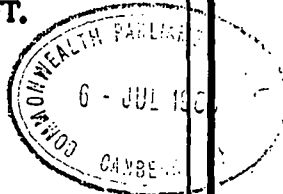


CPL 702

COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT.



DIGEST OF DECISIONS
AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

AND

IMPORTANT SPEECHES

BY

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

No. 133.

PERIOD 11TH DECEMBER, 1947, TO 4TH FEBRUARY, 1948.

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ANTARCTICA.

EXPEDITION—PROGRESS.

On 11th December, 1947, the Minister for External Affairs (Dr. Evatt) announced that the *Wyatt Earp*, mother ship of the Australian National Antarctic Research Expedition, would leave on 13th December, 1947, for a summer reconnaissance along the Australian sector of the Antarctic Continent.

On 15th December, 1947, Dr. Evatt announced that the advance unit of the Australian National Antarctic Research Expedition reached Heard Island on 11th December, 1947, and had established a food depot.

On 2nd January, 1948, Dr. Evatt announced that the *Wyatt Earp* had been recalled to Melbourne by the naval authorities. The vessel had developed a leak in the hull which made it necessary for her to be overhauled in dry dock.

On 25th January, 1948, Dr. Evatt said that he had conferred with the Leader of the Australian Antarctic Expedition (Group-Captain S. A. Campbell) who had reported to him the recommendations of the Planning Committee which had met on 23rd January, 1948. He had approved variations in the programme of the expedition for the remainder of the summer as proposed by the committee. The committee had considered a report by the Department of the Navy regarding the condition of the *Wyatt Earp* which had been in dock undergoing repairs following her recall from Antarctic waters. Naval authorities were satisfied that the *Wyatt Earp* was fully capable of carrying out her duties. The *Wyatt Earp* would, subject to comprehensive trials being successfully completed, leave Melbourne about 6th February, 1948, to carry out reconnaissance in the eastern sector of the Australian Antarctic territory. If practicable, the old magnetic station at Commonwealth Bay would be re-occupied, or magnetic observations would be taken in some other suitable region. On the return journey, the *Wyatt Earp* would visit the Balleny Islands and make a survey.

The Naval landing craft LST3501 had received damage to her plates at Heard Island. She would go into dry dock and would leave for Macquarie Island during the last week in February to land a party of fourteen scientists to stay there during winter.

(For earlier references, please see No. 126, page 5; No. 129, page 37.)

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.

AWARDS FOR GALLANTRY.

On 11th December, 1947, the Governor-General announced the award of the George Cross to Captain L. C. Matthews.

MILITARY BOARD—APPOINTMENT.

On 4th February, 1948, the Minister for the Army (Mr. Chambers) announced the appointment of Major-General G. F. Wootten as a member of the Military Board, as an officer of the Citizen Military Forces.

(For earlier references, please see No. 108, page 17; No. 110, page 8.)

FIGHTING FORCES.

RECONSTRUCTION TRAINING SCHEME—FIGURES.

On 11th December, 1947, the Minister for Labour (Mr. Holloway) said that the present position of the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme for post-discharged ex-service personnel was—

Total number accepted for training to 31st October, 1947—Full-time training 68,313, part-time and by correspondence 138,273, total 206,588.

Total number commenced courses as at 31st October, 1947—Full-time training 48,846, part-time training 125,227, total 174,073.

Total number completed and at work at 31st October, 1947—33,205.

The difference between the 174,073 and the 33,205 (with the exclusion of those who changed their minds or left their State or country) were going through their courses.

(For earlier references, please see No. 127, page 29; No. 128, page 20.)

PETROL SUPPLIES.

RATIONING SYSTEM—REDUCTION, DECEMBER, 1947.

On 11th December, 1947, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

“It is imperative that the cut of 10 per cent. in petrol, effective from 1st January, 1948, should be very real and reflect itself immediately in the monthly consumption of petrol through Australia. The Government realizes that there may be some very exceptional cases where special licences will need to be granted to compensate for a portion of the cut. However, such licences will be granted only in the most exceptional circumstances and there will be no possibility of granting special licences to class 2 (private motorists) and classes 3-7, including business cars and business-pleasure groups.

“The Government is doing its utmost under very difficult circumstances. Its objective is to spread the sacrifice over the whole community. The Government asks consumers to play their part and rigidly confine their purchases to the reduced licence gallonage under the new scale.”

On 12th December, 1947, Mr. Chifley said—

“A satisfactory arrangement has been concluded with the oil industry for the checking of resellers' petrol coupons at the oil companies' main terminals and branch offices. This work will be carried out under the supervision of the Liquid Fuel Control Board inspectors. As a

result of this arrangement, the coupon system will be brought under complete control and coupons surrendered by resellers on receipt of deliveries into their tanks will be checked and verified within a few days after the date of each sale. Advices are being issued by the companies to the resellers of the new arrangements, which become effective immediately.

"It will be necessary for resellers to return their coupons in bundles of uniform quantity (say 100 gallons) and each denomination will need to be kept separately. Liquid Fuel Boards are being instructed to take immediate action direct with resellers in the event of any inaccuracies being detected. The reselling of petrol will, like other rationing, be under an imprest system and any deficiencies will be deducted from the immediately following delivery into resellers' tanks".

OIL—SYNTHETIC PRODUCTION.

On 12th January, 1948, Mr. Chifley said—

"In May, 1947, following consideration of the matter by the Minister for Supply (Senator Ashley), the Minister for Post-war Reconstruction (Mr. Dedman) and myself, an inter-departmental committee was appointed to report to Cabinet on the general problems of fuel research in Australia.

"Cabinet to-day considered the committee's report which stated that, at this stage, it was unable to recommend any concrete proposals for the production of synthetic fuels. It considered it was impossible to decide what experiments should be undertaken until extensive investigations had taken place both in Australia and overseas.

"Cabinet adopted the following recommendations in regard to the administrative organization considered desirable to enable the formulation and development of future fuel policy—

The Department of Supply to be given the initial administrative responsibility for the formulation, for the consideration of Cabinet, of Commonwealth policy in regard to fuel development; and the administration of such fuel development or production projects as the Commonwealth may control, either alone or in collaboration with other Commonwealth Departments or with one or more States.

The responsible department to take such action as may be considered necessary to have the question of whether or not the production of synthetic fuels should be undertaken in Australia examined so that advice may be given to Cabinet on the policy it should follow.

"It is proposed that the Department of Supply will work in close association with a section of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research being established to engage in scientific research into fuel problems. A small mission, comprising two officers selected by arrangement with the Department of Supply and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, will be sent abroad in the near future to carry out investigations on the basis of which it will be possible to formulate sound recommendations as to future fuel policy."

BRITAIN.

FINANCIAL POLICY—DOLLAR IMPORTS.

On 14th December, 1947, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

“ The Minister for External Affairs (Dr. Evatt), the Minister for Supply (Senator Ashley), the Minister for Health (Senator McKenna), the Minister for Commerce (Mr. Pollard), the Minister for Customs (Senator Courtice) and myself conferred to-night on the basis to be adopted for the issue of new import licences for dollar goods to be imported before 30th June, 1948.

“ For the past two months there has been virtually a suspension of the issue of import licences for dollar goods. Following consideration of a report by the special inter-departmental committee, it has now been decided to resume the issue of licences. A maximum ceiling figure of very limited extent has been established for the value of new licences for goods to be imported from the dollar area before 30th June, 1948. This figure has been allocated over the various classes of goods and the Minister for Customs will issue licences only in accordance with the allocation. It must be emphasized that dollar licences to be issued for importation before 30th June, 1948, will be confined to goods of the very highest essentiality and the quantities of even these goods will necessarily be severely limited ”.

On 9th January, 1948, Mr. Chifley said—

“ Much as the Australian Government regrets having to impose restrictions on dollar imports, this action has been necessary if Australia is to assist Britain in its present economic difficulties. Any failure by Britain to meet the position that confronts it would have very disturbing economic results for Australia and the other Dominions. Therefore, in our own material interests—apart from sentiment and kinship—Australia must do everything she can to assist the Mother Country ”.

On 22nd January, 1948, the Minister for Customs (Senator Courtice) said that licensing of goods originating in the dollar area for importation on or before 30th June, 1948, was being confined to indispensable goods to ensure that the limited amount of dollars allocated by the Government for new licences was not exceeded. Licensing of goods to be imported from dollar countries during 1948-49 would be operated on a budget quota system related to imports during 1946-47. Each importer should, before 13th February, 1948, furnish to State Collectors of Customs statements, supported by a statutory declaration, showing—

Importations of dollar area origin during the period of eighteen months ended 31st December, 1947, according to the individual specifications; and

Particulars of the quantities and values outstanding as at 1st January, 1948, on all valid licences issued for goods of dollar area origin including those goods in respect of which statements of importations are not required.

Licences would not be issued to those importers who failed to furnish the required statements of imports and outstanding licences.

[For earlier reference please see Nos. 130, page 10; 131, page 24; 132, page 34.]

FINANCIAL POLICY—DOLLAR IMPORTS, PRIME
MINISTER'S BROADCAST.

On 26th January, 1948, Mr. Chifley broadcast over the National network. Mr. Chifley said—

“Recently, as you know, the Government has imposed further restrictions on dollar imports and, in one way or another, these restrictions will affect most of you. You have, therefore, a right to be satisfied that they are unavoidable and that they serve a real purpose. My desire is to explain the position to you as simply as I possibly can.

“In Australia we require dollars to pay for American and Canadian goods—such as newsprint, cotton textiles, tobacco, motor chassis, and various kinds of machinery. There are also items such as a freight, film royalties and a certain amount of interest on Australian Government loans in New York. We earn some of these dollars by selling to the United States and Canada commodities such as wool, rabbit-skins, canned fruits and so on. But in most years we do not earn as many dollars as we spend. For example, during the last trade year, 1946-47, we received round about 190,000,000 dollars and spent about 290,000,000 dollars, so that there was a gap of about 100,000,000 dollars.

“Even before the war we earned less dollars than we spent. Then, however, Britain was able to provide us with sufficient dollars to make up the difference. She sold us these dollars for sterling—English pounds, that is. Therefore, so long as we could earn enough sterling, we were able to obtain the extra dollars we required. That position has greatly changed. Britain is not able to earn sufficient dollars to buy the things she wants herself. She has, therefore, to restrict the importation of goods from dollar sources and that imposes severe hardships on her people. It follows that Britain is not able to sell us all the dollars we require. She is still selling us some of her dollars, but every additional demand we make on her means that she has to deny her people things that they need. It is true that Britain still has some reserves but they are being rapidly used up. After the war she borrowed about five billion dollars from the United States and Canada. But practically all that has now been spent.

“This situation has come about mainly in two ways. On the one hand, Britain needs goods from the United States and Canada to a far greater value than the goods she can sell there. Her industries need a great deal of re-equipping, after being damaged by bombs and worn generally during the war. Her export trade fell away by two-thirds largely because so much of her industry was diverted to war production. She lost a great part of her shipping and sold most of her overseas investments to pay for war supplies. By great efforts and much self-denial on the part of her people, her exports have been increased, but not far enough to pay for the goods she needs. Most of those exports go to countries which pay in currencies that cannot be changed into dollars.

" On the other hand, many other countries look to Britain to provide them with dollars. All those countries devastated by the war need great quantities of plant and materials to re-build their industries. Some still more urgently need foodstuffs and the other necessities of life, because their people are barely keeping ahead of starvation. These countries are all seeking supplies from the United States, but none of them has enough dollars to pay for the American goods they want nor enough goods of their own to export in return for American goods.

" For a time after the war the gap was partly bridged by loans from the United States and Canada and relief contributions such as Unrra. These resources could not have been more than a stop-gap and they have now come pretty well to an end.

" A number of countries have balances of English money to their credit at London and nearly all countries acquire a certain amount of English money in the course of their trade. To get American supplies, these countries seek to change some of their sterling resources into dollars. Thus, over and above providing dollars for her own needs, Britain has to try to provide dollars for a large part of the trading work, including ourselves. Britain could meet this dollar deficiency only by borrowing or by drawing on her gold reserves. Actually she has done both.

" As I have mentioned, the United States and Canada made loans to Britain totalling about five billion dollars. These loans were intended to fill the gap between dollar earnings and dollar expenditure until Britain could get on her feet.

" But whereas the United States loan of 3,750,000,000 dollars was expected to last two or three years, most of it was actually spent in about one year. During the same period, Britain was also drawing heavily against the Canadian loan. One reason for this rapid using-up of dollars was that American prices rose steeply, making the materials bought by Britain very much dearer. Another reason was the bad setback to British industry through the severe winter of 1946, which checked export production. Then, as the United States loan began to run out, a number of countries sought to convert large amounts of English money into dollars within a short period and this increased greatly the rate of drawings against what remained of the loans. Britain, therefore, has had to face the necessity of drawing on her gold reserves, which, by pre-war standards, are already very low. How low they are we have lately been told by the British Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir Stafford Cripps). He said in a statement to the House of Commons on the 19th December that, at the end of 1947, Britain's overseas reserves were expected to be about £500,000,000 sterling. He has since told us that the rate of drain on these resources is still proceeding at the rate of £11,000,000 sterling a week. Clearly this could not go on for too long.

"I need only add that even the £500,000,000 mentioned by the Chancellor cannot be regarded as wholly available for spending because some part of it would have to be held as a bedrock reserve against emergencies and to provide a minimum working fund for trade purposes. Clearly this very small margin of reserves must be very carefully husbanded. If the bedrock limit were reached, all the countries which now obtain dollars through Britain would have to live within their day-to-day earnings of dollars and this would cause acute difficulties for the individual countries—for ourselves perhaps as much as any one.

"As I have said, we have to call on Britain in most years for dollars to balance our accounts with the United States and Canada. The amount varies from year to year and depends largely on how much we sell to the United States and Canada. Wool is the main item at present. We sold a lot of wool to America last year at high prices. This year we will sell rather less, and although wool prices has risen, our total dollar earnings will be somewhat less than last year.

"If wool prices fall, our total dollar earnings might be a good deal less and we would either have to ask the British Government for large amounts of dollars or else cut dollar imports very drastically indeed.

"Since much that we buy from the United States is essential to the running of our economy and to our future development we naturally do not want to cut dollar imports too far. And yet, as things stand, we cannot expect to draw more than a minimum amount from the shrinking dollar reserves available to Britain. That, briefly, is the crux of our present position.

"Britain has taken the main burden of the dollar shortage so far. They have cut their dollar imports very rigorously, even going to the length of reducing their food rations still further. But the other sterling area countries—ourselves among them—must share this burden with them. This is not a mere matter of sentiment, but one of sheer, hard necessity. We simply could not afford to see Britain's dollar reserves run out. Therefore we must do our very utmost in a practical way, on the one hand, to earn more dollars and, on the other hand, to save more dollars. Even with the cuts imposed, and even though we are selling our current gold production abroad, we will not earn nearly as many dollars as we spend this year. There will still be an appreciable gap for which we must draw on Britain's dollar reserves. But we hope gradually to reduce that gap as the months go by.

"The action taken has inevitably caused a good deal of inconvenience and some dislocation to trade and industry. The Government regrets this but there was no way to avoid it. Even now it is estimated that dollar imports for 1947-48 will reach a total of £A90,000,000 as against £A63,000,000 for 1946-47.

"Since the basic problem behind the dollar shortage is that of reviving the war damaged economies of the world, we cannot expect any spectacular improvement within the near future. Those countries have made some progress since the war ended but it has been relatively slow. Their problems cannot be solved merely by outside help. The main effort must come from themselves.

"Nevertheless, outside help is necessary and that is the reason for further United States help under what is known as the Marshall Plan. This is a proposal which aims to provide these crippled countries with the materials they require to step up their production, the idea being that if they can once get into their stride again they will be able to keep moving. If the plan is approved by Congress and is put into operation, Britain should benefit, both directly and indirectly. Recovery in Europe would mean that supplies of goods which she now has to buy with dollars would become available to her from European countries.

"Sir Stafford Cripps has said that Britain could look forward to some benefit of this kind in the latter half of 1948 if the Marshall Plan had by then come into operation. But that is some way ahead yet and, in the meantime, the dollar problem for Britain, and for us too, is a pretty difficult job of making ends meet.

"We can play our part in two main ways. One is to go carefully with all forms of dollar expenditure. This particularly is a matter in which business firms and individual citizens can do a good deal to help. The other is to produce and export all we can, not only of goods which can be sold for dollars but of goods which sterling area countries would otherwise have to buy for dollars. The Government is going very closely into the question of increasing exports along these lines and it may be possible to do a good deal, particularly if we have further good seasons. It is, of course, more satisfactory to earn more dollars by increasing exports than to save them by reducing imports—although as matters stand we must do our utmost at both. In expanding exports, however, we have to keep in mind the essential needs of our own people.

"Since world conditions underlying the dollar shortage will take time to remedy, it would be wrong for me to hold out the prospect that import restrictions will soon be lifted or eased. We cannot ignore the possibility that some of these restrictions may have to be tightened further. That will not be done, however, unless it is absolutely inevitable.

"We have very great interests at stake in this matter because our overseas trade depends fundamentally on world economic conditions and above all on the strength and welfare of Britain which, these days, is hard-pressed to maintain the standards of living of her people. We all want to help her to win through. As a major exporting country we can do much by increasing the quantity of foodstuffs and other materials we send abroad. We can also help by economizing in the use of scarce dollar commodities. I put it to you that there is a job in this for every one in Australia".

FINANCIAL POLICY—STERLING, DEVALUATION.

On 24th January, 1948, Mr. Chifley said—

“If the International Monetary Fund agrees to devaluation of the French franc, the method of devaluation is important to Australia, as a problem could arise regarding relationship of our currency with sterling. If the devaluation is carried out in certain ways, it could result in a weakening of sterling, and if that resulted in a depreciation of British currency, a problem affecting Australia could arise.

“There have been no consultations with the Australian Government as to devaluation of the franc, but there must be consultations with the International Monetary Fund if devaluation is more than 10 per cent. The move will have no effect on United States aid to Britain. It is a purely French problem.

“The real danger is the establishment of a ‘double franc’—similar to the ‘double lire’ in Italy—which means that some proceeds of French exports would go to the French Treasury, while some would be free for exporters. This would result in a ‘cross rate’ of the franc against the dollar and the pound sterling. This could result in some weakening of sterling, and depreciation of sterling would set for us the problem of whether we would depreciate our currency in line with sterling. There can be no answer until these circumstances eventuate, but that is the problem which might arise”.

On 29th January, 1948, Mr. Chifley said—

“No consideration has been given to altering the Australian exchange rate while sterling remains at its present value. Only in the event of a depreciation of sterling would the matter be considered. There have been no consultations with the British Treasury on the exchange rate.

“The Australian Government shares with the British Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir Stafford Cripps) his fears as to the dangers which may arise in regard to the French open market for gold and certain foreign currencies, unless strictly administered”.

THE GOVERNMENT.

ACTING MINISTERS.

On 14th December, 1947, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

“The Attorney-General and Minister for External Affairs (Dr. Evatt) will be Acting Prime Minister; the Minister for Health (Senator McKenna) will be Acting Treasurer; and the Minister for Air (Mr. Drakeford) will be Acting Minister for Defence during my visit to New Zealand”.

(Mr. Chifley was absent in New Zealand from 15th December, 1947, to 1st January, 1948.)

MEAT.

LONG-TERM CONTRACTS WITH BRITAIN—EXTENSION.

On 15th December, 1947, the Minister for Commerce (Mr. Pollard) announced that the Government had completed negotiations for an extension for two years of the long-term contract with the British Government for the purchase of Australian meat. The original contract was for four years ending 30th September, 1948. Prices which operated during the period October, 1946, to September, 1947, would continue to operate for the October, 1947-September, 1948, period but provision has been made in the new agreement for pig meat prices to be subject to annual price review.

[For earlier reference please see Nos. 109, page 8; 116, page 32.]

COMMONWEALTH BANK.

POLICY—ADVANCES.

On 18th December, 1947, the Acting Prime Minister (Dr. Evatt) said—

“The instruction recently issued by the Commonwealth Bank to trading banks with regard to advance policy is similar to instructions issued by the Commonwealth Bank from time to time on the same subject since the early years of the war. During the past two and a half years the trading banks have increased from £200,000,000 to £320,000,000. The increase has been particularly rapid during 1947. Since December, 1946, trading bank advances have increased by £65,000,000. The Commonwealth Bank has facilitated this expansion by appropriate central bank action. The Government has endorsed the policy because it considered that the banks should be allowed to finance the re-conversion of industries from a war footing to peace-time production, to expand productive capacity for essential purposes and to assist the re-stocking of farm and station properties.

“Recently a large amount of free money has been available in the open market for investment, largely because of the exceptional prices for export commodities and because of the influx of overseas capital. The existence of this free money was shown by the fact that the Fourth Security Loan was over-subscribed by £13,000,000. The Commonwealth Bank therefore considers that while funds are so readily available in the market for investment purposes, it is unnecessary and inadvisable that bank advances should continue to increase as rapidly as in recent months. In present circumstances, the Commonwealth Bank considers that capital expansion should be financed by new issues and not by bank overdrafts. Accordingly, in its revised instructions to the banks it has called for a somewhat stricter application of the principles which have formed the basis of its earlier instructions”.

WHEAT. SALE TO BRITAIN.

On 18th December, 1947, the Minister for Commerce (Mr. Pollard) announced that the Government had completed negotiations with the British Government in regard to the supply of wheat and flour from the 1947-48 wheat crop. The Government had accepted the offer of the British Government for the purchase of 80,000,000 bushels of wheat at the overall price of A.17s. a bushel, f.o.b. Australian ports. The quantity represented shipments destined for British requirements and in addition the needs of colonial and other areas for whose wheat supplies Britain was responsible. The latter shipments would comprise mostly flour. Because of the magnitude of the deal and the fact that the British Ministry of Food would provide shipping to lift all the wheat and flour over a period of thirteen months, the Government was justified in accepting the maximum offer which the British Government was prepared to make. The Government felt that a contract for such a huge quantity should not be made on a quarterly price basis, particularly in view of market fluctuations which could occur over a period of twelve months.

A clause in the contract provided for an additional allocation of 5,000,000 bushels in the event that receipts by the board from the 1947-48 harvest reached 210,000,000 bushels of f.a.q. wheat. The price would be subject to review in the event of the participants to the contract becoming parties to an international wheat agreement if and when made. Under those circumstances, the price of wheat remaining unshipped at the date the international wheat agreement came into force would be adjusted to conform to the price operating under the international agreement.

SALE TO INDIA.

On 18th December, 1947, Mr. Pollard announced the conclusion of negotiations with representatives of the Indian Food Mission for the purchase of wheat on behalf of the Indian Government. The Government would sell to India from the 1947-48 wheat crop 25,000,000 bushels of wheat, including the flour equivalent of 2,500,000 bushels. The price would be on the basis of A18s. 6d. a bushel, f.o.b. Australian ports, with delivery spread over twelve months.

A clause in the contract provided for an additional allocation of 5,000,000 bushels in the event that receipts by the board from the 1947-48 harvest reached 210,000,000 bushels of f.a.q. wheat. The price would be subject to review in the event of the participants to the contract becoming parties to an international wheat agreement if and when made. Under those circumstances, the price of wheat remaining unshipped at the date the international wheat agreement came into force would be adjusted to conform to the price operating under the international agreement.

INDIA.

AUSTRALIAN SCIENTIFIC MISSION TO INDIA.

On 21st December, 1947, the Acting Prime Minister (Dr. Evatt) said—

“A mission of Australian scientists will shortly visit India. During the Empire Scientific Conference at London in 1946, many contacts were made between Indian and Australian scientists and, as a result, the Government of India has invited the Australian Government to send a goodwill mission to India to visit the main centres of University and Government research in that Dominion and to report on scientific development generally. Many problems encountered by Indian scientists are similar to those Australians have experienced, and it is believed that the exchange of views and closer contacts between Indians and Australians resulting from a visit should prove of mutual benefit to both countries.

“The Professor of Electrical Engineering at Sydney University (Sir John Madsen) will lead the delegation, and other members will be the Professor of Physics at Adelaide University, the Director of the Waite Agricultural Research Institute (Professor J. A. Prescott), and Mr. R. G. Thomas, of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research Division of Industrial Chemistry. The Assistant Secretary of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (Mr. G. Gresford) will act as secretary of the delegation”.

MOVEMENTS OF SHIPS.

STEVEDORING COMMISSION—ACT PROCLAIMED.

On 22nd December, 1947, the Attorney-General (Dr. Evatt) announced that the Stevedoring Industry Act would commence on that day.

[For earlier reference, please see No. 124, page 36.]

STEVEDORING COMMISSION—APPOINTMENTS.

On 22nd December, 1947, Dr. Evatt announced that members of the Stevedoring Industry Commission would be—

Mr. Justice Kirby, chairman, Mr. J. M. Hewitt, deputy-chairman, Messrs. G. G. Sutcliffe (Department of Shipping), J. P. Williams (overseas shipowners), A. J. Bampton (Australian Shipowners), J. Healy and E. C. Roach (Waterside Workers' Federation).

INDUSTRIAL.

ARBITRATION ACT—CONCILIATION COMMISSIONER.

On 22nd December, 1947, the Attorney-General (Dr. Evatt) announced that Mr. J. M. Hewitt had been appointed a Commonwealth Conciliation Commissioner.

(For earlier references, please see No. 129, page 6; No. 131, page 25.)

BASIC WAGE—FIXATION SYSTEM, PROPOSED COMMITTEE.

On 9th January, 1948, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

“The President (Mr. P. J. Clarey, M.L.C.) and the secretary (Mr. A. E. Monk) of the Australasian Council of Trades Unions to-day discussed with me the matter of the establishment of a committee to inquire into the computation and adjustments affecting the basic wage. They intimated that they proposed to discuss the matter with their full executive next week.

“I gave Messrs. Clarey and Monk an outline of the economic position generally and the question of increased production was discussed. Messrs. Clarey and Monk promised their fullest co-operation.”

PRIMARY INDUSTRIES.

POULTRY FARMING—AUSTRALIAN EGG BOARD, APPOINTMENTS.

On 30th December, 1947, the Minister for Agriculture (Mr. Pollard) announced the appointment of the following persons as members of the Australian Egg Board for three years from 1st January, 1948—

COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT.—Mr. H. Souter.

COMMERCIAL EXPERIENCE.—Messrs. R. C. Blake and A. A. Osborn.

PRODUCERS.—Messrs. E. C. Mitford (New South Wales) R. E. Huggins (Victoria), R. E. Slaughter (Queensland), C. R. Cowell (South Australia), W. L. Hoops (Western Australia) and T. M. Young (Tasmania).

(For earlier reference, please see No. 115, page 22.)

EXPORTS TO BRITAIN—GIFTS.

On 13th January, 1948, the Postmaster-General (Senator Cameron) said that food parcels despatched by post to Britain in 1947 constituted a record. The total was 3,355,933 parcels and the weight 31,874,871 lb. Previous figures were—

	Parcels.	Weight.
1945	1,313,236	6,885,713
1946	2,869,589	25,309,305

EXPORTS—NEW RECORD.

On 28th January, 1948, Mr. Pollard said—

“Australia’s exports for the year ending 30th June, 1948, are expected to total £390,000,000, compared with £308,000,000 for 1946-47—an increase of 27 per cent. and an increase of 182 per cent. on the average figures for the five pre-war years ended 1938-39. Details are—

WHEAT.—Estimated value of wheat and flour exports is £90,000,000, compared with £28,900,000 for 1946-47 and an average of £19,900,000 for the five pre-war years. Total volume of exports in terms of wheat may be less than 100,000,000 bushels, compared with an average of 107,500,000 bushels in the five years ended 1938-39. The great increase in estimated value is due to the average export price being nearly five times pre-war level.

WOOL.—Exports are expected to be worth £133,000,000, compared with £126,800,000 in 1946-47, in which year considerable shipments were made from stocks accumulated during the war. The estimated 35d. a lb. greasy basis compares with the 1946-47 return of 23d. a lb. and for the five pre-war years of 13½d. a lb.

BUTTER.—With a probable value of £16,700,000, shipments, which should reach a total of 70,000 tons, should be worth about 60 per cent. more than in either the previous period or the five pre-war years, when they were valued at about £10,400,000. If shipments did reach 70,000 tons in 1947-48 they would be about 26,000 less than the pre-war average but more than 10,000 tons above the 1946-47 total. An important factor in the decline in butter exports since pre-war is the diversion of more milk to whole milk consumption and production of processed milk.

FROZEN MEATS.—Total exports are expected to increase from an average of £9,100,000 in the five years ended 1938-39 and £10,500,000 in 1946-47 to £13,500,000 in the current period. Beef and veal shipments, estimated to total 90,000 tons, will be nearly 10,000 tons more than in the previous period, but about 17 per cent. lower than before the war, when they averaged 106,000 tons. Mutton and lamb, estimated at 70,000 tons, will be about 15 per cent. below the pre-war average of nearly 86,000 tons. The increased value of meat exports is due to an increase of about 90 per cent. in export prices.

CHEESE.—Average shipments in the five pre-war years were 9,540 tons, worth £63 16s. a ton. For the current period, cheese exports are expected to reach 24,000 tons, at an estimated average price of £120 2s. a ton, the estimated total value for the season being nearly £2,900,000.

EGGS.—For the five pre-war years, shipments of eggs in shell averaged 15,400,000 dozen valued at 13.52d. a dozen and eggs not in shell averaged 505,000 lb. worth 7.9d. a lb. Estimated shipments to Britain for the current season are 21,000,000 dozen eggs in shell at 2s. 1d. a dozen, 20,000,000 lb. egg pulp at 1s. 6½d. a lb., and 2,000,000 lb. egg pulp at 4s. 11½d. a lb. New Zealand is expected to take 3,500,000 lb. egg pulp at 1s. 7d. a lb. Total value of egg exports is estimated at almost £4,800,000.

DRIED FRUITS.—Because of bad seasonal conditions, dried vine fruits' exports are expected to be below pre-war average in volume but higher in value. Current period's shipments are estimated at 45,000 tons worth £2,800,000, compared to pre-war average of 58,245 tons worth £2,200,000.

(For earlier references, please see No. 115, page 22.)

WAR WITH JAPAN.

BRITISH COMMONWEALTH OCCUPATION FORCE— ADMINISTRATION.

On 31st December, 1947, the acting Minister for Defence (Mr. Drakeford) said that the British Commonwealth Governments whose troops were taking part in the occupation in Japan recently reviewed the system for the control and administration of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force. They had decided to modify the organization for combined control by the governments concerned.

It had been agreed, subject to the continued retention by the participating governments of sovereign control of their own policy and full consultation when their interests were affected, that responsibility for the control and administration of the force would be assigned to the Australian Government to be exercised through the Department of Defence in relation to joint-service matters and through the Departments of the Navy, the Army and Air in regard to matters within their respective spheres.

The new system would be introduced in January, 1948. The Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee in Australia, which had planned for and controlled the force on behalf of the British Commonwealth Governments, would be dissolved when the new system was introduced. Service representatives of other participating British Commonwealth Governments would continue to be associated with the Australian machinery for consultation and advice in connexion with their respective countries' interests.

BRITISH COMMONWEALTH OCCUPATION FORCE— COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

On 8th January, 1948, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

“Approval has been given for the Commander-in-Chief of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force in Japan (Lieutenant-General H. C. H. Robertson) to be absent from his command during January and February, 1948. Lieutenant-General Robertson will return to Australia for duty and leave and will visit New Zealand to discuss with the New Zealand Government matters affecting the disposition of its troops in Japan.

“During Lieutenant-General Robertson's absence from Japan, the Air Officer Commanding the British Commonwealth Air Forces (Air vice-Marshal C. A. Bouchier) will act as Commander-in-chief of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force.”

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE.

AWARDS FOR GALLANTRY.

On 2nd January, 1948, the Governor-General announced the following awards:—

Air Force Cross.—Flying Officers C. W. Stark, J. G. Cornish, D. R. Hebbard, A. J. Somerville, A. Starkey, G. Tuck.

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS.

TELE-COMMUNICATIONS—COUNCIL.

On 7th January, 1948, the Postmaster-General (Senator Cameron) announced that the Deputy Director of Posts and Telegraphs (Mr. F. R. Bradley), had been appointed Australian Representative on the Commonwealth Communications Council at London.

(For earlier references, please see No. 124, page 28.)

TARIFF.

EXPORTS PROHIBITED.

On 8th January, 1948, the Minister for Customs (Senator Courtice) announced that the export of maize and maize products, motor vehicles, partly or wholly assembled, and spare parts and accessories, and duplicating and blotting paper had been prohibited.

PRICES.

GOODS "DECLARED"—BIRD SEED, REVOCATION.

On 9th January, 1948, the Minister for Customs (Senator Courtice) announced that bird seed had been removed from price control.

AMERICA.

VISIT OF ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVAL OFFICERS TO PEARL HARBOUR.

On 9th January, 1948, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

"Six Royal Australian Naval officers will fly to Pearl Harbour to join U.S.S. *Valley Forge* and take passage in her from Pearl Harbour to Sydney. The *Valley Forge* is the flagship of the American Task Force due to arrive in Sydney on 30th January, 1948. This is in continuation of the very close liaison which existed between the Royal Australian Navy and the United States Navy during World War II.

"The officers, the senior of whom is Captain W. H. Harrington, will be able to observe the American Task Force during its operations at sea on passage. The kind invitation extended by the Commander-in-Chief of the United States Pacific Fleet will do much to further the close and cordial relations existing between the Royal Australian Navy and the United States Navy."

COMMONWEALTH OFFICES.

MELBOURNE.

On 12th January, 1948, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

"Cabinet to-day authorized the Minister for the Interior (Mr. Johnson) to proceed with the acquisition of land of an area of about 9½ acres, bounded by Spring, Victoria, Latrobe, Exhibition and Lonsdale-streets, Melbourne, for Commonwealth office purposes. The land is occupied by buildings, factories and residences, generally old and of poor class. Development of the site for Commonwealth purposes will be undertaken in stages. It is not intended to disturb owners or occupiers for some time as it is not likely that the first stage of the new office building will be commenced for about two years. Since June, 1946, the Commonwealth has acquired properties, such as the Odd-fellows Building, Reliance House, Chancery House and Henty House, and it is intended to dispose of these and concentrate activities in the new offices when erected."

HEALTH.

ACOUSTIC LABORATORY.

On 12th January, 1948, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

"In 1946, Cabinet approved of the Department of Health taking over the acoustic laboratory at Sydney from the National Health and Medical Research Council. At the request of the Department of

Repatriation, the activities of the laboratory have included the servicing and maintenance of hearing-aid equipment for ex-servicemen. Branch laboratories at Perth and Melbourne have been established.

"Cabinet decided to-day to establish the acoustic laboratory service to handle work for the Department of Repatriation at Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth."

(For earlier references, please see No. 115, page 34.)

MINING.

MICA INDUSTRY.

On 12th January, 1948, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

"Cabinet decided to-day that Commonwealth control of the mica industry be continued for a further period of one year from 1st January, 1948. The matter will be further reviewed before the expiration of that period. Twenty portable air compressors will be obtained from the Commonwealth Government from stocks at present available in Australia for outright sale or hire purchase to mica-miners.

"Mica is a strategic mineral of first-class importance and development of the industry is essential in Australia both for national development and defence."

(For earlier references, please see No. 11, page 14; 118, page 25; 126, page 42.)

URANIUM.

On 12th January, 1948, Mr. Chifley said—

"Under the *Atomic Energy (Control of Minerals) Act*, the Commonwealth Government took power in 1946 to control production and distribution of uranium, thorium, plutonium, or any of their respective compounds or other substances which may be used for the production of atomic energy.

"Following discussions in 1947 with the State Departments of Mines, a programme of investigation of resources of radio-active minerals has been carried out in Australia. The more important localities of investigation are the beach sands of the east coast of Australia (thorium), the Mount Painter and Radium Hill areas of South Australia (uranium), and the Port Hedland area of Western Australia (uranium and thorium).

"Cabinet decided to-day that the following rewards be approved in connexion with the discovery of uranium ore:—

A reward of £1,000 for the discovery of any new deposit of uranium ore which, in the opinion of the Minister, is of economic significance. A new deposit to be defined as a deposit more than 15 miles from any known occurrence.

A reward of a further £2,000 for discoveries which, in the opinion of the Minister, are capable of producing 25 tons of uranium oxide, and a *pro rata* payment for any additional quantities in excess of 25 tons of uranium oxide.

"The Minister will reserve the right to make payments of amounts to be determined by him to discoverers of new deposits which, although themselves not capable of yielding any substantial quantity of uranium oxide, may lead to the discovery of other deposits of importance."

(For earlier references, please see No. 112, page 48.)

LEAD—CONTROL.

On 12th January, 1948, Mr. Chifley said—

"The supply position of lead is very difficult in Britain and lead exported by Australia takes the place of that which would have to be procured by Britain from Canada and Mexico, involving the expenditure of dollars. The matter was dealt with by Cabinet in July, 1947, but the Minister for Supply (Senator Ashley) informed Cabinet to-day that there was evidence of dealers continuing to hold scrap lead.

"Cabinet decided that a further census of scrap lead be taken and dealers be required to furnish details of their holdings at quarterly intervals thereafter. Export licences will be granted in respect of 50 per cent. of declared holdings provided that holders furnish satisfactory evidence that the balance, including 50 per cent. of antimonial lead, has been sold for consumption in Australia. It is estimated that accumulated stocks of scrap lead in Australia amount to about 8,000 tons, which could be turned to considerable advantage in the present dollar crisis."

MIGRATION.

GOVERNMENT POLICY—TRANSPORT BY AIR.

On 12th January, 1948, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

"Cabinet to-day approved of the Minister for Immigration (Mr. Calwell) approaching the British Government to ascertain its views regarding the transport of British migrants to Australia by air. After full investigation the matter will be again submitted to Cabinet for final consideration."

SHIP BUILDING.

PROGRAMME—FURTHER REVISION.

On 12th January, 1948, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

"Cabinet approved to-day of the construction of four additional "B" class motor vessels to be propelled by the *Doxford* type diesel engine—making a total of twelve of this class of vessel (six diesel and six steam) in the Australian shipbuilding programme. Cabinet also approved of the construction of four "C" class vessels, two of which will be propelled by double-compound reciprocating marine engines and two by N-E type marine engines."

CIVIL DEFENCE.

BOMBING—COMMITTEE APPOINTED.

On 12th January, 1948, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

“In October 1947, confidential documents were received by the Minister for Works (Mr. Lemmon) from the British Ministry of Works giving an analysis of damage caused by bombs, including the flying bomb and rocket projectiles, and of the effect of atomic bombs.

“Cabinet decided to-day that a Cabinet sub-committee comprising the Minister for Defence (Mr. Dedman), the Postmaster-General (Senator Cameron), the Minister for the Interior (Mr. Johnson), the Minister for Works (Mr. Lemmon) and myself be appointed to arrange for a group of senior officers with specialized knowledge to be appointed from appropriate departments to advise the Cabinet sub-committee”.

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY.

FIRST NAVAL MEMBER.

On 12th January, 1948, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

“In August, 1944, War Cabinet decided that, on the completion of the term of appointment of Admiral Sir Louis Hamilton as First Naval Member, an officer of the Royal Australian Navy should be appointed as First Naval Member and Chief of the Naval Staff.

“Cabinet decided to-day that Rear-Admiral J. A. Collins be appointed as First Naval Member and Chief of the Naval Staff. Rear-Admiral Collins has just completed an Imperial Defence College course in Britain”.

(For earlier references, please see No. 99, page 15.)

SOUTH-EAST ASIA.

SCHOLARSHIPS.

On 12th January, 1948, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

“Cabinet decided to-night that provision be made for the establishment of three Australian scholarships for students from South-east Asian countries. The scholarships will be founded by the Commonwealth Government at Australian universities; the approximate annual cost being estimated at £5,000. It was considered that the provisions of opportunities in Australia for the students concerned would give further practical evidence of the goodwill of the Australian people towards the peoples of the countries concerned, such as India, Pakistan, Burma, Malaya, Ceylon, Siam, Philippines and Indonesia. Arrangements for the selection of scholars and their welfare in Australia will be worked out by the Department of External Affairs and Post-war Reconstruction in co-operation with consular or diplomatic representatives”.

RECONSTRUCTION.

BRETTON WOODS AGREEMENT—INTERNATIONAL
MONETARY FUND AND BANK DIRECTOR.

On 13th January, 1948, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

“Australia is eligible to participate in an election for the fourteenth Director of the International Monetary Fund and International Bank respectively. It is proposed to nominate the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. S. G. McFarlane) for the executive directorship of both organizations. It is intended that the Commonwealth Statistician (Dr. R. Wilson) will be the alternate director should Mr. McFarlane be elected. The tenure of office will be until September, 1948”.

(Mr. McFarlane was later elected unopposed.)

GOVERNMENT'S PLANS—SECONDARY INDUSTRY,
DIVISION OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT.

On 21st January, 1948, Mr. Chifley said—

“The Chairman of the Secondary Industries Commission (Mr. J. K. Jensen) has discussed with me the position of manufacturing industries in Australia, having particular regard to their greatly increased importance relative to the Australian economy as a whole and to the fact that the condition of full employment now being experienced will tend to reduce the tempo at which sound expansion of manufacture can take place in the near future. We have also discussed the danger inherent in the present situation that some ventures may be started which are likely to be short-lived.

“The Australian manufacturing industry to-day gives employment to nearly 30 per cent. of the Australian labour force. Its growth, through the diversification of production, material assets and employment opportunities, has given added strength and resiliency to the whole economy.

“In framing financial and general economic policy, governments and public authorities generally must ensure that the manufacturing industries continue to be given, within the limits of our resources, every opportunity to flourish and to develop, so that in turn they may continue to make their maximum contribution to the national policy of full employment. To this end, Mr. Jensen has represented to me that as much information as possible should be collated and made public regarding the structure and operation of manufacturing industry. Such information should be of use to management and entrepreneurs who are directly responsible for the operation of established ventures and the launching of new ones.

“The statistical information currently available aims only at giving a broad picture of the structure of industry. While it presents invaluable information, it is evident that additional data are desirable in order to appreciate the position at any particular time of any one industry. For the guidance both of public authorities and of private interest,

therefore, we must aim where possible to improve the information which can be made available, whether it be from current statistics or from the results of special surveys. Sometimes such additional information is of a kind that cannot be reduced to statistical presentation. The sort of information which I have in mind includes particulars about existing and projected productive capacity; the demand for products; the age and relative efficiency of machinery and plants.

"As a result of the willing co-operation of industrialists with which it has been associated, the Division of Industrial Development has accumulated much information about manufacturing in Australia. I have arranged that this division, drawing on its own resources and the resources of other government departments associated in this field, should prepare for public information periodical reviews, bringing together all the relevant information that can be obtained about as many manufacturing industries as possible.

"In preparing these reviews no attempt will be made by the division to ask manufacturers to give any additional information regarding their operations unless the manufacturers themselves find it expedient to do so".

FIFTH SECURITY LOAN.

TERMS ANNOUNCED.

On 13th January, 1948, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

"The long-term interest rate on bonds and inscribed stock issued for the next loan to be raised by the Commonwealth Government will be maintained at £3 2s. 6d. per cent. The same rate applied to the successful Third and Fourth Security Loans floated in 1947. The securities to be issued will be for a period of approximately twelve years. Once again there will be no short-term securities."

On 4th February, 1948, Mr. Chifley said—

"The next Commonwealth cash loan will open on 14th April, 1948. The amount to be sought for repatriation, rehabilitation and public works of the Commonwealth and States will be £35,000,000. The loan will be raised under the title of Fifth Security Loan.

"The loan campaign will close on 5th May, 1948, but the Treasurer reserves the right to close the loan at any earlier time if he should consider that course desirable."

WHEAT STABILIZATION PLAN SCHEME.

POST-WAR—CONTINUANCE, MINISTER'S ANNOUNCEMENT.

On 15th January, 1948, the Minister for Commerce and Agriculture (Mr. Pollard) announced that from 19th January, 1948, and to the conclusion of the marketing of the 1951-52 wheat crop a price of 6s. 3d. a bushel bulk f.o.r. ports would apply for all wheat sold by the

Australian Wheat Board for human consumption and stock feed within Australia. The Commonwealth Government would guarantee a price of 6s. 3d. a bushel bulk f.o.r. ports for all wheat sold by the Australian Wheat Board for consumption within Australia and for all wheat exported. The guaranteed price would be dependent on the States passing legislation identical with that required as complementary to the Wheat Stabilization Act of 1946 except in respect to the essential price alteration necessary to that Act to guarantee 6s. 3d. a bushel bulk f.o.r. ports. State complementary legislation would have to operate for the 1948-49 crop.

In the event of the Cost of Inquiry Committee recommending an index accepted as practicable by the Commonwealth Government, consideration would be given to varying the price up or down according to the index variation.

The operation of the plan would continue with the following alterations—the contribution of 50 per cent. would start under the new plan at 6s. 3d. a bushel bulk instead of 5s. 3d. a bushel bagged. The ceiling at which contributions stopped would be 10s. 7d. a bushel bulk instead of 9s. 6d. a bushel bagged.

Stabilization contributions already collected on the 1945-46 crop would be distributed to growers not later than December, 1948, in proportion to their deliveries to the board but no further distributions from the fund would be made except as Cabinet approved in the light of the position at the time. After disbursal of the 1945-46 contributions, £20,000,000 would be regarded as a reasonable minimum for the fund. The scheme would be reviewed before the end of the 1951-52 season.

The decisions followed the presentation on 18th December, 1947, of an interim report by the Cost of Inquiry Committee. The committee found a cost figure of 6s. a bushel at sidings. Conversion of that price to a bulk f.o.r. basis indicated a price of 6s. 8d. a bushel. Having regard to the long-range security provided and the profitable return to a reasonably efficient producer, the Government adopted 6s. 3d. a bushel bulk f.o.r. ports as a fair proposition to all concerned including consumers and stock feeders. The price represented an increase of about 1s. 4d. a bushel bulk f.o.r. ports for home consumption purposes and 1s. 3d. a bushel in the overall guaranteed price. With a refund to growers of about 1s. 1.5d. the 1945-46 fund contribution for that year's crop would return them 7s. 4.5d. a bushel bulk (less freight). It was estimated that final returns for the 1946-47 crop would amount to 7s. 9d. a bushel bulk (less freight).

The crop now being harvested would give a price return substantially in excess of the 1945-46 and 1946-47 crops. The plan in its revised form, if accepted by the States and growers, would give effective security for four crops after the one now being harvested. In the absence of Commonwealth marketing powers, complementary legislation by the States was essential.

(For earlier references please see Nos. 116, page 30; 123, page 28; 128, page 20.)

DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION.
DIRECTOR-GENERAL.

On 15th January, 1948, the Minister for Information (Mr. Calwell) announced that the Director-General of Information (Mr. E. G. Bonney) had resigned and would take over the Directorship of the Australian News and Information Bureau at New York. The Chief Publicity Officer of the Department (Mr. K. Murphy) would be Acting Director-General of Information.

CONVERSION LOAN.

LONDON OPERATION, JANUARY, 1948.

On 22nd January, 1948, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

“A conversion loan is being floated at London to convert a New South Wales loan of £17,870,000, bearing interest at 5½ per cent. per annum, over which an option of conversion is held by the Government.

“The terms of the new loan are: Issue price 98½, interest rate 3 per cent. per annum, maturity date 1st May, 1965, with the option to the Government of prior redemption on or after 1st May, 1963.

“Conversion offer will be made to all existing holders of the old loan but issue of new stock will be limited to £12,870,000, as £5,000,000 of old stock is being redeemed. The new loan will result in a substantial saving of interest to the New South Wales Government.”

BURMA.

BURMESE DELEGATION.

On 27th January, 1948, the Minister for External Affairs (Dr. Evatt) said that a delegation of Burmese Government officials would arrive in Australia on 28th January, 1948. The delegation comprised the Chairman of the Burmese Public Service Commission (Thakin Lun Baw), Boh Toon Lin and Lee Boon Thi. They would have consultations with the Commonwealth Public Service Board on public service organization and administration.

NATIONAL GALLERY.

On 4th February, 1948, the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) said—

“Mr. G. W. Booth, of Melbourne, has presented to the Commonwealth Government, for inclusion in the National Collection of Art Treasures, a very fine painting by the late Tom Roberts.”

FOURTH SECURITY LOAN.

OVER-SUBSCRIPTION.

Cash subscriptions to the Fourth Security Loan of £48,000,000 totalled £61,155,000 and £17,392,000 of the £32,000,000 conversion loan were converted.

(For earlier references, please see No. 130, page 37.)

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