

PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

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Seventh Annual Report of the  
Purchasing Commission

January 1st, 1949, to December 31st, 1949



VICTORIA, B.C. :  
Printed by DON McDIARMID, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty.  
1950.

Seventh Annual Report of the  
Purchasing Commission

Report of the Commission for the year ending 31st December 1911



Printed and Published by the Stationery Office, London

VICTORIA, B.C., January 10th, 1950.

To His Honour C. A. BANKS,  
*Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of British Columbia.*

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOUR:

Herewith I beg respectfully to submit the Annual Report of the Purchasing Commission of the Department of Finance for the period January 1st, 1949, to December 31st, 1949.

H. ANSCOMB,  
*Minister of Finance.*

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*The Honourable Herbert Anscomb,*  
*Minister of Finance, Victoria, B.C.*

SIR,—We have the honour to submit the Seventh Annual Report of the Purchasing Commission, covering the period January 1st, 1949, to December 31st, 1949.

C. B. PETERSON,  
*Chairman.*

E. W. GRIFFITH,  
*Member.*

J. M. STEWART,  
*Member.*

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

On 10/10/50, the Board of Directors of the University of California, Berkeley, met in regular session and discussed the proposed plan for the establishment of a new department of Chemistry in the College of Arts and Sciences. The plan was approved by a vote of 10-0.

It is recommended that the plan be approved and that the necessary steps be taken to carry it out.

The following members of the Board of Directors were present at the meeting:

- Chairman: CARL PETERSON
- Member: W. W. GRIFFITH
- Member: J. M. STEWART

# Seventh Annual Report of the Purchasing Commission.

For the Period January 1st, 1949, to December 31st, 1949.

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Gone are the days when a purchasing agent could hide his shortcomings behind the curtain of a "seller's market." Competition has suddenly assumed almost hectic proportions, and many suppliers who, in the past few years, appeared to regard our insistent and sometimes pathetic appeals for materials as a source of acute embarrassment are now becoming most solicitous for our welfare. In fact a positively injured attitude is assumed by some if their benevolent intentions are not now instantly recognized. This Commission may be pardoned (or even commended) for having one of the instincts of an elephant, and remembering those whose unflinching courtesy and co-operation kept our many services in operation during all that long and difficult period of shortages. To them we now wish to take this opportunity of conveying our compliments.

As to current prices, let us be generous and just say that over-all costs have not decreased. Increased freight rates and adverse exchange conditions have tended to offset the benefits that might otherwise have been apparent. The coming year should show a general levelling-off in prices where basic commodities are concerned.

British goods have shown a marked reduction during the last three months, particularly automobiles and crockery; and textiles are expected to follow this trend after existing stocks in this country have been depleted. Many British lines of heavy equipment might also be attractive if better servicing facilities were available.

A marked improvement has been apparent in the availability of steel products, including nails; and road machinery such as tractors, graders, and snow-removal equipment is obtainable on comparatively short notice. Antifreeze, previously in very short supply, is now plentiful. Supplies of coal and fuel-oil are also adequate.

The automotive industry has almost reached peak production, trucks of all sizes are available for immediate delivery, and, with few exceptions, the same may be said of passenger-cars. Ample supplies of parts and accessories are again in the hands of dealers. The tire business is highly competitive, stocks are complete, and prices are below pre-war levels.

For the first time in years lumber is readily available, and prices have dropped approximately 13 per cent. below last year's quotations.

Commencing on April 1st, 1949, a new system was inaugurated for purchasing the supplies of tea and coffee required by our several institutions. Instead of the former practice of attempting to set grades and calling for prices based on those grades, it was decided that we would set the price we were prepared to pay and ask the suppliers to compete on the basis of the quality of the tea and coffee they were willing to supply at those prices. The samples received from the various suppliers are submitted, for testing, to an independent and recognized authority on tea and coffee, and the business, for a period of six months, is awarded on the basis of the report received from this tester. As a result of this change in procedure, the institutions are receiving a much superior product.

During the calendar year 1949 the number of motor-vehicles purchased totalled 422, consisting of 228 trucks, 193 passenger-cars, and 1 motor-cycle. During the same period 237 vehicles were disposed of, from which the sum of \$133,522.26 was realized. The availability of new cars and the introduction of a large number of English vehicles

at the devalued sterling prices has tended to ease the demand for used cars, and consequently lower prices now prevail.

Miscellaneous items of surplus stock and equipment sold by auction or advertised tender amounted to \$53,088.30.

Supervision has been maintained over the stocks carried in Police stores, Langford Warehouse, and at the several Provincial institutions, and the inventories of supplies have been periodically verified.

#### STATISTICAL RECORDS.

Statistical records were maintained under the following headings, which, for information, are recited herewith:—

- A. *Competitive*.—On contract, quotation (written or verbal), or prices awarded on, and governed by, previous quotation.
- B. *Restrictive*.—Specified commodities sold exclusively by a particular manufacturer, wholesaler, jobber, or agent.
- C. *Controlled*.—Includes set prices where no advantage accrues in calling for competitive tenders on commodities sold at controlled prices.
- D. *Non-competitive*.—Requisitions issued without stated prices and controlled by checking or test-checking prices when invoices are submitted.
- E. *Retail*.—Includes semi-retail, or where prices are greater than might be secured from manufacturer or wholesaler (local purchases).
- F. *Emergency*.—(1) Retail. (2) Wholesale.

Comparative figures for the fiscal years 1946-47, 1947-48, and 1948-49 are set forth hereunder:—

|                                       | 1946-47.       | 1947-48.       | 1948-49.        |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| A. Competitive.....                   | \$1,224,889.62 | \$1,797,962.96 | \$2,390,495.25  |
| B. Restrictive.....                   | 1,913,511.26   | 3,171,273.11   | 4,539,397.45    |
| C. Controlled.....                    | 697,980.71     | 1,017,470.76   | 1,976,647.61    |
| D. Non-competitive.....               | 1,345,051.80   | 2,046,112.62   | 3,399,999.87    |
| E. Retail.....                        | 99,687.91      | 151,388.03     | 153,047.50      |
| F. Emergency—                         |                |                |                 |
| (1) Retail.....                       | 555,649.05     | 301,377.17     | 309,999.39      |
| (2) Wholesale.....                    |                | 472,359.06     | 620,584.50      |
| War Assets Corporation.....           | 227,049.05     | 98,693.42      | 23,374.78       |
| Totals.....                           | \$6,063,819.40 | \$9,056,637.13 | \$13,413,546.35 |
| Number of purchase orders issued..... | 27,163         | 30,390         | 33,315          |

The increase in the total amount of purchases during the fiscal year 1948-49 was, in part, due to heavy purchases of road machinery; also the purchase of supplies for the Crease Clinic, Essondale; new building, Colony Farm; new Nurses' Home, New Westminster; and the Dominion Health Grant projects.

#### OFFICE FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT.

Increased requirements under this head are, of necessity, in direct relation to the expansion in Government services. The two new temporary buildings on Superior Street and the offices connected with the new Crease Clinic at Essondale have had to be completely furnished. There have also been a number of smaller offices opened throughout the Province to accommodate additional personnel in the several departments. Due to past shortages, replacement of various types of obsolete and worn-out office equipment has not been possible; but, as supplies have now become available, these replacements are being made as rapidly as our appropriations will permit.

Previously unavailable but urgently required filing equipment, particularly in Land Registry and Government Agents' offices, has now been provided.

As fast as the facilities of our British Columbia manufacturers will permit, the policy of having our office furniture made locally is being expanded, and with splendid results. The quality of the product supplied is of a high standard and fully complies with our requirements.

The inventory of office furniture is still incomplete, owing to pressure of work on the tabulating machines and staff in the offices of the Bureau of Statistics (Health Insurance requirements taking precedence over ours). However, it is far enough advanced to give an approximate valuation of \$1,500,000.

The typewriter-maintenance staff continues to render an efficient and economical service. Provision is being made to employ an additional mechanic next year in order that the inspection of our 500 adding-machines may be undertaken, in addition to the 2,650 typewriters now under inspection.

The facilities of our cabinetmaker's shop in Vancouver, referred to in previous reports, continue to be utilized to the fullest extent. Much valuable work of a similar nature is also performed for us in Victoria by the carpenters on the maintenance staff of the Department of Public Works.

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