In the period before July, 1951, such amount will be made available, to a maximum of £325,000 a year, as is actually needed to meet running expenses. The Government will provide sufficient funds to enable the university to start with buildings worthy of the objects for which they are built and in keeping with the best types of architecture in the Capital Territory. Accordingly the Government has approved £872,500 for buildings for the university. This amount will not be required immediately, nor will it be drawn from any one budget.

"The vice-chancellor, as the administrative head of the university, will be, in many ways, the key member of its staff. In the first instance, it is proposed that the vice-chancellor be appointed by the Governor-General for five years. All subsequent appointments to that office will be made by the council. It is vital that the vice-chancellor be a man of outstanding administrative ability, and, if possible, of high academic standing. I believe that he must at all costs secure men of world reputation to supervise the work of the various research schools."

[The bill was passed.]

COAL-MINING INDUSTRY.

CONTROL—COAL CLIFF COLLIERY.

In Parliament.—On 20th June, 1946, the Minister for Supply (Senator Ashley) said that losses in the operation of Coal Cliff colliery by the Commonwealth had been—

Year ended March, 1945, £28,350; year ended March, 1946, £27,652.

LITERARY CENSORSHIP BOARD.

MEMBERS RE-APPOINTED.

On 20th June, 1946, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) announced that Dr. L. H. Allen (chairman), Prof. J. F. M. Haydon and Mr. K. Binns had been re-appointed members of the Literature Censorship Board for three years from 25th June, 1946. Sir Robert Garran had been re-appointed Appeal Censor for the same period from the same date.

DEFENCE.

POST-WAR—RIFLE CLUBS.

In Parliament.—On 20th June, 1946, the Minister for the Army (Mr. Forde) said—

“The Government has authorized the re-establishment of rifle clubs as from 1st July, 1946. The departmental organization for the administration of the rifle club movement will be on the lines in force before 1931, when the rifle clubs were a civil movement under the Department of Defence.”

POST-WAR—BRITISH COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE.

On 27th June, 1946, the acting Minister for Defence (Mr. Forde) announced that Lieutenant-Generals S. F. Rowell, C. A. Clowes and F. H. Berryman, and Brigadier R. King would attend a defence conference of the commanders-in-chief of all British army commands at home and overseas and of representatives of the Dominions in Britain in August, 1946.

WOOL.

MANUFACTURES—SUBSIDY.

On 20th June, 1946, the Minister for Customs (Senator Fraser) announced that subsidy would be paid to maintain existing prices of wool to Australian manufacturers for utilization in goods for domestic consumption, when auction sales recommenced after 30th June, 1946. The purpose of the subsidy was to enable Australian manufacturers to compete with overseas buyers in a manner that will avoid interference with normal auction purchases. Subsidies would be paid to manufacturers to re-imburse any excess paid in purchasing at prices for domestic consumption but not in excess of the average market level for individual wool types at a series of auction sales. That ensured that manufacturers would not bid extravagantly on the assumption that the Commonwealth Government would meet deficiencies resulting from unlimited bidding.

WHEAT STABILIZATION SCHEME.

POST-WAR—BILL INTRODUCED.

In Parliament.—On 20th June, 1946, the Minister for Agriculture (Mr. Scully) introduced the Wheat Industry Stabilization Bill. Mr. Scully said—

“Wheat has been a troubled industry for many years. For a decade before the war, it was frequently in a depressed condition and constant assistance from governments was required. Prices were low and growers

could not obtain a reasonable living from their labour. Other wheat-producing countries were in a similar plight, and wheat presented the world's greatest agricultural problem. The need for stabilization in Australia was recognized, but it is beyond the power of any Commonwealth Government to stabilize the industry. Joint action by all Australian governments is necessary, because both States and Commonwealth are vitally affected by matters concerning the wheat industry. Although the problem is old, to date it has not been possible to get agreement on a plan, and the method of operating it.

" The bill is intended to give security to the wheat industry in Australia. It provides growers with a guaranteed minimum price for wheat for five years, and has the machinery to maintain minimum price guarantees as a permanent feature. The effect will be to remove the feature which disturbed the industry most in the past; that is, the impact of unduly low prices. It will be replaced by a system under which wheat farmers will know, for a period of years in advance, that they will receive a definite price for their wheat. They can plan their farm programme with an assured return, and with the knowledge that they will not be ruined by market changes which cannot be foreseen or controlled. The stabilization proposals represent the considered judgment of governments and growers, first, as to the measures needed for the industry, and, second, as to the best way to effect them. Co-operation with the States is an essential part of the plan. The States control production, and production must be regulated according to the markets available for our wheat. In marketing, Commonwealth and States must use their constitutional powers in harmony if the plan is to be effective; neither can provide effective marketing unaided. In the plan now proposed, the States have shown their willingness to co-operate with the Commonwealth. It has been discussed in detail with State Governments, and they have agreed to bring complementary legislation before their parliaments. The Government has consulted wheat-growers' organizations. The plan was discussed with the Wheat Growers' Federation in December, 1945, and growers' views on its details were then expounded fully. The various points stressed received consideration and it has been possible to meet them in full. The bill represents the greatest practicable measure of co-operation between governments and growers to settle the problem of the wheat industry.

" The plan provides a minimum guaranteed price for wheat for the period 1945-46 to 1949-50. It provides for review during the currency of the scheme, with a view to its extension beyond the five years. Growers will contribute to a stabilization fund, when prices are high, and the contribution will be not more than 50 per cent. of the excess of the export price above the guaranteed minimum price. The Commonwealth will meet any deficiency in any one year should the stabilization fund become exhausted. A central marketing organization will be responsible for the marketing of the Australian wheat crop, and production will be regulated in accordance with the markets available. The guaranteed price for the seasons 1945-46 to 1949-50, is 5s. 2d. a bushel f.o.r. ports for f.a.q. bagged wheat. This minimum will apply to the whole of the marketed crops.

At present, a home-consumption price applies to wheat used locally for flour. This will be extended to cover other wheat used locally. There is, in addition, the very important point of the guarantee for export wheat. Control over local wheat prices is always possible, but the grower will now get protection against slumps which have been a regular feature of world markets, and the Commonwealth will take a financial risk to give that protection. It is intended that the guaranteed price will apply for five seasons, but, before the period is up, the plan will be reviewed, and a fresh guarantee given for a further period. The intention is to have regular reviews, and to maintain always a guaranteed price for some seasons ahead. The first period has been fixed as a reasonable period of security and a reasonable period for a fixed commitment. The guaranteed price is the minimum return, and growers will get more when export prices are high. They are given a definite floor price.

A contribution from growers is provided for. It is considered that, in principle, a government guarantee, which is really a guarantee from the taxpayer should be accompanied by contributions from growers when prices are high. This principle is accepted by growers and a 50-50 contribution is generally conceded to be fair. When prices are high, growers will contribute up to 50 per cent. of the excess above the guaranteed price of export wheat. The money so subscribed will go into a stabilization fund, and will be used to meet the guarantee when prices fall. The fund will be a trust fund. There is no intention of building up an excessively large fund, and, if prices remain higher than is now expected, the contribution will be reduced below 50 per cent. The effect is that growers will make a reasonable but not an excessive contribution, and the Commonwealth will meet the guarantee if a run of low prices exhausts the fund. This means that growers will share in the extra amounts from high price years, and are assured in advance against a price below 5s. 2d.

"It is not proposed, that returns shall be permanently out of line with the export price, nor that the industry will be continually subsidized. Two-thirds of our wheat goes on to the export market, and we must compete with other countries for our markets. The plan gives time for adjustments to meet changing world conditions, and it protects growers against a rapid fall on the export market. It cannot relieve them of the need to meet world competition in the export trade. It is hoped, however, that an effective international agreement will protect export markets in future. For the next five years, come what may in the export field, growers are guaranteed against the effect of a world slump. They will not receive in any one of the five years less than 5s. 2d.

"The difficulties of making a guarantee effective can hardly be overcome without a central organization for marketing. A wheat board will be set up to handle and sell the crops with the benefits of war-time experience and of an efficient organization. The board will succeed the war-time Wheat Board and carry on its work. In its new set-up it will operate under joint powers conferred by Commonwealth and States, and the statutory power to operate will relate almost entirely to wheat covered by the State acts.

"Regulation of production is a part of the plan in which action would be impossible without full State co-operation. The long history of wheat

gluts and wheat shortages has shown how easy it is to go from one extreme to the other. Wheat gluts build up fast, and the low prices which result have had a disastrous effect in past years on wheat farmers here and overseas. Over-production must be avoided in the future. We wish to produce all the wheat we reasonably can, and to sell it at a price fair to growers and consumers. We want to avoid temporary high-price expansion in the industry which would leave it over-capitalized and unable to carry on when prices recede. Deliberate regulation according to markets available is a new departure, but it offers the best prospect for avoiding a return to the disastrous see-saw from glut to scarcity. It may seem odd at present to be thinking of regulating wheat production. Australia is now trying to produce the maximum crop and to supply everything possible to meet overseas needs. But we must prepare for whatever may come in the future, and it is likely that, within a short time, a wheat glut may recur. If it does, farmers will again be faced with depression, and precautions against that must be taken now.

“Normal pre-war basis of production can be maintained and it will be practicable to include in the industry soldier settlers and farmers’ sons. I hope that conditions of world trade in the years to come will give an outlet for all the wheat which Australia can produce. If so, there will be room for expansion to the limit of economic productive capacity. It must, however, be realized that farmers cannot go into the wheat industry one season, and out of it the next. Once in it, they are committed to heavy outlay and years of production. Boom years are a menace because of the danger of high land prices and over-capitalized farms, leading to a financial structure which is not able to meet low or medium price years. For that reason, the production basis must be decided with the greatest care. The plan is intended to make the wheat industry sound financially. Regulation of production—not restriction of production—has been recognized over the years as one requisite for any plan. That is recognized not only by governments but by the growers; and growers are willing to co-operate in regulation of the industry to secure the wide benefits of stabilization. Regulation of production was brought in as a war-time measure, and now can readily be adapted to peace-time needs. It is a State function, and Commonwealth and States will co-operate to secure uniformity in administration.

“There are two Commonwealth bills, and complementary legislation will be necessary in each State. It is considered the State legislation can be covered by one act, and one object of the discussions was to secure uniformity among the States. The Wheat Industry Stabilization Bill provides the mechanism for carrying out the plan I have outlined, and for co-operating with the States in all necessary matters. The Wheat Export Charge Bill completes the work by providing for the charge which forms the growers’ contribution to the bill. Difficult problems will be met in administration. I am confident that they will be overcome by the partnership of Commonwealth and States.

“The Wheat Charges Bill, to be introduced later, provides for a maximum contribution of 50 per cent., or a lower rate if prescribed, of the difference between the guaranteed price of 5s. 2d. and the average export price in

any one year or such part of the export price as is prescribed. It is proposed for the 1945-46 crop, that the contribution be 50 per cent. of the difference between 5s. 2d. and 9s. 6d. bagged. The average export return is estimated to be 10s. Growers will be paid from the pool on the following basis:— 5s. 2d. a bushel for domestically consumed wheat, and for export wheat 5s. 2d. a bushel plus 50 per cent. of the difference between 5s. 2d., the guaranteed price, and 9s. 6d.—which is 2s. 2d.; and a further 6d. on export wheat, this being the difference between 10s. and 9s. 6d. It is estimated that, for the whole of the wheat marketed local and export, the grower will receive 6s. 7d. a bushel f.o.r. at ports bagged.

“ Summarized, the two bills provide—

The preservation over five years of a price of 5s. 2d. a bushel f.o.r. at ports bagged for all wheat consumed within Australia.

A guarantee by the Government of a minimum price for export of 5s. 2d. a bushel f.o.r. at ports bagged.

When the export price exceeds the guaranteed price, growers to contribute to a fund to an amount not exceeding 50 per cent. of the difference between the export price and the guaranteed price of 5s. 2d.

When the export price falls below 5s. 2d., the fund will be called upon to provide the amount necessary to bring the export price up to 5s. 2d.

If and when the fund is exhausted in any one year, the Government under its guarantee will provide, out of general revenue, the funds necessary to bring export prices up to 5s. 2d.

For the 1945-46 crop, the Government proposes that the grower will be paid on export wheat 5s. 2d., plus 2s. 2d., plus the excess of export returns over 9s. 6d. Under this arrangement, it is calculated that, for the whole of his sales, export and local, the grower will receive 6s. 7d. a bushel f.o.r. at ports bagged.

The scheme, including the guarantee, is to operate for five years. During its currency, however, reviews will be made with a view to continuing it under conditions which may or may not be revised, beyond five years.

The plan is designed to provide for stabilized returns over a period of years. Funds will be held on account of growers in years of high prices and paid out in years of low prices. But the Government underwrites the scheme to the extent of guaranteeing that, whatever be the rise or fall of the market over five years, the farmer will get a return not less than 5s. 2d. a bushel f.o.r. bagged at ports.

[The bill was passed.]

(For earlier references, please see No. 108, p. 44; 110, p. 15.)

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS.

FUTURE POLICY—TELECOMMUNICATIONS, BILL INTRODUCED.

In Parliament.—On 20th June, 1946, the Minister for Information (Mr. Calwell) introduced the Overseas Telecommunications Bill. Mr. Calwell said—

“ This bill deals with the transfer to national ownership of the external telecommunication services now owned and operated by Amalgamated Wireless (Australasia) Limited and the establishment of a statutory corporation to operate both radio and cable services linking Australia with other countries. This bill is one of similar pieces of legislation which will be enacted by the parliaments of all self-governing countries in the British Commonwealth and Empire. The step being taken in Australia is part of a unified plan, recommended by the British Commonwealth Telecommunications Conference in July and August, 1945. The conference reached the unanimous conclusion that, to secure the desired strengthening and

better ordering of the British Commonwealth telecommunications system, a fundamental change in the present organization was necessary. The conference recommended—

That the private shareholder interest in the ownership of overseas telecommunication services of Britain, the Dominions and India should be replaced by public ownership.

That the government in each country should acquire the ownership of the telecommunication assets in its territories.

That the type of organization established in each country to own and operate the external telecommunication services should as far as possible be uniform.

That a Commonwealth Telecommunication Board be established to replace the Commonwealth Communications Council, with functions mainly advisory in character, but extending to all the national organizations throughout the Empire instead of being related only to the London organization as under present conditions.

“The conference also worked out a system of pooling of net revenues in a central fund, from which out-payments for the maintenance of the board and the maintenance of the submarine cables could be met, after which the residues would be returned to the respective national bodies.

“Legislation to give effect to the recommendations of the conference has been introduced in the British House of Commons and provides for the acquisition of the shares of Cable and Wireless Limited, apart from the 2,600,000 shares which it already owns, and the payment of compensation to the shareholders. Another bill is to be introduced later for the establishment of the Commonwealth Telecommunications Board and for the carrying into effect of the full scheme recommended by the 1945 conference.

“The bill before this House provides for the full implementation of the recommendations of the conference and the ratification of an overall agreement in the form set out in the first schedule to the bill. The bill provides for the establishment in Australia of a government commission as a corporate body, to acquire the ownership of and to maintain and operate the overseas telecommunication services at present conducted by Amalgamated Wireless (Australasia) Limited and by Cable and Wireless Limited in the territories of the Commonwealth of Australia. The commission will be called the Overseas Telecommunications Commission (Australia). Provision is made for the assessment of the compensation which will be payable to Amalgamated Wireless (Australasia) Limited. The bill provides that the amount may be determined by agreement between the commission and the company. In the event of agreement not being reached, the amount may be determined by a compensation board. If either party is dissatisfied with the amount of compensation determined by the board, an appeal may be made to the High Court. The assets of Cable and Wireless Limited to be taken over by the commission will be transferred by the British Government to the commission at an agreed price to be paid in cash.

“Employees of the two companies who have been exclusively employed by them on telecommunications in Australia for three years or over, and for whom suitable employment can be found by the commission, will become entitled to appointment to positions in the service of the commission, with preservation of their accrued pension, superannuation, furlough and other rights. If it is not found possible to re-engage all the employees affected, it is proposed to come to an arrangement with the companies so that the employees affected will not be placed at a disadvantage.

"The commission will acquire, operate and maintain all the overseas telecommunication services hitherto owned and operated in Australia by Cable and Wireless Limited and Amalgamated Wireless (Australasia) Limited, including in the latter case the operation of coastal and island radio stations which handle wireless traffic with ships at sea and similar traffic exchanged within and between territories of the Commonwealth. The national corporations throughout the Empire will undertake research and developmental work to improve the efficiency of services. This work will be co-ordinated by the Commonwealth Telecommunications Board in London, and that board will also undertake research work on behalf of all partner governments. It is contemplated that the commission shall, if so desired by another national body, undertake to act as agent on agreed terms in maintaining and operating overseas telecommunication services in regional areas adjacent to Australia.

"Power is conferred on the Minister to approve of any contracts where supply, either directly or indirectly, of imported equipment or material of a value exceeding £5,000 is involved. This provision will ensure that due consideration is given by the commission to the use of equipment manufactured in Australia before steps are taken to import material of any appreciable value from abroad. The powers conferred on the commission do not detract in any way from those entrusted to the Minister administering the *Wireless Telegraphy* and the *Post and Telegraph Acts*.

"Conditions under which advances will be made to the commission shall be determined by the Treasurer. The form in which the commission will keep its accounts will be subject to the approval of the Treasurer and to inspection and audit by the Auditor-General. Annual reports and financial statements of the commission, accompanied by a certificate of the Auditor-General, will be submitted to Parliament.

"The commission will arrange free handling of meteorological telegrams exchanged with ships at sea and of similar messages exchanged between Commonwealth meteorological offices and stations. The commission will handle free on behalf of the Post Office other telegrams for transmission within the Commonwealth in cases of interruption to land-lines, in return for which the Post Office will arrange free transmission of messages relating to the commission's administrative affairs.

"The duties and functions of the Commonwealth Telecommunications Board are set out in detail in the overall agreement which becomes a part of the bill. The costs of the board are to be met in agreed proportions from the net revenues of the several national bodies.

"In the overall agreement, a form of tripartite agreement is drawn up for execution in due course by each partner government concerned, the Commonwealth Telecommunications Board and the local national telecommunication body. This tripartite agreement defines the relationship which will exist between the several parties thereto and, in particular, to mutual responsibilities of the local national body and the Commonwealth Telecommunications Board. It provides for the establishment of a central fund into which the national bodies will pay annually their net revenues.

"Of the subscribed capital in Amalgamated Wireless (Australasia) Limited, amounting to £985,518, the Government owns 500,001 fully paid shares and private interests 485,517 shares. Under the agreements to which I have referred the measure of control exercisable by the Government is incommensurate with its majority shareholding. The agreements are so greatly in favour of the company that, apart from approval or veto of tariffs and the granting or withholding of licences for new services and— even this later right by the Government has been denied by the company— the Government has virtually little or no control at all over the policy of the company. Government representation on the Board of Directors is limited to three out of a total of seven directors constituting the board. Effective co-ordination and control of overseas telecommunication services in Australia in the national interest is impracticable of realization so long as two separate companies own and operate the two respective means of overseas communication, cable and radio. The transfer of the services of both companies to the Government will enable their complete co-ordination under a single operating authority, and will ultimately enable cheaper rates to be offered to the users of the services through the avoidance of existing duplication of effort and of overhead costs resulting from the conduct of the respective services by two separate undertakings. The acquisition by the Government of the telecommunication assets of Amalgamated Wireless (Australasia) Limited will involve a reconstitution of the company to enable it to continue as a manufacturing, commercial broadcasting and patent-holding sales and servicing organization. The Government proposes to retain its proportionate shareholding in the reconstituted company, if the private shareholders of Amalgamated Wireless (Australasia) Limited so desire. Provision for this would not be appropriate in this bill, and suitable steps towards this end will be taken later, if necessary."

[The bill was passed.]

(For earlier references, please see No. 93, p. 80; 105, p. 26; 108, p. 27.)

AIRMAIL TO NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES.

On 8th July, 1946, the Postmaster-General (Senator Cameron) announced that airmail facilities had been resumed between Australia and the Netherlands East Indies.

REVIEW OF RENTS.

REGULATIONS—OPERATION REVIEWED.

On 22nd June, 1946, the Minister for Housing (Mr. Lazzarini) said that, because of National Security (Landlord and Tenant) Regulations, there had been an overall rental reduction of 14.4 per cent. in shared accommodation cases determined since the deputy rent controllers commenced operations in October, 1945. A summary of determinations of rents of shared

accommodation for the quarters ended 31st December, 1945, and 31st March, 1946, was—

	Number of Determinations made.		Rent Decreased.		Rent Unchanged.		Rent Increased.	
	Dec. Qtr.	Mar. Qtr.	Dec. Qtr.	Mar. Qtr.	Dec. Qtr.	Mar. Qtr.	Dec. Qtr.	Mar. Qtr.
New South Wales	952	1,947	548	1,211	219	397	185	339
Victoria ..	612	1,560	394	1,051	193	418	25	91
Queensland ..	366	416	274	242	56	113	36	61
Tasmania ..	42	61	17	26	24	33	1	2
Total ..	1,972	3,984	1,233	2,530	492	961	247	493

(For earlier reference, please see No. 111, p. 13.)

WOOL AGREEMENT.

NEW AGREEMENT—JOINT ORGANIZATION, FIRST MEETING.

On 23rd June, 1946, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

“ The first meetings of the Dominion and British directors of United Kingdom-Dominion Wool Disposals Limited have been held in London. The company has been entrusted by the Governments of Britain, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa with the double task of effecting orderly disposal of accumulated war-time surpluses of wool and at the same time maintaining an appropriate degree of stability in prices.

“ It will attempt to achieve the first objective by offering at auction its stocks of wool alongside current clips in accordance with supply and demand in the world's markets and to achieve the second objective by regulation of offerings and by means of reserve prices at which it will be prepared to buy in growers' wool at auction. It will, at all times, endeavour to act impartially towards the interests of the various parts affected or likely to be affected by its decisions and the company makes the following preliminary announcement :—

His Majesty's Governments in Britain, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa have considered the recommendation made by the Joint Organization pursuant to the terms of paragraph 6 of the Wool Disposals Plan and have decided that the initial general level of reserve prices for Dominions' wools sold in the Dominions shall be the same as the present average selling price, *ex store*, in the Dominion concerned. It is the intention that this initial level shall, in the absence of circumstances at present quite unforeseen, be maintained throughout the wool year 1946-47.

Individual reserve prices for the wool year 1946-47, apart from exceptional cases, will not be changed throughout the year.

The sale of wool at fixed prices by, or on behalf of, the Joint Organization will cease on 30th June, 1946.

Orders against which allocation of wool has not been made, on or before 30th June, 1946, will be cancelled.

Sales by auction will commence in Australia at the beginning of September, in South Africa at the beginning of September, in New Zealand of crutchings and of old wool at the beginning of September and of new wool in November, and in Britain in September. The precise dates on which auctions will commence and details of the selling programme will be announced later.

"Details in broad technical descriptions of the stock estimated to be held by the organization at 30th June, 1946, will be announced as soon as possible."

On 27th June, 1946, the Minister for Agriculture (Mr. Scully) announced that the Wool (Contributory Charge) Assessment Act and the Wool (Contributory Charge) Act, assented to on 11th October, 1945, as an essential part of the plan for the stabilized marketing of accumulated stocks of wool in conjunction with current clips, had been proclaimed to operate as from 1st July, 1946.

In Parliament.—On 27th June, 1946, Mr. Scully said—

"The agreement between the Governments of Britain, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa for the disposal of accumulated stocks of wool and of oncoming clips provided for decisions by the four Governments, of a reserve price for the season, below which sales would not be made, and for a contributory charge which would be struck in each country to meet the industry's share of the cost of administration. The general reserve price agreed upon is that price at which wool is at present being sold *ex store*. For Australia, this is, on average, 18.15d. (Aust.) a lb. The contributory charge decided upon by the Commonwealth Government is 5 per cent. of the value of the wool, which works out at .91d. (Aust.) a lb. average.

"The price of 18.15d. a lb., less the contributory charge of .91d., gives a net average return of 17.24d. (Aust.) and this is 1.79d. (Aust.) more than the average price of 15.45d. (Aust.) over the whole clip payable by Britain under the war-time agreement. This must be considered very satisfactory to growers, because it gives to them, in effect, an overall minimum guaranteed return substantially greater than that received by them under the war-time contract."

WAR ARCHIVES.

On 25th June, 1946, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

"In 1942, the then Prime Minister (the late Mr. Curtin) formed a War Archives Committee under the chairmanship of Dr. C. E. W. Bean, who was historian of World War I., to investigate measures for the preservation of Australian records and documents relating to World War II.

"I have now approved of the scope of the committee being broadened so that its functions include the preservation of all Commonwealth records and not only records relating to the war. The committee will be known as the Commonwealth Archives Committee. Its functions will be to study archival principles and practices and to submit recommendations for the establishment, when circumstances permit, of a permanent archival system

for the Commonwealth. Pending the establishment of such system, it will advise the Government on general questions of collection and preservation of records, for the collection or preservation of which adequate steps are not being taken by a Commonwealth authority, and will formulate proposals for the preservation of records and documents of Commonwealth departments, and lay down broad principles to be observed by Commonwealth departments and provisional archival authorities. The members of the committee will be—

Dr. Bean (chairman), Messrs. H. S. Temby (Prime Minister's Department), P. Hasluck (Department of External Affairs), J. G. B. Castieau (Attorney-General's Department), K. Binns (Commonwealth Librarian), Lt.-Colonel J. L. Treloar (Director, Australian War Memorial), Mr. A. W. Bazley (Assistant Director, Historical Records, Australian War Memorial), and a representative of the Department of the Interior.

TEXTILE TRADE.

WOOLLEN TEXTILES—EXPORTS.

On 26th June, 1946, the Minister for Customs (Senator Fraser) said that export of woollen cloths related to all woollen and worsteds and included shipments to Unrra as well as commercial exports. Of the 3,000,000 square yards exported during the current trade year, about 2,000,000 square yards of woollen piece goods went to Unrra, and a large quantity of it was stock the trade was glad to dispose of as it was unsaleable in Australia. The remaining 1,000,000 square yards of commercial exports of woollen and worsted piece goods represented only 4 per cent. of the total production of woollens and worsteds and included all types of woollen cloth. Suitings exported represented only a small proportion as the Government had established strict quotas for worsted exports. Apart from a small quota to New Zealand, the only exports of worsteds were on a token basis to maintain overseas markets.

BUDGET, 1945-46.

APPROPRIATION BILL—EXCESS REVENUE.

In Parliament.—On 26th June, 1946, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) introduced the Appropriation Bill. Mr. Chifley said—

“The purpose of this bill is to obtain parliamentary appropriation for the expenditure of an additional £20,000,000 of revenue for war purposes. When the budget was presented in September, 1945, I estimated that total revenue would be £374,000,000. The budget was framed to provide an appropriation from revenue for non-war items aggregating £166,000,000. The balance of £208,000,000 was appropriated for war purposes.

“It is now anticipated that some revenue items will exceed the estimate. With the end of the war and the relaxation of controls, there has been a marked buoyancy in customs and excise revenue, and indications are that the estimate will be exceeded by £7,000,000. Increased sales of civilian goods, mainly due to demobilization of the forces, may result in an increase of sales tax revenue of £5,000,000. Income tax may yield an increased amount of £5,000,000. Estate duty and some other items of revenue will show small increases.

"It is anticipated that non-war expenditure will be approximately the same as the budget estimate. An accurate forecast of the total revenue for 1945-46 is difficult, but the improvement will be from £15,000,000 to £20,000,000. To permit this increase of revenue to be utilized to meet war expenditure, it is necessary to provide an additional appropriation of £20,000,000. The budget provided for total war expenditure of £360,000,000. Owing mainly to the acceleration of demobilization, this estimate will be exceeded. The appropriation of £20,000,000 will enable the actual improvement of revenue to be applied to war expenditure, thus reducing the amount chargeable to loan."

[The bill was passed.]

IMPORTS.

CIGARETTE PAPERS.

On 26th June, 1946, the Minister for Customs (Senator Fraser) announced that, in view of the shortage of cigarette papers in Australia, licences would be issued for the importation of reasonable quantities of cigarette papers.

BANKING CONTROL.

LEGISLATION—COMMONWEALTH BANK ACT, INDUSTRIAL DEPARTMENT.

In Parliament.—On 26th June, 1946, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said that to 20th March, 1946, applications to the Industrial Loan Department of the Commonwealth Bank totalled 964, of which 782 had been dealt with. Applications totalling 501 and involving £781,738 had been granted.

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE.

AWARDS FOR GALLANTRY.

On 26th June, 1946, the Governor-General announced the following awards:—

Commander of the Military Division of the Order of the British Empire (C.B.E.).—Air Commodores A. M. Charlesworth, A. L. Walters, Group-captain A. M. Murdoch.

Distinguished Service Order.—Group-captain D. W. Kingwell.

Officer of the Military Division of the Order of the British Empire (O.B.E.).—Group Captains N. M. Heath, A. D. Charlton, Wing Commanders A. W. Raymond, M. H. Meyers.

Member of the Military Division of the Order of the British Empire (M.B.E.).—Flight Lieutenants R. F. Parker, G. C. Ripley.

Military Cross.—Flight Lieutenant N. M. Kater, Pilot Officer R. Stuart.

Bar to the Distinguished Flying Cross.—Squadron Leaders B. E. Brown, J. R. Kinnimont, N. T. Quinn, Flight Lieutenant F. R. Schaaf.

Distinguished Flying Cross.—Wing Commanders J. O. F. Burton, C. H. C. Thompson, Squadron Leaders B. Todd, B. B. Watson, A. R. Emslie, Flight Lieutenants G. S. Hodges, J. L. Macalister, A. G. Stuart, A. F. Tutt,

A. P. Walters, J. T. Bell, J. G. B. Campbell, R. W. Crawford, R. P. Curtis, E. E. Garside, I. B. Giffin, D. H. Kelly, W. J. Madigan, W. E. Miller, R. McD. Muirhead, V. A. Rule, E. L. L. Sly, A. B. Taylor, A. E. Thomson, W. J. Wilkinson, Flying Officers J. C. Meachem, I. A. Pedersen, J. A. Pretty.

Air Force Cross.—Wing Commander E. V. Read, Flight Lieutenants S. J. Rane, J. Slade, F. J. Ball, F. C. Chaney, W. R. Mills, Flying Officers T. W. Bridges, R. J. Carson, F. A. Weir.

British Empire Medal.—Flight Sergeant R. C. Blunt, Leading Aircraftman C. H. Couper.

On 3rd July, 1946, the Governor-General announced the award of the British Empire Medal to Sergeant M. T. Goode.

RECONSTRUCTION.

SOLDIERS' SETTLEMENT—REVIEW OF OPERATIONS.

On 26th June, 1946, the Minister for Post-war Reconstruction (Mr. Dedman) said that statistics of progress in war service land settlement since the Commonwealth Act was assented to on 11th October, 1945, to 18th June, 1946, were—

	Areas Approved.	Referred back to State.	Under Consideration.	Submission Withdrawn.
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
New South Wales Western Land Leases	329,799
New South Wales	302,167	115,584	46,458	24,267
New South Wales Group Settlement	803
Victoria	63,940	..	5,160	..
Queensland	414,991	1,313,194	230,281	..
South Australia	64,189	54,350	83,255	..
Western Australia	90,072	334	76,599	..
Tasmania	134,516	23,016
Total	1,400,477	1,506,478	441,753	24,267

On 26th June, 1946, Mr. Dedman said that rural loans made for war service land settlement to 31st May, 1946, were—

New South Wales, 668 applications, £461,334; Victoria, 100, £66,219; Queensland, 47, £26,332; South Australia, 75, £55,074; Western Australia, 444, £365,510; Tasmania, 26, £18,451; total, 1,360, £992,920.

GOVERNMENT'S PLAN—NATIONAL WORKS COUNCIL, LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS.

On 1st July, 1946, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

“The question has been asked whether the Commonwealth Government would give financial assistance to local authorities to implement their plans for local works, improvements and facilities, or arrange for the granting of interest free loans to such bodies.

"It must be remembered that these local authorities are self-governing bodies, responsible to the electors, and that powers exist under State law for them to raise loans, as well as obtain revenue by the levying of rates. As to concessional interest rates, I think it would be difficult to justify the selection of one class of borrowing for favoured treatment in this respect. Moreover, a concession to one class of borrowers presents the problem of adjusting upwards the rates to other borrowers if a net loss in interest receipts from all advances--involving an additional charge on the Budget--is to be avoided.

"The Commonwealth Government is aware of the problems associated with the financing of public work programmes and has actively pursued a policy which will provide the most favorable terms over the widest field of prospective borrowers. I refer particularly to the fact that borrowings by governments, and semi- and local government authorities, may now be negotiated on more favorable terms than ever before and this is directly attributable to the policy of low interest rates by the Commonwealth.

"It is essential to the continued success of financial policy, that all approaches to the market for loan funds should be properly co-ordinated. This is particularly important during the next few years, when it will be necessary to introduce the public works requirements of Commonwealth, State and local government bodies in an ordered way so as to avoid undue competition for available building and works facilities. Similarly, it is essential that financial needs be co-ordinated and related to available money.

"The fact that the Commonwealth, foreseeing these potential needs, convened the National Works Council, and was instrumental in having a long-term public works programme planned by the States, must not be interpreted as an indication that the Commonwealth Government desires to usurp the sovereign responsibilities of the States in the field of local government, nor that it is prepared to support a financial arrangement which would give strong preference to local government bodies in respect of public works finance which could not be extended to other Commonwealth and State financial requirements for public works and buildings programmes.

"At its first meeting in January, 1944, the National Works Council agreed to the preparation of a programme of public works in three classifications of urgency and amounting in all to roughly £200,000,000 as a reservoir of works to facilitate the stabilization of the early post-war economic condition. It was resolved that the programme for each State should be endorsed by that State Government and that the administering authority of the programme should indicate its agreement to accept the financial responsibility entailed. Among the items included in the States' programmes would be works planned by local government authorities and authorized by the State Government concerned as sufficiently urgent to be included in its programme. At the second meeting of the National Works Council in August, 1944, progress was reviewed and it was again emphasized that the responsibility for the financing of the works programmes planned rested on the States. Local government authorities should, therefore, submit their loan proposals to their State Governments."

UNITED NATIONS FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION—
AUSTRALIAN BODY.

On 2nd July, 1946, Mr. Chifley said—

“ The Food and Agriculture Organization is now becoming effectively established as an integral part of the new international machinery of the United Nations. The first conference, to which Australia sent a delegation, was held in 1945. Following the conference, steps have been taken to build up a permanent secretariat to carry out its functions.

“ In 1944, Full Cabinet approved of an inter-departmental committee being established, comprising representatives of the Departments of the Treasury, External Affairs, Post-war Reconstruction, Commerce and Agriculture, and Health, to consider matters associated with the subject as they arose and to report to the Minister for External Affairs. A request has now been received from the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization that an Australian committee be set up to provide a liaison between the appropriate agencies in Australia and the secretariat of the organization.

“ Cabinet decided to-day that the Inter-departmental Committee be replaced by an Australian Food and Agriculture Organization Committee to be set up in conformity with the request of the Director-General of F.A.O., comprising representatives of the Departments of the Treasury, External Affairs, Commerce and Agriculture, Information, Interior, Health, and of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics (now with the Department of Post-war Reconstruction), the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, the Commonwealth Statistician, and the Forestry and Timber Bureau. The Australian F.A.O. Committee has the following duties and responsibilities :—

To advise the Government on policy questions in regard to F.A.O.

To collect information and statistics required by the F.A.O. secretariat from Australia and to approve such matter before despatch.

To disseminate information provided by F.A.O.

To bring to the notice of appropriate authorities any action required on their part to carry out the purposes of F.A.O.

To prepare the draft brief for Australian representatives attending conferences and other meetings of the F.A.O.

To furnish a quarterly progress report to Cabinet and to report at other times as circumstances require.

To arrange suitable publicity for F.A.O. activities through the Department of Information.

To co-operate with State authorities through the Department of Commerce and Agriculture and the Australian Agricultural Council.

WORLD ORGANIZATION—ATOMIC ENERGY.

In Parliament.—On 3rd July, 1946, Mr. Chifley said—

“ On the general subject of the control of atomic energy and the materials used in the manufacture of atomic bombs, a conference has been sitting for some time. The Minister for External Affairs (Dr. Evatt) is representing Australia. I cannot say what final decisions are likely to be reached, but the general view has been expressed by this Government, and has been submitted to the conference, that the control of atomic energy should be placed under the United Nations. Having regard to the dreadful possibilities of the use of uranium and other ingredients in the production of

atomic bombs, and to the future peace of the world, our belief is that this new discovery should be developed to produce industrial power and not bombs for war purposes. Dr. Evatt is making this clear at the conference."

SECONDARY INDUSTRIES COMMISSION—PLYWOOD INDUSTRY PANEL.

On 3rd July, 1946, Mr. Dedman announced the formation of a Plywood Industry Advisory Panel to function within the Secondary Industries Division of his department comprising—

Mr. I. H. Boas, chairman, the secretary of the Department of Forests, Papua-New Guinea (Mr. J. B. McAdam), Messrs. J. F. Brett and C. R. Paterson (Australian Plywood Board), Mr. C. Mitchell (Associated Country Saw Millers of New South Wales), the secretary of the Furnishing Trades Union (Mr. O. Schreiber), the secretary of the Timber Workers' Union (Mr. J. A. Weir), and Mr. A. H. Crane (Forestry Division, Queensland Department of Lands).

The panel would report on—

The pre-war and post-war requirements of plywood by types to determine the degree of permanency of any increased demand.

The present day relation between established demand and available supplies expressed in terms of local production capacity, plus importation potential.

The location and availability of logs with particular reference to unexploited home and adjacent island stands of timber.

Action to secure an adequate supply of logs for the plywood industry to meet current and expected demands.

WHEAT POOLS PAYMENTS.

No. 8 WHEAT POOL—THIRD ADVANCE.

On 26th June, 1946, the Minister for Agriculture (Mr. Scully) announced a third advance in No. 8 pool of 9d. a bushel bulk quota wheat and 1s. 1½d. a bushel for non-quota wheat, less freight in each case. An extra 1d. would be paid on bagged wheat. The advance brought payments of the pool to 4s. 11½d. a bushel, less freight bagged basis.

TARIFF.

EXPORTS PROHIBITED.

On 27th June, 1946, the Minister for Customs (Senator Fraser) announced that exportation of pig lead, scrap lead and manufactures of lead had been prohibited.

On 3rd July, 1946, Senator Fraser announced that exportation of tobacco, cigars and cigarettes had been prohibited.

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY.

AWARDS FOR GALLANTRY.

On 27th June, 1946, the Governor-General announced the award of the Distinguished Service Cross to Lieutenant G. J. B. Crabb.

PETROL SUPPLIES.

RATIONING SYSTEM—ADJUSTMENT.

On 27th June, 1946, the Minister for Supply (Senator Ashley) announced that the adjustment promised in respect of petrol consumers in classes 3 to 7, whose licences covered both private and business running, would be effected by making available an additional four gallons of motor spirit monthly as from the August issue uniformly to each consumer in those groups, thus making the actual ration available the gallonage shown on the face of each consumer's licence, plus four.

(For earlier reference, please see No. 115, p. 18.)

AUSTRALIAN WAR EFFORT AND CAPACITY.

CONTROL OF TINPLATE—RE-INSTITUTED.

On 27th June, 1946, the Minister for Supply (Senator Ashley) announced that as from 1st July, 1946, control of the end use of tinplate, which had been relaxed in October, 1945, would be re-instituted. Action had been necessary because of serious cut-backs in allocations of tinplate from the United States and because substantial supplies of tinplate were not yet coming forward from Britain. The Government was taking steps to meet the position and had despatched a mission to Britain and the United States to ensure that Australia's needs were fully known.

PHILIPPINES.

INDEPENDENCE—AUSTRALIAN REPRESENTATION.

On 27th June, 1946, the acting Minister for External Affairs (Mr. Makin) announced that Australia would be represented by Commodore J. A. Collins and the Australian Consul-General in the Philippines (Mr. H. A. Peterson) at the ceremonies attending the proclamation of Philippine independence at Manila on 4th July, 1946.

MORTGAGE BANK.

OPERATIONS TO JUNE, 1946.

In Parliament.—On 28th June, 1946, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said that to 25th June, 1946, applications for loans to the Mortgage Bank Department of the Commonwealth Bank totalled 2,535 of which 1,398 had been approved, involving £2,924,105.

TAXATION.

COMPARISONS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES.

On 28th June, 1946, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said that statements comparing the level of taxation in Australia with that of other countries were misleading, unless qualified by a proper understanding of the relative values of the several currencies and other relevant factors, including the level of indirect taxation, such as customs and excise duties, the level of social services expenditure, the standard of living in each country and whether the exchange rates were free or pegged.

Tables of tax payable in sterling countries as compared with tax payable in non-sterling countries should be treated with great caution before drawing any conclusions from them. In the following table, setting out the tax payable on selected incomes in Australia, New Zealand and Britain, in each case the tax payable had been expressed in the currency of the country concerned. The amounts shown in the statement included the following levies :—

Australia—social services contribution, New Zealand—social security charge, Britain—national insurance at 4s. 10d. a week.

Income.	Australia.	New Zealand.	Britain.
£	£	£	£
150	9	19	16
200	15	25	25
250	30	40	38
300	46	54	55
350	64	70	75
400	82	85	95
500	118	117	134
600	155	152	173
800	232	225	252
1,000	312	305	331
1,250	422	415	432
1,500	547	534	544
2,000	845	805	769
3,000	1,557	1,472	1,332
4,000	2,341	2,304	1,957
5,000	3,157	3,204	2,632

EXTERNAL TERRITORIES.

CIVIL ADMINISTRATION—FULL RESTORATION.

On 28th June, 1946, the Minister for External Territories (Mr. Ward) announced that the transfer of administrative control of the Rabaul and Kokopo sub-districts of New Britain from the Australian Military Forces to the Provisional Administration of the Territory of Papua-New Guinea had been effected on 24th June, 1946. Restoration of civil administration to the whole of the territories was now complete.

WHEAT STABILIZATION SCHEME.

POST-WAR—PRODUCTION COSTS.

On 1st July, 1946, the Minister for Agriculture (Mr. Scully) said that he had told the Australian Wheat-growers' Federation that day that he would recommend to Cabinet that a commission of inquiry be set up to ascertain the cost of producing wheat in Australia.

AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING COMMISSION.

REVENUE FROM LICENCES.

On 2nd July, 1946, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

“ In June, 1945, Cabinet approved of the continuation of a special payment to the Australian Broadcasting Commission of such additional amount as is equivalent to 1s. a full licence fee and 6d. a half licence fee for a period of twelve months on the basis of licences in force on 30th June, 1945. This was a further continuation of an arrangement approved in May, 1944.

“ Cabinet to-day decided to continue still further this special payment for a further year, pending a report on the subject by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Broadcasting.”

SOCIAL SECURITY.

TUBERCULOSIS PATIENTS—COMMONWEALTH GRANT.

On 2nd July, 1946, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

“ The *Tuberculosis Act*, passed by Parliament in October, 1945, came into operation on 1st January, 1946, and provided for Commonwealth grants for diagnostic facilities, after-care facilities, payment for patients in State hospitals and special allowances to a sufferer or his or her dependants. In regard to special allowances, the then Minister for Health (Senator Fraser) and I were directed by Cabinet to discuss with the State Ministers for Health the question of the States distributing, on behalf of the Commonwealth, the grant to be used as a special tuberculosis allowance.

“ To provide for policy and administrative questions arising from the Act, Cabinet to-day decided that the Act be amended to provide that an amount of £250,000 a year may be payable to States, the allocation to each State to be determined by the Minister, on condition that the States distribute the grant to or in respect of sufferers from tuberculosis or their dependants in necessitous circumstances to achieve the object of encouraging sufferers to cease work and take treatment; to assist in preventing the spread of the disease; and to promote the better treatment of the disease; and that payments received by individuals in accordance with the proposed new section shall not be regarded as income for the purposes of the *Invalid and Old-age Pensions Act* and of the *Unemployment and Sickness Benefits Act*. This will ensure that the tuberculosis special allowances are excluded from the means tests imposed in these two Acts, thus making the allowances additional to any benefit the sufferer may be eligible to receive direct from the Commonwealth by way of sickness benefit or invalid pension.”

AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING ACT.

VENEREAL DISEASE, SEX TALKS.

On 3rd July, 1946, the Postmaster-General (Senator Cameron) announced that the Parliamentary Broadcasting Committee had recommended that broadcast talks on venereal disease and sex matters should not be permitted. The Government had adopted the recommendation and broadcasting stations had been requested to refrain forthwith from broadcasting such talks.

PRICES.

U.S. REVOCATION—EFFECT ON AUSTRALIA.

On 3rd July, 1946, the Minister for Customs (Senator Fraser) said that the effect on Australian prices of the abandonment of price control in the United States would depend on the extent and direction of the inflationary forces in America. It was not known whether American exports would be affected or whether any increase in price would be significant. In any case, it would be some months before goods purchased at current or future prices would be landing in Australia and there was no present indication that the local retail price level would be affected. It was difficult to make any forecasts but Australia would watch developments in the United States with great interest both from the point of view of the lesson to be learned from the experiment, and the effects on the Australian economy.

SERVICE PAY RATES.

DEFERRED PAY—GOVERNMENT LIABILITY.

In Parliament.—On 3rd July, 1946, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

“Total expenditure on deferred pay for the financial year 1944–45 was £9,674,273. To 30th May, 1946, expenditure was £67,711,892.”

MEAT AGREEMENT.

EXPORTS—CONTROL, BILL INTRODUCED.

In Parliament.—On 3rd July, 1946, the Minister for Commerce (Mr. Scully) introduced the Meat Export Control Bill. Mr. Scully said—

“The purpose of this bill, to amend the *Meat Export Control Act*, is to provide for the reconstitution of the Australian Meat Board, and to grant to the board additional powers necessary to enable it to carry out work in relation to the long-term purchase agreement covering meat for export, entered into between the Commonwealth Government and the British Government.

“The Australian Meat Board will consist of twelve members, including a Commonwealth Government representative, who will be appointed by the Governor-General. He will be employed full-time on the business of the board and will be chairman. Of the remaining eleven members, seven members, constituting a clear majority of the board, will be representative of producer interests. Producer members, comprising four representatives of the lamb and mutton producers, two of the beef producers, and one of the pig producers, must be bona fide producers, and must be persons nominated by producer organizations constituted on a Commonwealth basis. Members appointed to represent the meat exporting companies are to be appointed after consultation with representative organizations of meat exporters. The member appointed to represent the employees will be appointed after consultation with the Federal Council of the Meat Industry Employees Union. The member appointed to represent the publicly-owned abattoirs and freezing works will be appointed by the Governor-General.

"The bill gives the person presiding at a meeting the right to dissent from any decision of the board. This right is necessary because of the Commonwealth Government's financial interest in the operations of the board. It is essential that the chairman shall have the right to bring to the Minister's notice immediately any resolution which he considers may involve the Commonwealth Government in any way on a point of principle or on a question of financial losses or gains.

"So that all sections of the industry may be in a position to present their views on matters affecting the industry, provision has been made for the setting-up of State committees. It will be competent for any duly constituted State organization representing a section of the meat industry to apply for representation on the State committee.

"As the administration of the long-term purchase agreement for meat between the Commonwealth Government and the British Government will be a function of the board after the expiration of the *National Security Act*, provision has been made for the powers of the board to be extended to include the following:—

To purchase on behalf of the Commonwealth Government any meat, meat product, or edible offal.

To sell on behalf of the Commonwealth Government any meat, meat product, or edible offal.

To manage and control as necessary, the handling, storage and shipment of any meat, meat product, or edible offal.

Subject to the approval of the Commonwealth Government, to obtain advances from the Commonwealth Bank under Commonwealth Government guarantee, for use in the purchase of meat for export and the payment of expenses incurred in connexion therewith.

"Attention is directed to the provision, of special interest to producers, that the conditions attaching to the issue by the board of an export licence have been extended to make it obligatory on the licensee, where the producer-owner of such stock so requests, to treat stock on account of the owner on a weight and grade basis."

[The bill was passed.]

In Parliament.—On 3rd July, 1946, Mr. Scully introduced the Meat Industry Control Bill. Mr. Scully said:—

"The purpose of this bill, which is supplementary to the Meat Export Control Bill, is to transfer to the Australian Meat Board the powers and functions at present exercised by the Controller of Meat Supplies and the Meat Canning Committee under *National Security Act* regulations. It will be appreciated that the transfer is to be temporary, and that, with the expiration of the *National Security Act*, this act will cease to have the force of law. Notwithstanding that, the interests of the Commonwealth Government and of the meat industry, insofar as they relate to actions taken by the Controller of Meat Supplies and the Meat Canning Committee under *National Security Act* regulations, must be protected. The bill provides that these rights and obligations shall be assumed by the Australian Meat Board. Since the rationing of meat and the control of meat prices are matters which, for the time being at least, are closely linked with the

general control of the meat industry, provision has been made for the temporary appointment to the Australian Meat Board of additional members, one to represent the Commonwealth Prices Commissioner, and one the Director of Rationing. These members will automatically cease to hold office upon the expiration of the *National Security Act*."

[*The bill was passed.*]

(For earlier references, please see No. 83, p. 37; No. 109, p. 8.)

NATIONALITY.

NATURALIZATION—NEW GUINEA.

In Parliament.—On 4th July, 1946, the Minister for Immigration (Mr. Calwell) introduced the Nationality Bill. Mr. Calwell said—

"Under existing nationality law, an essential requirement for the grant of a certificate of naturalization is that an applicant shall have resided for a prescribed period within the British dominions. The Territory of New Guinea does not form a part of the British dominions for the purposes of nationality law, and residence in the territory cannot be counted as residence for the grant of naturalization. This means that the only way open at present to a person living in the territory to acquire British nationality, which will be recognized in Australia, or other parts of the Empire, is to abandon his domicile there and take up residence in Australia or some other part of the British Commonwealth. The purpose of this bill is to enable a resident of the territory to qualify for naturalization as a British subject while maintaining his residence in the territory.

"Commonwealth Crown Law authorities have expressed the opinion that it is not possible to grant to residents of New Guinea naturalization which would be effective throughout the British dominions. The Government has decided that the next best should be given to residents of the territory: that is, that they shall be accorded the privilege of qualifying for the grant of British nationality which will have effect in the Commonwealth and its territories. The bill makes that provision.

"It is not the Government's intention that this shall be the final word on the subject. It is proposed to hold a conference of representatives of Britain and the Dominions in the near future to discuss certain nationality questions. It is intended to raise at that conference the matter of making provision that residence in New Guinea shall be regarded as a qualification for the grant of a certificate of naturalization which will be effective, not only in Australia and its territories, but also throughout the whole of the British Commonwealth."

[*The bill was passed.*]

JUDICIARY.

ARBITRATION COURT—PENSION RIGHTS.

In Parliament.—On 4th July, 1946, the Minister for Labour (Mr. Holloway) introduced the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Bill. Mr. Holloway said—

"The object of this bill is to provide that, where a judge of the Commonwealth Arbitration Court has, before his appointment, served in any judicial office under a State, his service under the State, up to a period of ten years,

shall be deemed to be part of his service as a judge of the Commonwealth Arbitration Court for the purpose of calculating his pension rights. Under the act in its present form, account may be taken of prior service in a judicial office under the Commonwealth for the purposes of pension rights, but no such provision is made in respect of prior service in a judicial office under a State.

"In other legislation, for example, the *Bankruptcy Act*, a limited period of prior service in a judicial office under a State may be taken into account for the purposes of pension. The idea is to establish a permanent basis for settling matters of this kind. Recently, several new judges have been appointed, and most of them have served in a judicial capacity in a State."

[*The bill was passed.*]

PATENTS.

BILL INTRODUCED.

In Parliament.—On 4th July, 1946, the Acting Attorney-General (Mr. Holloway) introduced the Patents Bill. Mr. Holloway said—

"The principal object of the bill is to remove certain disadvantages which have occurred by reason of the delay at present existing in the examination work of the Patent Office. That delay has been brought about in part by the fact that a large number of examiners of patents—representing over 60 per cent. of the staff—were released during the war from the Patent Office for service in the forces and in other departments. The delay has also been partly brought about by reason of an abnormal and entirely unpredictable increase of the number of applications for patents. This increase appears to be largely due to the great industrial development which has taken place in Australia in recent years. Many overseas manufacturers discovered during the war that the Australian market was worthwhile, and that they cannot obtain royalties for the use of their inventions in Australia unless they patent them here. In 1939, the number of applications for patents was 5,700; last year it was 7,300; and it is expected that this year the number will exceed 10,000.

"Every effort is being made to obtain the services of additional examiners of patents. It takes at least three years to train an examiner fully in his work, and some considerable time will elapse before any substantial reduction is made of the arrears of examination work in the Patent Office. Any serious delay in the examination of patent applications has a detrimental effect on inventors, and on industrial development.

"This bill proposes to amend the law so as to provide for the publication of complete specifications forthwith after lodgment at the Patent Office and for a patentee whose invention has been used after publication to be entitled to damages for infringement committed from the date of publication forthwith after the lodgment instead of from the date of publication consequent upon acceptance. Damages are recoverable only if a patent is ultimately sealed on the application and only in respect of valid claims. As a corollary to the provisions referred to, the bill gives protection to persons who may be threatened with infringement actions by applicants

on the basis of questionable or invalid claims, and prohibits the making of false representations that articles are patented or the subject of pending applications.

"The bill proposes to make permanent a practice adopted during the war under *National Security Act Regulations* of not examining a provisional specification until the complete specification has been lodged. In many cases, applications are accompanied by provisional specifications only and lapse by reason of the failure of the applicant to lodge a complete specification. The time spent in examining provisional specifications which may lapse will be saved by reason of this amendment."

[The bill was passed.]

(For earlier reference, please see No. 96, p. 47.)

SERVICE PAY RATES.

REPATRIATION—MEDICAL CARE, COMMITTEE APPOINTED.

In Parliament.—On 5th July, 1946, the Minister for Repatriation (Mr. Frost) said that the Repatriation Commission, with his concurrence, had appointed the following committee:—

Colonel E. J. Parks, chairman, Major-General S. R. Burston, Air Vice-Marshal T. S. V. Hurley, Colonel K. Smith, and Captain G. Wheeler, secretary.

Its terms of reference were—

To examine the existing medical set-up of the Repatriation Commission throughout Australia; to consider fully all facts and factors affecting proper medical care and treatment of all members of the Forces in the future suffering physically or mentally as a result of their war service, and as a result of its investigations and deliberations to advise as to the future policy, organization and administration of the medical services of the Repatriation Commission with a view to ensuring the best and most efficient medical services and also to ensure, as far as possible, that ex-servicemen in the medical care of the Repatriation Commission have the benefit of the latest advances in medicine, surgery and medical rehabilitation.

(For earlier reference, please see No. 94, p. 3.)

DENMARK.

EXCHANGE OF MINISTERS—DANISH MINISTER.

On 5th July, 1946, the Acting Minister for External Affairs (Mr. Makin) announced that agreement has been reached on the exchange of diplomatic missions between Australia and Denmark. The first Danish Minister to Australia (Mr. C. Rottbøli) would soon arrive in Australia. The Danish Government had been informed that it might not be possible to appoint an Australian Minister immediately.

BRITAIN.

PROPOSED VISIT BY MR. ATTLEE—POSTPONED.

On 6th July, 1946, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

"The British Prime Minister and Mrs. Attlee have been looking forward to visiting Australia and New Zealand at the invitation of their governments. It was announced in April, 1946, that Mr. Attlee planned to leave Britain in the last week of July, 1946, but that his plans were liable to revision if there should be any public matters, requiring his personal attention, which necessitated his presence in Britain in the period concerned. He has now regretfully reached the conclusion that the decision recently announced to

summon the Peace Conference at Paris on 29th July, 1946, added to the other pressing problems which confront the British Government at present, render it impossible for him to be absent from Britain during the period proposed for the visit to Australia and New Zealand. He has, accordingly, informed me that he keenly regrets that he is obliged to cancel the arrangements and postpone the visit.

"Both Mr. and Mrs. Attlee are acutely disappointed at the loss of this opportunity to see Australia and New Zealand, to meet their governments and people and to express, on behalf of the people of Britain, the appreciation of Britain of the magnificent contribution made by both the fighting men and women and the civilians of each of the two Dominions in the war. They greatly hope that they may have an opportunity to visit Australia and New Zealand at a later date."

HOUSING.

WAR WORKERS—REGULATIONS, REVOCATION.

On 8th July, 1946, the Minister for Housing (Mr. Lazzarini) announced the repeal of National Security (Housing and Accommodation) Regulations, which, during the war, had enabled essential workers, such as those engaged in munitions, flax, food production and certain others in prescribed areas, to secure available housing and accommodation.

AMERICA.

AMBASSADOR—UNITED STATES AND AUSTRALIAN APPOINTMENTS.

On 9th July, 1946, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

"Following discussions between the Minister for External Affairs (Dr. Evatt), the President of the United States (Mr. Truman) and the Acting Secretary of State (Mr. Dean Acheson), formal arrangements have now been completed between the Australian and United States Governments for the raising of the rank of their legations at Canberra and Washington to embassies, and of the office of Minister to that of Ambassador. This step is the natural consequence of the increasingly closer and cordial relations between Australia and the United States and reflects the added importance of the Pacific area in the eyes of both governments. The move also serves as a recognition of the major contribution made by Australia to victory in World War II, and of the important part which she continues to play in regard to the preservation of security in the Pacific.

"President Truman proposes to submit to the Senate the nomination of Mr. Robert Butler of St. Paul, Minnesota, as first United States Ambassador to Australia. Mr. Butler served in World War I, and is to-day one of America's leading constructional engineers. He is also actively connected with the governing bodies of various educational establishments.

"The Minister for the Navy (Mr. Makin) will, in due course, be accredited as the first Australian Ambassador to the United States."

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES. AWARDS FOR GALLANTRY.

On 10th July, 1946, the Governor-General announced the award of the George Medal to Corporal Diti.

FIGHTING FORCES.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES—PSYCHIATRIC CASES.

On 26th June, 1946, the Minister for Post-war Reconstruction (Mr. Dedman) announced that consideration had been given to the care of persons discharged from the Forces who, although not eligible for repatriation benefits, had psychiatric disability and required treatment and satisfactory re-establishment. Arrangements had been made for a committee representative of the Ministry of Post-war Reconstruction, the Repatriation Commission, the Department of Social Services, the Treasury and the Department of Labour to carry out detailed planning. The Australian Red Cross Society had been invited to take part with a view to it assuming a full and official part in the development of the planning. Establishment of a psychiatric out-patients' service in each State was an essential of the plan, together with further development by the Department of Social Services of its rehabilitation centres in State capitals.