

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Wednesday, June 15, 1955.

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

QUESTIONS.**DRIED FRUITS INDUSTRY.**

The Hon. C. R. STORY—Will the Chief Secretary ask the Premier whether during his visit to Canberra in the near future he will inquire from the Minister for Commerce and Agriculture what stage has been reached in negotiations relating to the dried fruits stabilization scheme, and ask him to provide a report on his return?

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—I shall refer the honourable member's question to the Premier who will be pleased, I am sure, to undertake any inquiries when he is in Canberra.

QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—A statement appears in the press that it is proposed to spend a further £3,000,000 on the Queen Elizabeth Hospital at Woodville. Has the Chief Secretary considered the plan, and what are the proposals?

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—I read a report in the press, which did not come from a Ministerial source. The plans for the Queen Elizabeth Hospital are in an advanced stage and tenders will be called almost immediately for certain of the buildings in accordance with the programme. The amount the honourable member mentioned is still an estimate. I am not clear on what information he desired when he asked "What is the programme?"

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—I understand that the programme will be submitted to one contractor who will sublet.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—The plan has already been advertised, certain contractors have registered with the architects and will apply when tenders are called. To speed up the completion of the building the tendering will be under certain conditions. The contractors will tender on a fixed fee, the Government will do the purchasing and the contractors will undertake all the arrangements for the construction. Is that the information the honourable member requires?

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—Parts of the maternity hospital have been completed. Is it intended to get on with the casualty hospital next?

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—As the honourable member knows, the maternity block is in course of construction and due for completion next year. It will be necessary to erect other buildings, and it is now proposed to erect the resident medical officers' building before completion of the nurses' quarters. This will enable the accommodation of staff for the additional hospitalization made available, and when the main block is completed it will give the opportunity to have the patients moved out of the nurses' quarters, thereby making accommodation available for the nurses. The programme is to facilitate the extension of hospital services while at the same time reconciling the amount of accommodation available for staff, so that there will be no hitch in bringing hospitalization into being because there is no provision for staff quarters or *vice versa*. The whole thing is synchronized to bring about a gradual development and for the completion of the hospital to be carried out by December, 1957.

SOUTHERN HOSPITAL.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—I desire to make a short statement with a view to asking a question.

Leave granted.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—Owing to the rapid increase in population and development around the Marion and Brighton areas and because of the possibility of Chrysler Aus. Ltd. establishing works there, does the Government expect to refer to the Public Works Committee the establishment of a hospital on the Oaklands Park Estate?

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—The Government in its wisdom made provision ahead for development of hospitals on what was called at one time a regional basis, but the new term is "perimeter hospitals." Land in the area to which the honourable member refers was obtained two or three years ago to provide for future hospital development, but at present there are no proposals other than those before the Public Works Standing Committee or in the course of construction. At present the finance available for this purpose is being absorbed by present schemes, and it is not possible to even suggest what will be the position when a further project is necessary or whether the demand will be more justifiable in the south than in the north. I would not be prepared to make any suggestion on what the next step will be because to do so would be purely guesswork and would be misleading.

BULK HANDLING OF WHEAT.

The Hon. L. H. DENSLEY—Can the Chief Secretary inform the Council whether the report of the Public Works Standing Committee regarding bulk handling of wheat will be received before we are asked to debate the measure now before another place on this subject?

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—I am not competent to answer such a question which would be more properly addressed to the Chairman of the Public Works Standing Committee or someone representing him. The Government receives reports when they are ready and I could not prophesy when they may be expected on any subject referred to the Committee.

The Hon. L. H. DENSLEY—Will the Chief Secretary inquire from the committee when the report will be available?

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—If it is possible to obtain that information I shall be pleased to do so.

WOODVILLE CORPORATION BY-LAW.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY (Central No. 1)
—I move—

That By-Law No. 56 of the Corporation of the City of Woodville relating to Drinking outside Licensed Premises, made on December 13, 1954, and laid on the table of this Council on May 19, 1955, be disallowed.

The by-law is an attempt by the Woodville Corporation to deal with a situation that has arisen in its municipality, but which is not peculiar to that area. There are occasions, especially in the summer and on Saturday afternoons, when the hotels become quite incapable of dealing with their customers, with the result that a considerable amount of drinking takes place on the footpaths outside hotels.

The Hon. Sir Frank Perry—Cannot they go into a beer garden or something of the nature?

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—These hotels have no beer gardens. Woodville, like other districts, has developed so fast that it has outgrown the drinking accommodation available in hotels. The offence has increased of late and has become obnoxious to some of the residents who have complained to the council that the free passage of pedestrians is interfered with by people who are drinking congregating on the footpaths and carriage ways, and they have asked the council to do something about it. The Committee considered the by-law for some time and decided that it was a matter better dealt with by Parliament through an amendment of the Act.

The Hon. C. R. Cudmore—The Licensing Act?

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—The Licensing Act or the Lottery and Gaming Act. The police are doing their best, with some success, to keep order and maintain a passageway for pedestrians. I spoke to the inspector in charge of the district this morning and he said he thought that the trouble was considerably exaggerated, but that something should be done about it. The council has attempted to do this in a specific way, but the Committee felt it should be dealt with in a general way so as to meet similar conditions in other places. It felt that the by-law could not be made good law, and consequently decided to move for its disallowance.

The Hon. C. R. Cudmore—What does the by-law say?

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—I will read it:—

Any person who consumes liquor or any non-alcoholic beverage upon any footway or carriageway adjacent to or within 50 yards of any licensed premises within the municipality shall be guilty of an offence and liable upon conviction to a penalty not exceeding £10.

Any person coming into Woodville could, if it is confined to Woodville, unknowingly commit an offence.

The Hon. N. L. Jude—Is it suggested that it should be made State-wide?

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—I am not suggesting that, but the Committee felt that it was not its function to pass a by-law to legislate for one part of the metropolitan area while leaving other parts quite free.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN secured the adjournment of the debate.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON CONSOLIDATION BILLS.

A message was received from the House of Assembly requesting the concurrence of the Legislative Council in the appointment of a Joint Committee on Consolidation Bills.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN moved—

That the Assembly's request be agreed to and that the members of the Legislative Council to be members of the Joint Committee be the Chief Secretary, the Hon. C. R. Cudmore, and the Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph, of whom two shall form a quorum of Council members necessary to be present at all sittings of the committee.

Motion, carried.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 1).

Received from the House of Assembly and read a first time.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN (Chief Secretary)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The Bill is submitted to the House for the purpose of appropriating £704,147 for expenditure this financial year on urgent and essential matters. I now propose to give members some detail of the amounts included in the Bill.

Chief Secretary and Minister of Health, Miscellaneous—£171,495.—Under this heading provision is made for grants to the Adelaide Children's Hospital of £10,000 towards a new operating theatre which is required to cope with the increasing demands of the hospital, and £9,400 towards the purchase of Estcourt House which, by arrangement with the James Brown Memorial Trust, will be acquired by the Children's Hospital and, after necessary alterations to accommodate the nursing staff, will be used for the treatment of convalescent patients, thus relieving the present overcrowding at the main hospital.

The sum of £3,850 is provided as a grant to the Ashford Community Hospital towards the purchase of property to extend the hospital, and a grant of £15,000 is being made to the South Australian Spastic Welfare Association towards the building of a new wing at the association's home at Woodville.

Also included under this heading are subsidies to private (non-profit) hospitals, operated by various religious organizations, to assist with the provision of additional hospital accommodation. In each case the Government will find half the capital cost of any extensions or proposed extensions on the basis of moneys actually expended, or firm commitments made, during the period January 1 to June 30, 1955. As was the case last year when the Government made special grants to assist with the provision of additional accommodation at homes for aged persons, the Government will require a certificate from the Auditor-General as to the amount of subsidy to be paid to each of these private hospitals, and will also require the controlling authorities to submit their plans to the Government for approval.

The hospitals to benefit under this subsidy scheme are:—Calvary Hospital to the extent of £33,000; Memorial Hospital £30,000; and McBride Hospital £13,000. At Calvary (Catholic) Hospital the money will be used for extensions to the new nurses' block, provision of additional toilet and bathroom faci-

ties at the old nurses' home, extensions to kitchen accommodation, provision of kitchen equipment, and provision of six extra beds in the general hospital. The additional kitchen accommodation and increased accommodation for nurses will permit more beds to be added to the hospital when further finance is available to make extensions. At the Memorial Hospital, which is a Methodist organization, another floor is to be built on the maternity section and this will enable a further 22 maternity beds to be provided, bringing the total maternity accommodation to 62. Modern nursery accommodation is to be provided and a new lift installed.

The Hon. C. R. Cudmore—Are those the only hospitals to qualify under the non-profit provision?

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—The only denominational hospitals. The community hospitals are already covered. McBride Hospital, which is run by the Salvation Army, will use the money made available by the Government to recondition the hospital. The proposals are to demolish the west wing, which is in very poor condition, and replace it with a two-storey wing consisting of kitchens on the ground floor and wards on the first floor; and to restore the east wing, which is badly affected by salt damp, and convert it into a nursery and post-natal section. It is considered that these alterations will increase accommodation at the hospital by 8 beds.

Provision has also been made for payment of £12,500 to enable Ambulance Services to be extended to country areas, and £500 to the Bush Church Aid Society's Flying Doctor Service which has its headquarters at Ceduna. Assistance to the extent of £1,600 has been given by way of subsidy to the Eyre Peninsula Old Folks' Home towards purchase of land for the establishment of a home for aged persons at Port Lincoln. It is also proposed to grant a subsidy of £36,250 to the Central Mission Old Folks' Home Inc. towards the establishment of an old folks' infirmary. This subsidy will permit the building of a self-contained infirmary, including kitchen, bathroom and toilet accommodation, quarters for the staff, and a clinic for the use of doctors, with full hospital equipment (excluding surgery). The infirmary will provide accommodation for 41 old people who are in need of nursing care.

Provision has been made for a special payment of £5,245 to His Excellency the Governor, his family and his staff, towards personal losses sustained as a result of the bushfire which completely destroyed the Vice-Regal residence

at Marble Hill. A further amount of £1,150 has been provided for payment to the caretaker to assist him in the replacement of his losses, as this officer suffered heavy personal loss in attempting to save the main residence, and in so doing sacrificed the chance of saving his own possessions.

Publicity and Tourist Bureau and Immigration, £25,652.—The provision of £25,652 under this heading is for the purchase of land at Magill and at Eden Hills for conversion to national pleasure resorts.

Treasurer, Miscellaneous, £35,000.—Of this amount £25,000 is provided as a contribution to the Advances for Homes Insurance Fund towards meeting claims for earthquake damage to homes mortgaged to the State Bank under the Advances for Homes Act. The Government has already provided £70,000 for this purpose, but a further contribution to the fund is necessary as the overall damage to these homes is considerably greater than was at first apparent. To date £144,000 has been paid in meeting claims and it is anticipated that the ultimate cost of repairing earthquake damage in respect of these homes will be in the vicinity of £184,000. The sum of £10,000 is proposed as a gift to the Government of New South Wales to assist people of that State who suffered hardship in the floods which occurred earlier this year. Honourable members will recall that a similar grant was made by this State last year.

Minister of Lands, Miscellaneous, £5,000.—This money is provided for the erection of a new kiosk and dwelling at National Park to replace the buildings destroyed by fire last April. The Government considers the kiosk an essential amenity as the National Park is a very popular pleasure resort all the year round.

Engineering and Water Supply Department, £212,000.—This increased provision over and above the Budget estimate for the year is necessary to meet pumping and other operating costs of the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline, and the cost of pumping water from underground supplies in the suburban areas. The very dry summer we experienced necessitated early completion of the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline so that Murray River water could be pumped into our reservoirs continually during the whole of the summer. The completion of this pipeline, as members well know, saved the metropolitan area from very drastic restrictions in the use of water, and it also enabled sheep owners to retain their flocks in country areas supplied from the Warren reservoir.

Education Department, £50,000.—This amount is required for the purchase of 12 new buses for conveyance of school pupils. The department already owns and operates 85 school buses in addition to hiring nearly 300 buses daily, but, as the increasing number of children attending school puts an extra strain on transport facilities and it is not always possible to obtain additional buses by charter, it is necessary for the department to acquire more buses to provide the necessary transport.

Minister of Education, Miscellaneous, £12,000.—This amount is provided as a further grant to the School of Mines, mainly to meet increased salaries which have been granted to the teaching and administrative staff.

Agriculture Department, £67,000.—This provision is necessary to meet salaries and wages, mainly in connection with controlling outbreaks of fruit fly, which have proved very costly to the State. Since the first appearance of this pest in January, 1947, approximately £1,000,000 has been spent in endeavours to prevent the spread of fruit fly and if possible to eradicate it, and £55,000 of this further provision is required to meet wages of employees engaged in stripping and spraying in areas affected by the most recent outbreaks which occurred in December, 1954.

Minister of Agriculture, Miscellaneous, £55,000.—Of this provision £50,000 is in the nature of a grant to the Bushfire Relief Fund to help those people who lost many of their possessions in the bushfires which swept the Adelaide Hills in January of this year. A contribution of £50,000 has also been made to the fund by the Commonwealth and a further £108,000 has been contributed by the people of this State. Applications for relief from people who suffered loss as a result of the fires are under consideration by the Bushfire Relief Committee. The balance of the amount provided under this heading, viz., £5,000, is for a grant to Roseworthy Agricultural College towards the cost of a chapel which is to be built as a memorial to students and former students of the College who fell in the two World Wars.

Mines Department, £60,000.—The sum of £30,000 is included in this provision to meet the cost of an aerial magnetometer survey, which is being undertaken on a charter basis by a private aircraft company, and is being conducted for the purpose of logging the State's various mineral deposits. The other £30,000 is to meet expenses of the security section of the department, primarily to enable

the Police Department to be recouped the cost of providing security guards at the Mines Department laboratories at Parkside and the Pilot Plant at Thebarton.

Minister of Marine, Miscellaneous, £5,000.—This amount is provided for payment to the Port Adelaide Corporation for the purpose of assisting in the provision of works and services in areas affected by recent acquisitions of properties by the Government.

Minister of Railways, Miscellaneous, £6,000.—This amount is provided as a contribution to the cost of that part of the City of Enfield drainage scheme which involves the construction of flood openings and drains on the Main North line and Dry Creek loop line. The work is being carried out by the Railways Commissioner for the Enfield Corporation and any costs in excess of £6,000 will be met by the corporation.

Turning now to the Clauses of the Bill, Clause 3 provides for the appropriation of moneys totalling £704,147 for the various purposes I have mentioned. Clause 4 provides that the Treasurer shall only have available to him, for payments, such amounts as are first authorised by His Excellency the Governor by warrant, and that the receipt of the payees shall be evidence of the payments made and the Treasurer shall be allowed credit accordingly. Clause 5 provides for payments in lieu of leave to officers of the Public Service or teachers in the Education Department, who retired during the period from December 20, 1954, to the time when the marginal increases were fixed by the Public Service Board and the Teachers Salaries Board, at the increased rates prescribed by those boards. The Clause also provides for payments to dependants of deceased officers at rates of pay calculated to include the marginal increases which would have been received by an officer during the period of leave due to him had he lived. I commend the Bill to members.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON secured the adjournment of the debate.

DANGEROUS DRUGS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN (Minister of Health)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time. Its purpose is to give effect to recommendations made last year by the Central Board of Health for the alteration of the law relating to narcotic drugs. The most important of

these recommendations was that it should be made possible to prohibit the possession of heroin in South Australia. The recommendations were made as a result of decisions of the Public Health Committee of the National Health and Medical Research Council, which has recommended that the States enact uniform law relating to narcotic drugs, and at the same time give effect to proposals made by the World Health Organization. The committee suggested the adoption by the States of model legislation based on the South Australian Dangerous Drugs Act, 1934, but pointed out that a number of alterations to that Act would be necessary. The Government is anxious that South Australia should play its part in the suppression of narcotic drugs, and has decided to give effect to the recommendations of the Public Health Committee and the Central Board of Health. The Government is accordingly introducing this Bill.

For convenience, I will deal with the provisions of the Bill in the order in which they appear. Clause 3 provides for the application of the principal Act by proclamation to new narcotic drugs with such modifications as are stated in the proclamation. At present the principal Act can only be applied to new drugs without modification. The clause is primarily intended to enable a modified control to be exercised over a new drug called pholecodine. This drug is similar to codein and dionin, drugs over which a modified form of control is at present exercised under the principal Act. It is thought desirable that pholcodine should be similarly controlled.

Clause 4 modifies a defence at present available to a charge of unlawful possession of narcotic drugs. Section 5 of the principal Act provides that it shall be a defence to a charge of possession of dangerous drugs that the drugs were supplied for the defendant's use by a doctor. A number of cases have occurred, where the defendant has obtained excessive supplies of dangerous drugs by consulting several doctors contemporaneously, but has been able to escape conviction by raising the defence. Clause 4 prevents the defence from being raised in such circumstances.

Clause 4 also deals with another matter. The principal Act at present prohibits the growing of the opium poppy, except by the Governors of the Botanic Gardens. In accordance with decisions of the World Health Organization, it has been recommended that the growing of the plants from which Indian hemp and cocaine are produced should also

be prohibited. The clause accordingly prohibits the growing of such plants except by the Governors of the Botanic Gardens.

Clause 5 enables the Governor to declare a drug by proclamation to be a prohibited drug, and makes it an offence among other things to manufacture, sell or be in possession of a prohibited drug except in compliance with the conditions, if any, mentioned in the proclamation. The principal Act at present only regulates the possession of narcotic drugs. There is no power to impose a general prohibition on the possession of a drug. Clause 5 supplies this omission. The main object of the clause is to enable the possession of heroin to be generally prohibited.

The Public Health Committee of the National Health and Medical Research Council has recommended that the possession and use of heroin be prohibited throughout Australia. The Commonwealth has accordingly prohibited the importation of heroin into Australia, and it now remains for the States to complete the prohibition. It is hoped that all States will, in the near future, have passed legislation enabling the possession of heroin to be prohibited, and that it will be possible to bring the prohibition into effect on the same day throughout Australia. October 1 this year has been suggested as a possible date. New South Wales has already passed legislation prohibiting the possession of heroin after a date to be proclaimed.

The Government feels that members will be glad to assist in the attempt to ban this drug from Australia. Heroin is the most habit-forming of all narcotic drugs, and is regarded, therefore, as the most dangerous. The drug is not required nowadays for medicinal purposes.

At one time it was widely used for such purposes, but its use has been superseded by other less dangerous drugs. The Federal Council of the British Medical Association supports the recommendation of the Public Health Committee for the banning of heroin. Many nations, including the United States of America have already banned heroin.

Clause 6 makes a minor amendment to the principal Act to enable the Minister to re-issue a licence or authority to be in possession of drugs after the licence or authority has been withdrawn. Doubts have been raised whether at present a licence or authority which has been withdrawn can be re-issued.

Clause 7 makes it an offence to obtain a drug by false pretences from a doctor or veterinary surgeon. At present, it is an offence, under the principal Act, to obtain drugs by false pretences from a manufacturer of drugs or a chemist, but not from a doctor or veterinary surgeon. It is clearly desirable that the offence should be extended in the manner proposed.

Clause 8 provides that a person authorized to enter premises under the principal Act may, in addition to the powers which he can at present exercise, seize and carry away books, documents, drugs and samples of drugs. It is considered that such powers are necessary for the proper policing of the principal Act. I commend this important legislation to the consideration of members.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 2.44 p.m. the Council adjourned until Tuesday, June 21, at 2 p.m.