

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Wednesday, August 29, 1951.

The PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir Walter Duncan) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

SCHOOL AT BRIGHTON CEMENT WORKS.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—Has the Minister of Education any further information regarding the question I asked yesterday relating to the establishment of a school in portion of the Brighton Cement Company's office?

The Hon. R. J. RUDALL—The question of providing a school at Seacliff is under investigation, but the site for such a school will be decided only after receipt of a report from the Land Acquisition Committee which is now examining the question.

TRANSPORT OF PARCEL POST.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—Has the Chief Secretary a reply to the question I asked yesterday regarding the carriage of parcel post by the Railways Commissioner?

The Hon. A. L. McEWIN—I have a report from the Railways Commissioner in which he states that:—

Such parcels are carried by passenger train with other mail matters between South Australia and the other States except on Tuesdays from Adelaide to Melbourne, and on Wednesdays from Melbourne to Adelaide when, due to the Victorian Railways having cancelled express running on those days, mail matter may be forwarded by fast freight train in either direction when it can be seen that sufficient accommodation will not be available on the following day's Overland express. The restoration of the Overland to seven days a week would ensure all interstate mails being carried by passenger train.

I have also spoken to the Minister of Railways who states that the department is urging the Victorian department to run at least a daily express from Melbourne, so far without success. When that is done the difficulty evidently responsible for the honourable member's question will be overcome.

**SWINE COMPENSATION ACT
AMENDMENT BILL.**

Read a third time and passed.

**CATTLE COMPENSATION ACT
AMENDMENT BILL.**

Read a third time and passed.

**CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT
BILL.**

Read a third time and passed.

SUPPLY BILL No. 2.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 28. Page 437.)

The Hon. F. J. CONDON (Central No. 1—Leader of the Opposition)—This Bill provides for a further £5,000,000 to carry on the public services of the State, the amount provided by Supply Act No. 1 being practically exhausted. As there will be an opportunity to speak later on various matters connected with expenditure for the current year, I do not propose to delay the passage of the Bill, and support the second reading.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.

PAYMENT OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. A. L. McEWIN (Northern—Chief Secretary)—This Bill gives effect to Mr. President Morgan's report on the salaries of members of Parliament and the holders of certain Parliamentary offices. As members may have noticed, the increase recommended for private members, both city and country, is £250 a year. The allowances of the President of the Legislative Council and the Speaker of the House of Assembly are to be increased from £400 to £600 a year, and that of the Chairman of Committees of the House of Assembly from £200 to £250. The Leader of the Opposition in the House of Assembly will receive an increase of £200 a year, bringing his allowance up to £500. The Bill provides for these new rates. As in the case of the other increases recommended by Mr. President Morgan, the Government considers it just that the increases should be payable as from the beginning of the present financial year and has included a clause to provide for this. In support of the Bill I desire to draw attention to the matters on which Mr. President Morgan based his report and recommendations. These matters are summed up in a general way on page 1 of the report as follows:—

In arriving at what appears to me to be the appropriate sums to be paid by way of salary by this State to the abovenamed I have relied principally upon the following matters:—(1) The change in the value of money since the salary was last fixed. (2) The salary of the individual holding a comparable office (where such exists) in each of the other five States. (3) The salaries of officers in the Public Service of this State particularly those in the higher paid positions. Generally speaking I have given these less weight than interstate comparisons or than comparisons between the

salaries of those with whom I am particularly concerned. (4) The information before me as to duties and responsibilities of the office in question and as to all other matters pertaining to it which seem to me relevant to the salary attached.

When dealing specifically with the salaries of private members, Mr. President Morgan pointed out that they had been fixed in 1948 on the recommendation of a committee appointed for the purpose and the only ground for increasing them was the fall in the value of money since then. As regards the President, the Speaker, and the Chairman of Committees, His Honour mentioned that their allowances had not been altered since 1887, except for reductions during the depression. He recommended increases based principally on the emoluments of the holders of the same offices in other State Parliaments. This last-mentioned principle also applies to the rate recommended for the Leader of the Opposition. The report was based upon a reliable and conservative comparison of the responsibilities of the office imposed on honourable members. I move the second reading.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON (Central No. 1—Leader of the Opposition)—As I said yesterday, I consider that Ministers and members of Parliament in South Australia are the poorest paid in Australia. I can remember the time when members of both Houses had their salaries fixed by Parliament at £400 a year, but this was reduced to £360, to which I strongly objected. I have no hesitation in supporting the Bill, but would have preferred that Parliament itself decided the issue as was done previously. However, the Government thought otherwise. I speak freely on this occasion, because, unfortunately, the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council has been overlooked as regards an allowance for his office. Today he receives no extra emolument for his services. There are private members in this Chamber who receive more than the person who is asked to undertake the responsible position of Leader of the Opposition. It is not a personal matter with me, because Leaders of the Opposition come and go, and the policy of my Party is that a person shall not occupy and be paid for two positions. On one occasion I was approached about an amount being placed on the Estimates to provide an allowance for the Leader of the Opposition in this Chamber, but as it was at the end of a Parliament I said I thought the matter should be referred to the incoming Parliament. I hope that when the Estimates are introduced some

consideration will be given to that proposal. All members have the welfare of the State at heart, and I appreciate the work they are doing.

In New South Wales a member receives £1,350 a year and in other States slightly less. South Australian members of Parliament are the lowest paid in the Commonwealth, receiving only £900. Some metropolitan members in Tasmania receive £850 a year but those who reside outside a radius of a few miles receive £1,050. It is proposed to increase the present New South Wales salary of £1,350 by £250. A South Australian member is of as much value to his own State as a New South Wales member to his State. It is worthy of consideration that the South Australian Parliament has a record unequalled by any other Parliament in Australia. In some States salaries are fixed by tribunal and not by members. We are subject to increases in the cost of living the same as everyone. People should not complain if we give effect to a recommendation of the President of a court. For 42 years I have advocated in arbitration courts decent wages and conditions for those I have represented. Whilst I continue to do so I have no hesitation in supporting a Bill of this nature. I heartily agree with the proposed increases to those occupying high Parliamentary positions.

I have no objection to any man refusing the increase if his conscience so compels him but a clause should be inserted in this Bill to the effect that if a member does not accept the increase within a specified period he should not be entitled to claim it later. I remember a member who represented this State in another place refusing to accept an increase for three years. He was defeated at the next election and then applied to the Treasury for the salary he had refused. A Bill was introduced in the Federal Parliament which provided that if a member did not claim his salary during the life of a Parliament he could not later get it.

South Australian members of Parliament are granted the worst amenities in the Commonwealth. Members in other States are allowed concessions under a Federal Act which are denied us. In New South Wales a member can get a deduction of £300 on taxation and in other States £250; in South Australia the allowance is only £100. Although the Bill does not go as far as I would prefer, I support the second reading.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY (Central No. 2)
—Mr. President Morgan of the Industrial

Court must have had a difficult task in trying to evaluate the worth of a member of Parliament to his constituents on a monetary basis. The variation of duties and expenses would have to be considered in trying to assess a reasonable allowance for a member of Parliament. Consider the country member who has to travel many thousands of miles during the year at considerable disadvantage to himself, and compare his lot with that of the city member who, although his time may not be taken up to such a large extent in travelling, may have many more calls upon him during the week because of the larger population of his constituency. All these things would have to be considered very carefully and I think he has done a particularly good job under the circumstances. He would have, as he said, to take into consideration similar positions occupied by men in public life in other States.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—Did he do that?

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—He says he did. I think most members, in travelling about this Commonwealth, have met many members in similar positions to our own representing smaller States which have a greater number of members of Parliament who are paid much higher salaries. All these things would have to be weighed by the tribunal in trying to come to a reasonable conclusion in this very vexed matter, and I pay a very high tribute to Mr. President Morgan, who is the very soul of honour and who could not be swayed in any particular in coming to his judgment. When salaries were increased in 1948 I said I thought it would be better if they were placed in some relationship to the cost of living index, and then the salaries of members would automatically increase or decrease in accordance with the trend of the cost of living. His Honour said he thought some indignity might be held to attach to that, but I cannot see it.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—How do you know that? There is no report as to how he came to his findings.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—There is a report, and it has been as accessible to the honourable member as it has been to me. It would save a lot of trouble and much heart-burning, and obviate letters from "Mallee Stump" and "Mother of Ten" making a fuss about the increases in members' salaries; people not at all armed with the facts, but simply referring to another grab by members. Such criticism is totally unfair because all

sections of the community have been subject, not to one but to many increases in remuneration.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—When did the honourable member see the report and where is it available?

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—I saw it recently and I think the honourable member was told that he could see it. However, there is nothing in it which was not completely presented by the Minister in his second reading speech. I understand it will not be long before there is another quarterly adjustment of the basic wage and if justice is to be done—and I take it that that is what His Honour was endeavouring to arrive at—very shortly Parliament will have again to consider raising the emolument of members. It is regrettable that these things have to be done. Members of Parliament are not the only persons in the community who have had increases from time to time because of the rapid increase in the cost of living. This proposed increase in members' allowances simply brings them up to where they were three years ago.

The Hon. E. A. Oates—It brings value back into the pound.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—My friends opposite know as well as I do, or better, that the loading is about £121 a year and therefore, relating our salaries to those of 1944, members have lost £121 a year for the last three years. I do not think any reasonable person among the public would object to justice being done to members, so I have no hesitation in supporting this adjustment of salaries, although I say again that it is a pity it was not related to the cost of living so that automatic adjustments could be made, thereby avoiding a lot of unnecessary and often uninformed criticism, which does no good to the institution or members associated with it.

The Hon. Sir WALLACE SANDFORD (Central No. 2)—When Mr. Anthony began his remarks he referred to the fact that the adjudicator was confronted with a difficult task, and I am sure we all agree with that. We too, as members, are confronted with a very difficult task in having to deal with a subject in which we are personally and intimately concerned. A few years ago when this type of Bill was before us there were few speakers on the matter in either place, and this was ascribed to the natural diffidence which members felt in discussing a subject which was to their own benefit. We find

ourselves again confronted with the subject, although on this occasion it is one of several Bills before us designed to increase emoluments in various spheres, and possibly therefore more members will express themselves than was the case previously.

All listened with interest to the Leader of the Opposition, as well as to my colleague, Mr. Anthoney. I am sure we all regret the spasmodic publicity which is paid at times to the subject, which remains unanswered—at any rate satisfactorily I suppose—because the average writer to the papers is one whom—and surely I am not misjudging him—is hardly open to conviction. It is a subject which has to be dealt with one way or another, and there can be no better method of endeavouring to reach a conclusion—I will not say a satisfactory conclusion, for that is hard to attain—which will convince the average person that it is not a question of putting up fees or salaries. They might equally have fallen instead of risen, and I am sure that had the report recommended action in the opposite direction every member would have dealt with his responsibilities and duties just as energetically and enthusiastically as when the movement was upwards. In all these things there is a pressure from below rather than an attraction upwards. We in Australia lead the van in attempting to relate salaries or wages of the workman or official to results, and more than once, when outside Australia, I have heard references, frequently congratulatory, on the very advantageous conditions which have been developed between employer and employee by our system of arbitration and fixation of wages. It has worked fairly satisfactorily—I say “fairly satisfactorily” because there have been weaknesses. In saying that I hope I am not reflecting on either side. Those weaknesses have shown themselves from time to time and to some extent have been ironed out with the passing of the years. In fixing wages and remunerations through a court, such disadvantages as may arise will in due course become evident. It does not always work out just as smoothly and satisfactorily as the enthusiastic supporters of one side or the other might hope. We must be logical in these matters. It was inevitable that sooner or later a set of conditions, such as those ruling today, would come about. It is uncomfortable for those who are directly concerned, and it is not very pleasant to have a debate on the matter in public, because one can lay oneself open to misunderstanding.

Mr. President Morgan, who enjoys the confidence of everyone, was good enough to accept the duty of making a recommendation. Even although all members may not speak on the Bill, it is desirable that expressions of opinion should be vented. I am sure there will be little disagreement with the method of arriving at the result of the recommendation. I support the view expressed by Mr. Anthoney in his concluding remarks, because it is hard at the moment to see where the present tendency will finish. We are told that every lane has a turning and when the turning will occur I do not know, but I feel sure that some solution will inevitably be reached. I am certain that the action recommended in this Bill and in other similar Bills as a result of Mr. President Morgan's inquiries will not aggravate the position, but will be found to have contributed toward overcoming the difficulty facing us. I support the second reading.

The Hon. E. H. EDMONDS (Northern)—As a representative of one of the country districts, I feel called upon to at least offer some comment upon the Bill. I agree with previous speakers who have expressed some diffidence about being called upon to determine their own reward for the services they render in this Council. However, there is no other alternative which could be adopted. The Parliamentary salary must be determined by an Act of Parliament. Therefore, one has to accept the responsibility of determining what our own remuneration should be. The history of the payment of members of Parliament goes back to the early days of the State's Parliamentary institution. Speaking from memory, it was first determined in 1888 that members should be paid for their services and the salary was fixed at £200. In going through some of the old records it is interesting to note that the objections being raised now to the increase, not only in Parliament but outside, are similar. I suppose similar criticism will be levelled each time the matter comes up for decision. It seems to me that we must be directed by our consciences and knowledge of the position as we find it, and that we must record our votes and express our opinions accordingly.

When I came into this Council eight years ago the salary was £400 a year, and I had not been here long before I realized that I was going to be called upon to have recourse to my private income. In the first year I drew considerably upon my own financial resources. The position did improve to some extent when

the salary was raised to £600, and again in 1944 when it was increased we were at least getting to the position where the salary and emoluments paid came near to reimbursing us for our outgoings. It has been said in this debate that it is difficult to put down on paper, or to put one's finger on, the exact circumstances which lead up to forming a judgment as to what is an adequate salary for the services members render. As taxpayers they are allowed certain deductions from income tax. Up to a point one can keep a record of what the commitments are, but there are a dozen and one items which are never considered. In making a claim for income tax deductions one must submit documentary proof in the form of receipts for any contributions made. When a member attends a function in the country he contributes 2s. 6d. for one thing, 5s. to something else and perhaps a few shillings towards a competition; and although these payments are small in themselves, they aggregate a considerable amount in the course of 12 months. One cannot itemize such things to show the claim upon his financial resources.

In reviewing the report submitted by Mr. President Morgan, I noticed he said he had based his recommendations on the devaluation in money values and on the relative reward paid to members of Parliament in the other States. If that is a fair basis, and I certainly think it is, there is no argument as to whether the proposed increase in warranted or not. In addition to their responsibilities here, many members are called upon to incur considerable expense in travelling around their constituencies. Recently I made a trip to one of the remote parts of my electorate. It was one of those occasions when I could not make use of my gold pass to travel on the railways and I had to pay my transport charges and other incidental expenses. I had little left out of £50. A member of Parliament is usually looked upon as fair game, and is expected to fulfil the responsibility attached to the office and add to the dignity of it by being generous in his donations. When the proposal for an increase was brought forward first I had some doubts, which were engendered to a great extent by the general economic and financial position of the State, in that we might be threatened with the prospect of our standard of living being reduced, and others might be called upon to accept a reduced reward for their labours. I said to myself, "Is it really a time when we should be looking for an increase in our own remuneration?" I have a clear conscience in

supporting the Bill and I feel that I will only be accepting a just reward for the services I endeavour to render to my electorate.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Midland)—I do not take a great personal interest in this matter because I am not very concerned with the outcome of the Bill, and I do not claim to have read Mr. President Morgan's report in detail. When the matter was introduced I examined the position as far as it affected me. I had not considered the position from the time of my election until now and in fact at the time of my election I was not aware what remuneration members received, but as a result of the introduction of the Bill I have had a look at the position from my own point of view. Last year I purchased a small English car which cost me about £1,100. The reading on the speedometer on that car today is slightly over 18,000 miles and I estimate that at least 10,000 miles have been travelled on political work. I reside at Maitland, 100 miles from Adelaide, and as there is no train service I have to use my car almost exclusively. If the cost of the car is assessed at 6d. a mile, which is below the allowance paid by the Government, and would be below the actual cost of running, that would account for £250. That figure is very low, because a vehicle which has travelled 10,000 miles would have depreciated almost that much, apart from the cost of petrol, oil, running repairs and tyres. After my election it became necessary to engage another clerk to assist me at Maitland not only with political correspondence but with work which I normally would do in the office if not absent on political duties. It costs me £350 a year for her salary. I have not kept an actual record of my out of pocket expenses for board and residence when attending the sittings of the House, but a conservative estimate would be £5 a week or £250 a year. Altogether that represents £850, expenditure which cannot be disputed, which leaves a net return of £350 from the proposed salary of £1,200. From that net return must be deducted the loss which is incurred in my private practice because I am not able to attend to it like I would if I were there permanently. From my point of view the amount I receive does not represent a salary but a return of my out of pocket expenses. That is an angle which the ordinary person in the community does not consider, but there are even more important angles. One is that the Parliamentary job is a six-year contract. If a member knew that he would be in Parliament for the rest

of his life he would know what the course of his life would be and could order his affairs accordingly. As it is he has to face the electors at set periods and cannot assume that his position is safe or his future secure. Because of the short term of the contract members are at a greater disadvantage than if they had a longer term. I do not suggest a longer term, but merely point out that because we are elected for only six years we have to make our arrangements along temporary lines. If I knew that I was to be a member for a very long period I could make arrangements for another professional man to assist in my private practice and would provide him with a house and the other amenities he requires, but obviously I cannot make arrangements of that nature when the term of my Parliamentary life may be shorter than I expect.

I think that what I have said illustrates that there is no easy money or sinecure in the position of a member of the Legislative Council, nor do I suggest there should be. We are here to do what we can to further the interests of the people we represent and the matter of remuneration is a secondary consideration. The general opinion outside appears to be that members take their responsibilities rather lightly and that their term is virtually a glorified holiday. One of my first impressions on entering this House—and an impression which has remained—was the serious approach which members of all sides make to the problems confronting them. All members carry out their duties efficiently, quietly and satisfactorily and certainly with more courtesy and attention than one gets when he approaches people in other walks of life. I support the second reading.

The Hon. E. A. OATES (Central No. 1)—It was not my intention to speak on this matter but after hearing members' speeches I felt compelled to. I first received my education as a genuine industrialist in Broken Hill in 1908. I adopted as the first principle of being an industrialist the practice of arbitration and conciliation. I have had no reason to alter my opinions since 1908 and I accept the decisions of Mr. President Morgan in fixing the emoluments of certain people. Although members in other States receive higher salaries they are not satisfied and are asking for increases which I feel certain they will get. When Mr. Condon mentioned that no provision had been made for the Leader of the Opposition in the Legis-

lative Council he was not criticizing Mr. President Morgan. Shortly after he sat down Mr. Condon mentioned to me that Mr. President Morgan was not asked to make a finding concerning his salary. I agree with him that the Government should consider his salary. There is no more sincere or conscientious man in the House than Mr. Condon. I do not say that because he is a friend of mine but because I admire his ability. There have been occasions when members of his Party have felt like getting on the loose and having a go, but he has constrained them to act differently. I have deputized for him on occasions and I realize the onerous duties of the Leader of the Opposition. I hope that some provision will be made for an increase in his salary in the Estimates.

I listened with interest to the remarks of Mr. Edmonds and Mr. Rowe. I realize the position of country members in the districts they represent. Admittedly, I represent a metropolitan constituency, but there are seven Assembly districts in it.

The Hon. W. W. Robinson—There are nine in some country districts.

The Hon. E. A. OATES—That makes it more difficult for the members representing those districts, and it certainly adds to their expenses, for all members are called upon for gifts and donations. Some of the people who criticize us today will tomorrow ask for a donation for some local function, and we are expected to give such donations. I have never heard less criticism about increases than on this occasion—and in my district there are people who are capable of criticism. They use words most members have never heard, and even invent new ones for themselves, but on this occasion I have heard no criticism of a serious nature, except the suggestion that we were definitely scabbing. At one meeting at which Mr. Condon and I were present we were asked to what union we belonged, for they were amazed to know that we were paid a travelling allowance of only 15s. a day—and that was some four or five years ago. Most of the union delegates at that meeting received an allowance of from 21s. to 25s. a day. I would prefer that our salaries remained as at present if I thought that an increase would destroy that dignity and decorum for which this Council is so well and favourably known. If higher salaries are received by members in other States it does not seem to have added to the dignity and decorum of their Parliaments. I did not speak to the Constitution

Act Amendment Bill, but I feel that other members of our Party, as well as myself, endorse the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition regarding the proposed increase in Ministers' salaries. I have every sympathy for them and although we may offer a little constructive criticism—the criticism of the Labor Party is always constructive, and I am sure Ministers usually act on it—we realize their responsibilities and believe that they deserve better remuneration. I support the second reading.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH (Central No. 1)—I did not purpose participating in this debate, but I wish to add one or two comments to what has been said by other members. First, I wish to make it clear that I am not speaking in any ungracious manner against Mr. President Morgan, but I think the Government has placed an undue responsibility upon the President of the State Arbitration Court in this matter. I submit that it is wrong for any Parliament, State or Federal, to seek to thrust a responsibility for the fixation of salaries of members on an authority, the creation of that Parliament. In fact, this matter has not been determined by arbitration, but by the President of the Court in accordance, I have no doubt, with references made to him by the Government.

The Hon. E. H. Edmonds—He took evidence.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—Certain evidence was taken, but not on an arbitration court basis of accepting evidence. Was the honourable member asked to give any?

The Hon. E. H. Edmonds—No.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—That supports my argument that it was unfair to ask the President to adjudicate on a matter such as this. There should have been an open inquiry from among all members, if the matter was to be dealt with on an arbitration court principle, to determine the value of the services of members of Parliament.

The Hon. A. A. Hoare—Was any member asked to give evidence?

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I do not know. I was not but—and this is the point I rise on—it is wrong in principle and wrong in fact for a superior authority, such as Parliament, to ask the President of a subordinate authority to fix the salaries of members.

The Hon. E. H. Edmonds—But the President made only a recommendation. Parliament fixes the salaries.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—The honourable member should not split straws. The recommendations have been made and we are considering the effect of translating them into a legislative enactment. I had the pleasure yesterday, with other members, of listening to no less a person than the Lord Chancellor of England, and I was very interested in his review taking us back to the early stages of representative Government and what it stood for. I appreciated his dissertation on the activities of Parliament in the Mother Country. We are a body emulating those traditions which have been established in the Motherland, and I say quite candidly that I cannot visualize the Mother of Parliaments, or His Majesty's Government in England, the home of British democracy, doing as we are doing with regard to the salaries of members of the House of Commons. It is all very nice to say that this is arbitration *in excelsis*. It is not arbitration at all; it is merely the delegation of responsibilities which every member of this Parliament and the Government itself should have assumed.

The Hon. R. J. Rudall—We are taking the responsibility.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—We are not. The Government threw the responsibility upon the President of the State Arbitration Court, and he has not the right to sit in this House and hear the discussions on his recommendations.

The Hon. R. J. Rudall—His recommendations are not binding on this House or the honourable member.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I am not suggesting they are, but the President's recommendations are being translated into legislative enactment and the Government cannot escape the fact. I conclude by saying that all members of the Opposition and members opposite do their jobs. They are the elected representatives of the people and they know the value of their own services, and the people know their value, otherwise they would not return them from time to time.

The Hon. A. J. MELROSE (Midland)—I purposely refrain from saying that I did not mean to speak on this Bill, but it occurred to me while listening to the last few speeches that it would be unfortunate to let the matter pass without saying anything about it. Various reasons have been advanced for supporting the Bill, but the fundamental question seems to me to be this: we must make up our minds whether we are in favour of the

payment of members or not. Apparently that question was resolved a very long time ago, when it was recognized that some payment should be made in order, I presume, that whatever their walk in life members would be able to maintain a reasonable dignity suitable to their office. If that principle be accepted then, in the light of modern salaries and standards of living, it is obvious that the salaries paid to members of Parliament should be greater than they were in the year of origin, about 1888, therefore we must accept the argument that an increase from that date is fit and proper. It is equally fit and proper that we should not adjudicate on this matter. There have been instances, I believe, in other Parliaments of Australia where Parliament itself has fixed its own salaries. I think the Government's action in submitting the matter to someone completely free from Parliament, who is practised in assessing values, such as Mr. President Morgan is in his daily avocation, is very fair and should commend itself to anyone. Having submitted the matter to a very highly qualified arbitrator it remains for us either to repudiate the Bill entirely or accept it in full. I think it has been amply proved in this debate that the cost to the member of Parliament of maintaining the dignity of his office has become heavier and heavier. I can more than support what my colleague Mr. Rowe said, for in the case of any country member with any considerable interests the position soon arises when he has to employ extra officers. As a Scotchman said, when he went to London it was not what he spent there but what he lost in the way of earnings when away from his farm. That is an imponderable sum to members, and I think that in many cases it would be much greater than the Parliamentary salary. I am prepared to accept that members should be paid and to leave the decision as to the amount to a competent and recognized public authority, such as was chosen on this occasion. I therefore support the second reading.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.

SUPREME COURT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 22. Page 401.)

The Hon. E. A. OATES (Central No. 1)—I feel that the Government did the right thing in placing before an arbitrator the question of the salaries to be paid to judges of the Supreme

Court. I do not know whether Mr. President Morgan's recommendation is to be registered in the Arbitration Court. I accept it, but if a crash comes I wonder whether a similar reduction will take place. If it is right for their salaries to be increased by £750 now, should other salaries and wages be reduced later there should be a comparable reduction in judges' salaries. The public is to be put to great expense because the Commonwealth Government has determined to defy the High Court and hold a referendum on the question of controlling Communists. The referendum is to decide whether the High Court or the Commonwealth Government should be the all-powerful body in Australia.

The Hon. E. Anthony—You are not advocating the abolition of the High Court?

The Hon. E. A. OATES—No, that is what I am opposed to, but the honourable member's Party has taken the first step towards it because it would not accept the High Court's decision. Six High Court judges said that certain legislation was *ultra vires*, but the Government would not accept that decision and intends to submit the question to a referendum.

The Hon. W. W. Robinson—What about the High Court's decision on the Banking Bill? Do you accept that?

The Hon. E. A. OATES—We had to. I am pleased to see that Government members have some respect for the judiciary, because over the last three years I have heard no criticism of the uniform taxation legislation. The High Court's decision was accepted on that matter.

The Hon. R. J. Rudall—Do you think we should have a referendum on it?

The Hon. E. A. OATES—You can still apply the same criticism as was applied prior to December 10, 1949, to another Government, which held the highest respect for the judiciary. I do not want to deny to the judges what they are justly entitled to, but I should like to know from some of our legal members whether they accept the position without protest. They have the satisfaction of knowing that one of their own profession was given the responsibility of deciding upon the worth of the judges of the Supreme Court. I shall not say that that principle is wrong, because I would then be arguing against my own beliefs. If the Government had decided that we should fix our own salaries I would have been just as satisfied as I am now. I have no criticism to offer except to say that I take it that Mr. President Morgan called

evidence from the judiciary. It has been said that members of Parliament did not have an opportunity to submit evidence, but I understand that the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Assembly was asked to give evidence on behalf of my Party. However, I do not know whether evidence was called from Government supporters. I support the second reading.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH (Central No. 1)—I rise to support the measure. I have always expressed both inside and outside of Parliament my greatest admiration and respect for our judiciary, and have always said that it is one of the bulwarks of democracy. There are three things which make up our democracy—our citizens, our Parliaments, and our judiciary. I am always prepared to agree that those who accept the high position of a judge of our courts should be placed in the financial position their office demands, because they make great economic sacrifices in accepting office. Consequently there should not be any quibble regarding the payment of increased salaries to the judges. They are in a totally different position from members of Parliament. When they accept their high offices they are appointed for life and are, in effect, removed from the general scheme of things. Their duty is to administer the law and they are above reproach and have proved before their elevation to the bench their integrity, knowledge, culture and ability to carry out the duties. I add my tribute to the South Australian judiciary because if these institutions, which are a creation of democracy, are undermined by any of the outside public, then it will be like palsy creeping upon democracy. The judges are above reproach in their interpretation of the law and the British system of justice should be emulated in other parts of the world. I support the second reading.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.

AUDIT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 22. Page 402.)

The Hon. E. A. OATES (Central No. 1)—Amongst other things, Mr. President Morgan was asked to consider the salary of the Auditor-General. Can the Chief Secretary say whether it is the Government's intention to consider Mr. President Morgan's suggestion that the method of fixing the emolument for this office

is wrong in principle? The work of the Auditor-General is increasing because of the increased expenditure of the Government. I have great respect for the present Auditor-General and it seems wrong that he should be required to submit a case for an increase in his salary to the Public Service Commissioner. I support the second reading.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY (Central No. 2)—I do not understand Mr. Oates when he states that the court indicated that the settlement of this salary was not on the right basis. I thought the President meant that the salary he recommended should be an inclusive salary. The objections I raise are not to the present Auditor-General but to his office. The Auditor-General, who holds one of the highest offices in the Public Service and whose time should be fully occupied in the discharge of his duties as such, should not be given other duties to perform which return him a further £465 a year. I am opposed to the principle of imposing additional duties upon men who should be fully occupied in the positions to which they are appointed. The imposition of additional offices upon high public servants has hastened their deaths, and it was so in the cases of Mr. Wainwright and Mr. Angwin. Surely there are other officers who could fulfil the additional duties which are imposed on the Auditor-General. Can the Chief Secretary say whether the salary recommended by the President is inclusive or exclusive of the salary received from other offices?

The Hon. A. L. McEWIN (Northern—Chief Secretary)—The salary recommended is for the services as Auditor-General only, in the same way as a member's salary is for being a member of Parliament and not for being a member of the Public Works Standing Committee. Mr. Anthony may have views as to whether the Auditor-General should be allowed to hold other positions but on behalf of the Government I am not prepared to say that when there is work which is particularly fit for the Auditor-General to undertake, he should not do it. There are many matters concerning which the Auditor-General is looked upon as the last word. I would not be prepared, either as a private member or Minister, to suggest that because he receives this salary as Auditor-General he shall be debarred from any other undertaking. It would be depriving the public of services which should be available in certain instances. This is not a high salary from the point of view of emolument. That is not what is under

discussion at the moment. The Government is equally concerned with the health of every member of the Public Service and it does not desire to heap unnecessary work upon them. I have heard of public men being killed by work but without knowing the chassis or what the engine was like it is difficult to say just how much work has contributed to the early departure of any member of the community. So far as it is generally possible to assess a fair responsibility to an individual, then the Government is equally concerned that no-one should be overburdened with work.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.

PUBLIC WORKS STANDING COMMITTEE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 28. Page 439.)

The Hon. E. ANTHONY (Central No. 2)
—I am in the main in agreement with the Bill, which is a simple measure providing for an increase in the travelling expenses of members of the Public Works Standing Committee. The Bill does not stipulate what the increase is to be, but leaves it to be fixed by regulation, and consequently it will be possible to vary it from time to time in accordance with circumstances without further reference to Parliament. There can be no criticism of this principle. I listened with considerable interest to Mr. Condon's remarks yesterday. I am sure he may be regarded very much as the father of the Public Works Standing Committee, for surely he must be the member who has rendered longest service on that committee. Consequently, when he speaks on matters affecting the committee members listen to him with considerable interest.

I take this opportunity to discuss a point I have raised previously. The honourable member referred to the multiplicity of inquiries undertaken by the committee, and I suggest again that the Government should consider amending the principal Act with a view to lessening the duties of members by reducing the number of subjects submitted to the committee for investigation. Consider the question of schools. I think members will agree that in nine out of 10 cases the committee must submit a more or less standard recommendation, yet the Government must, under the Act, submit each proposal to the committee because of the limitation prescribed in the Act. Money values have about trebled since the limit of £30,000 was fixed and consequently the Public

Works Standing Committee is called upon to deal with many works which, at the time of the passing of the Act, would have been considered minor projects. I do not think Parliament ever contemplated calling upon members of the committee to work night and day, as Mr. Condon said he sometimes had to do, and I therefore suggest that the prescribed limitation of £30,000 be increased, thus making the work of the Committee lighter and the number of inquiries fewer.

The Hon. E. A. OATES (Central No. 1)—I am unable to agree with the honourable member, and in referring to schools he touched on a sore point. He is concerned about the limitation of £30,000, but we have heard very much about the abnormal times in which we are living, and they may not last indefinitely; we may be at the peak of our prosperity now and the day may come again when costs of construction will be reduced.

The Hon. E. Anthony—Then we could alter the Act again.

The Hon. E. A. OATES—We do not want to have to deal with the Act again and again. The committee is not called upon to deal with only one class of school. I am sure the Minister of Education will agree that new ideas and innovations are constantly being brought forward. I remember the Woodville North school being built not many years ago. Had evidence been taken regarding the number of new houses in the district and the consequent probable number of children to be accommodated I am sure the committee would have recommended a larger school.

The Hon. E. Anthony—The new Adelaide High School is not big enough already, and the committee inquired into that.

The Hon. E. A. OATES—And it is possible that that will also be the case at Brighton. I hope that when it is investigating the next big hospital project the committee will find time to visit Western Australia and see what is being done there in the way of laundry and kitchen arrangements for hospitals. That alone would justify a visit. Although the £30,000 limitation may seem low at present, like our salaries costs may be reduced through force of circumstances, when the £30,000 will again represent a reasonable limitation. I support the second reading.

The Hon. W. W. ROBINSON (Northern)—Whatever criticism may be levelled against any increase in prices or charges, no fair-minded man could criticize the amendment proposed in this measure, which provides for an increase

in the travelling allowance of members of the Public Works Standing Committee. The principal Act, which was passed in 1927, provided that no member should be entitled to any travelling allowance in respect of any journey confined to a radius of 20 miles from the General Post Office. Members residing beyond that radius were entitled to an allowance of 10s. in respect of any journey for the purpose of attending a meeting in the city, and a travelling allowance of 15s. a day within the State and 30s. a day elsewhere was fixed. We have all had experience of the great variation in hotel charges which has taken place in recent years. I pay a tribute to the Public Works Standing Committee, for I feel that this State and our

Legislature are greatly indebted to it for the information it gathers, dissects and places before us. I am sure that we envy them their opportunities of gaining this information, but we appreciate the fact that they pass it on to us. This Bill provides for the fees to be fixed by regulation and this will enable them to be varied from time to time to meet changing circumstances. In the meantime I am sure we are doing only the right thing in providing an increase in allowances.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 4.18 p.m. the Council adjourned until Tuesday, September 4, at 2 p.m.