

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.**

Tuesday, June 21, 1955.

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

**QUESTION.****CONTROL OF TAXICABS.**

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—As the city council obviously is unable to control taxicabs plying for hire in the metropolitan area, will the Government consider the advisability of placing them under the control and supervision of the Police Department?

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—I can only say that as the matter involves a question of policy it will be again considered by the Government.

**IRRIGATION SCHEME: HUNDRED OF GORDON.**

The PRESIDENT laid on the table the report of the Parliamentary Committee on Land Settlement on the proposed irrigation scheme in the hundred of Gordon.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION.**

The House of Assembly intimated that it had appointed Mr. D. N. Brookman to fill the vacancy on the Committee caused by the resignation of Mr. B. H. Teusner.

**APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 1.).**

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from June 15. Page 329.)

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—(Leader of the Opposition)—In this Bill we are asked to pass a sum of £704,147 covered by the Supplementary Estimates to cover the Government's expenditure to the end of the financial year. I do not know whether this is merely political in the shape of a little window dressing, but I think that some of the items could well have been included in the ordinary Estimates. One item provides for a payment to the Port Adelaide Corporation for the purpose of assisting in the provision of works and services in the areas affected by the recent acquisition of properties by the Government. About three years ago a long-term plan, consisting of 20 projects, was submitted to the Public Works Committee, the total cost of which over a long period of years was estimated at £20,000,000. Some of the work has been carried out as the result of which the Government proposes to pay £5,000 a year for seven years to the Port Adelaide

Council in respect of land acquired in the past two years on LeFevre Peninsula. Although the Port Adelaide Council appreciates this assistance I consider that the Government has not gone far enough. When a Royal Commission was appointed many years ago in connection with the acquisition of wharves at Port Adelaide it consisted of six members, three from each House of Parliament, and it recommended:—

That the Wharves and Water Frontages Repurchase Bill be submitted again to Parliament but that it first be amended by providing that all wharf properties vested in the Harbors Board shall be subject to taxation by municipal corporations or district councils within whose boundaries such properties are situated. Provided that in the case of Port Adelaide wharves, the amount be paid in rates by the board shall not exceed £3,070 and, in the case of the Port Pirie wharves, £1,042.

Recently a request was made to the Commonwealth Government by councils for assistance in respect of the taxation on Commonwealth properties, involving an amount of £20,000 a year. No doubt Port Adelaide will receive a little of that because there are a number of Commonwealth buildings in the district, but I want to bring again to the notice of members what I consider to be an injustice, and I hope that my remarks will not fall on deaf ears. During a period of about 40 years since the acquisition of the wharves the Port Adelaide Council has lost £550,000 in rates. This year it will lose £47,000. I ask members to compare that with the £20,000 which the council is asking from the Commonwealth Government. Since 1944 rates in the Port Adelaide district have increased by 161 per cent, including 100 per cent since 1950. This shows that the revenue has to be made up by the ratepayers.

The Hon. N. L. Jude—Has not the council's income increased lately?

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—The wharves provided at Port Adelaide are for the benefit of the State and not one particular locality. No other place has suffered as much as Port Adelaide, and therefore it has a fair case for consideration. No matter how small the donation may be, it will be thankfully received. Under these Estimates the Government is granting the council £5,000 a year for seven years on the understanding that there will be no alteration in that period. Port Pirie, Port Lincoln and Wallaroo have also suffered, but only to a very small degree compared with Port Adelaide.

For the year 1953-54 the Government grant to the Adelaide Children's Hospital was £247,593,

but I do not know what amount will be provided this financial year. This is a wonderful institution doing good work. A number of organizations, particularly the *Advertiser*, raise each year large sums to assist this institution. In view of the large Government grant to this hospital the question arises whether it should not have some representation on the board of management. I do not suggest that the present board is not doing a good job. An amount of £9,400 is allotted towards the purchase of Estcourt House for convalescent purposes. This is a worthy cause. It has done wonderful work over the years and therefore Parliament should assist wherever possible so that its efforts can be continued. The Spastic Welfare Association is to receive £15,000. We are all sympathetic towards this work, and the association is certainly entitled to our encouragement. I compliment the Government on what it has done in this regard.

The work accomplished by the Royal Adelaide Hospital and hospitals throughout the country over the years has been exceptional, but their efforts have been severely taxed through lack of accommodation. Today many projects are being inquired into which, if given effect to, will assist in meeting the extra demand. We must not lose sight of the fact that private hospitals are also doing a wonderful job, and the Government in its wisdom has decided to make subsidies available to some of these institutions. The amount mentioned is £76,000. All are deserving of our support. In order to assist in extending ambulance services to the country an amount of £12,500 is provided. They are doing excellent work and are entitled to our encouragement.

An amount of £16,000 is to be made available to the Eyre Peninsula Old Folks Home for the purchase of land to establish a home for aged persons. During the last few years I do not think we have done enough to assist the aged. Many lost their homes and worldly belongings during the depression and therefore were not in a position to provide for their advancing years. Some who should be housed elsewhere are to be found in our hospitals and mental institutions but, having nowhere else to go, are compelled to spend their remaining days in these institutions which I must admit provide every possible assistance and comfort, but I think Parliament should support the building of additional institutions so that we can care for these pioneers.

The Hon. E. Anthoney—That is the Government's proposal.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—It is, but it does not go far enough, and I urge the Government to do anything it can to assist aged and invalid persons. The purchase of land for institutions is a matter that needs examination because too much is charged when the Government purchases it.

The Hon. C. R. Cudmore—That is a matter for arbitration under the Act.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—That may be so, but I know of one case that was disputed and the person who took it to arbitration received more than the Government had offered. Exorbitant prices are paid for land for Housing Trust homes and schools. Although there are tribunals to deal with this matter, advantage is taken of the Government in many cases and legislation should be introduced to prevent this.

The Hon. E. Anthoney—Is an agent or the Government authorized to purchase the land?

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—When there are any specs around we all know who gets in. If the Government wants to purchase land it must keep it a secret or someone will get in and make a profit. Provision has been made for the payment of £5,245 for the personal loss of the Governor's family and personal staff during the disastrous bush fire early this year. We all regret the circumstances and it is our duty to support this expenditure. It is pleasing to note that the caretaker will receive £1,150 for his loss. The sum of £25,000 is provided as a contribution towards meeting claims for earthquake damage to homes mortgaged to the State Bank. To date £144,000 has been paid in meeting claims, and it is expected that the ultimate cost will be about £184,000. An amount of £10,000 is proposed as a gift to the victims of the New South Wales flood, and I do not oppose this because it is the duty of the Government to assist people in distress, but I have not noticed any reciprocal action by the New South Wales Government in regard to our own bush fires fund.

Mainly because of the necessity for working overtime to complete the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline, it has been necessary to provide a further £212,000 to the Engineering and Water Supply Department. This scheme prevented disaster in the metropolitan area, and because of it no water restrictions were necessary last summer. We should all compliment everyone from the Engineer-in-Chief down to the boy who boils the billy for the wonderful part they played in this scheme that means so much to us.

The Government intends to introduce a Bill to increase sewerage assessments. Several water schemes have yet to be brought to fruition. The Myponga reservoir will be of service to the country and the metropolitan area, and will cost £3,000,000. There is also a scheme for continuing the South Para reservoir, a reservoir on the Onkaparinga River and other schemes that will add to present losses.

The Hon. E. Anthoney—What will be the capacity of the Myponga reservoir?

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—It is nearly as large as Mount Bold. Many people have said that it is not necessary because of the new pipeline, but I hope that we keep all the reservoirs full, thereby avoiding the necessity for pumping. Over a period of years we have been catching up our water deficiencies. We have had low rainfalls and have had to meet the demands of industry and increased population, but we have not had the water available to meet the position. I feel sure that the many schemes under construction will be sufficient to meet our demands for many years to come. Again I say that we are very fortunate in having to pay only 1s. 8d. a thousand gallons for rebate water and 1s. a thousand gallons for excess. The balance sheets of the department reveal losses that must continue and it is just a question of whether or not we have missed the bus; whether the Government should not have imposed higher charges three or four years ago when conditions were buoyant and at their best instead of waiting until now when it may find that people are not so well able to meet any increase that may be imposed.

A sum of £50,000 is provided for the purchase of 12 new buses for the conveyance of children to schools. The department already owns and operates 85 in addition to hiring nearly 300 buses every school day. It would be interesting to know what the cost is today compared with the cost of maintaining the schools that were closed on the introduction of area schools.

The Hon. E. Anthoney—I tried to get the figures three or four years ago but could not.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—It may have been due to a shortage of teachers, but I am drawing attention to the huge sum that is required to convey children to schools to give them that education to which they are entitled. This may be the cheaper way of doing it, but I question it and it would be nice to know how the costs compare. I do not see why we should not be able to get such information because it is of importance both to the taxpayer and to members.

The Hon. Sir Lyell McEwin—What comparisons is the honourable member seeking?

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—I would like to know how many schools have been closed in the last three or four years, and how many teachers have been dispensed with.

The Hon. Sir Lyell McEwin—The standard of education is also involved.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—That is so and that cannot be measured in terms of money. I may be anticipating a little, but I think it will be found that shortly we will be asked to vote £5,000,000 or £6,000,000 for the Education Department, so I think that this is a question that any member should examine, and on which he is entitled to the fullest information.

The control of fruit fly has cost approximately £1,000,000 since its inauguration. This is a huge sum and it may be necessary. One would have thought that we might have reached the end of the campaign, but we are again asked to provide a further £50,000. We appear to be on the brink of success all the time without quite achieving it.

The Hon. E. Anthoney—We will never do it.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—I think the department is taking every precaution to prevent the introduction of fruit fly into the State, but it is a very difficult task.

The Hon. W. W. Robinson—It appears to have been effective.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—It was effective, but the fruit fly came again.

The Hon. Sir Lyell McEwin—It has not come back the second time in areas where it has been eradicated.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—That may be so. It has been prevalent mostly on the eastern side of the city and not so much the western. However, I know that floods, bushfires and fruit fly are serious things and that we have to meet the expenditure involved.

I have selected only a few items for comment this afternoon; things which seem to me to be worthy of our attention, and I conclude with once again urging that if it is fair and reasonable for the Commonwealth Government to give some consideration to district councils and corporations in respect of their non-ratable property, it is equally fair and reasonable to ask the Government to do likewise in respect of State properties, and I hope that the Government will sympathetically consider my request.

The Hon. Sir WALLACE SANDFORD (Central No. 2)—When the Bill for the Appropriation Act (No. 1) 1954 was passed during June a year ago the Chief Secretary drew

attention to the fact that it covered the Supplementary Estimates. He pointed out that those Estimates did not apply to the new financial year shortly to begin, but completed the financial obligations of the Government for the year ending June 30, 1954.

The Hon. E. Anthoney—They deal with money already spent.

The Hon. Sir WALLACE SANDFORD—Most of us know that, yet it seems to be necessary to remind some. I think we all approve of the trouble the Chief Secretary went to in order to make it perfectly clear that the Supplementary Estimates cover financial obligations already incurred. This Bill is for the purpose of appropriating £704,147 for expenditure in this financial year on urgent and essential matters and members will no doubt have noted that the total figure exceeds the amount of last year's Appropriation Bill (No. 1) by about £143,000. In explaining the Bill the Chief Secretary gave details of a number of the amounts included and particularly referred to Estcourt House which is being purchased from the James Brown Memorial Trust. This means that the Children's Hospital will use Estcourt House for the treatment of convalescent patients as soon as accommodation for nursing staff has been provided. A grant of £3,850 has been made to the Ashford Community Hospital towards the purchase of property and £15,000 to the South Australian Spastic Welfare Association. This will be used in building a new wing at the association's home at Woodville. Substantial subsidies are to be paid also to private (non-profit) hospitals. An amount of £12,500 is provided for the extension of ambulance services to country areas, and I am sure that this move will meet with general approval. The Bush Church Aid Society's Flying Doctor Service, which has its headquarters at Ceduna, is to receive £500, and that also will meet with our warm support. The total amount provided for the Chief Secretary and Minister of Health Departments is £171,495 as against £229,900 last year, and this will have our approval.

I am sure that no-one is surprised at the amount provided for the Engineering and Water Supply Department because, with the rapid increase in our population and the great expansion of secondary industry, of which we are so rightly proud, the demand for more and more water for domestic as well as commercial enterprises has continued to grow. The Mannum-Adelaide pipeline, which was inspected by most members three months ago, was greatly admired, and I am sure it gave feelings of

general relief. As Mr. Condon said, there had been several occasions within our memory when the community generally had reason to believe that there was a reasonable degree of security in our water supply position in the metropolitan area; and yet, not long after the completion of the project, consumption continued to outstrip supply, and what looked like a degree of security for the future faded, and strenuous endeavours were necessary to prevent what could be a tragedy. Pumping and other operating expenses are necessarily costly, particularly on the Mannum-Adelaide system, but the benefits to the city and suburbs and places *en route* are almost incalculable. This project has resulted in benefits both direct and indirect.

The final clause in the Bill makes it clear that where awards for teachers have been made, the necessary authority is provided to meet the expenditure, and I am sure that this will meet with our approval. The income of all the States arises from the taxation collections from the individuals. I am not sure whether we might be rather worse off, at any rate for a time, if we were to revert to complete State taxation instead of the present uniform system, as has been suggested from time to time. When we were levying all the taxation, we kept a closer watch on expenditure than is necessarily the case when part of the balance-sheet is administered from a remote distance. The passing of the Bill will enable the Government to pay for services rendered and to meet debts that are due. I have not dealt with each of the items under the various headings. That was adequately done by the Chief Secretary, and therefore further comment is not necessary. The case submitted by the Minister was very convincing and therefore I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### DANGEROUS DRUGS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from June 15. Page 330).

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH (Central No. 1)—As indicated by the Minister of Health, the Bill gives effect to the recommendations made last year by the Central Board of Health in relation to narcotic drugs. The most important alteration is to prohibit the possession of heroin. The recommendations were made as a result of decisions of the Public Health Committee of the National Health and Medical Research Council, which

meets from time to time in Canberra. It has recommended that all States pass similar legislation. The committee has paid a compliment to South Australia by asking that the proposals should be implemented by following the model of the Dangerous Drugs Act passed in South Australia in 1934. I know I am expressing the opinion of honourable members when I compliment those who were advisers to the Government at that period and responsible for the model Act in operation here. The people responsible are Mr. Litpham, Senior Lecturer in Pharmacy at the University of Adelaide, Professor McBeth, Professor of Chemistry, Dr. Rollison, Director-General of Medical Services and Dr. Southwood, Director-General of Public Health, who should all be complimented on their work. This State is very fortunate to have such men skilled in their respective professions who not only advise the Government but also give their professional knowledge for the purpose of bringing down legislation to protect the interests of the citizens.

The control of narcotics is a matter that is not only considered by the Governments of Australia, but is a world-wide movement. The report of the International Permanent Central Opium Board and the estimates of the Drug Supervisory Body for narcotic drugs indicate that the illicit use of narcotic drugs, with the exception of morphine and diamorphine, is increasing, although the increase is not regarded as alarming. The Supervisory Body points out that the upward trend is doubtless the result of a number of causes, including the increasing use of narcotic drugs in the palliative treatment of cancer, the progress of social and general medicine in undeveloped countries, the extension of existing social security systems, the discovery of new analgesics, and the increase in world consumption. The continuing reduction in the consumption of diamorphine is ascribed to the efforts of national authorities to discourage the use of that highly dangerous drug. The extent of the reduction may be gauged from the fact that estimated requirements for 1955 are only 20 per cent of those for 1949. The decline is likely to continue in view of the growing number of countries that have indicated their intention, like South Australia, of adopting a policy on diamorphine which has the support of the World Health Organization, and since July, 1954, the United Nations Economic and Social Council, of not manufacturing or importing the drug.

It is rather illuminating to quote the countries that are the greatest users of the drug per head of population. Great Britain ranks fourth highest, the countries above her being Norway, Denmark and Australia in descending order. An exception to the general trend is provided by Finland where, after a steady drop since 1948, an increase has been reported. However, that country has proposed to cease using the compound once its stocks are exhausted. World production began to rise during the year reviewed by the board, and it appears that the increase was distributed between the United Kingdom and Hungary.

The main purpose of narcotic control is to prevent the licitly produced substances from being diverted into illicit channels. Although the Central Opium Board is hampered in its work by the failure of some countries to submit returns, 91 per cent of the statistics requested in 1953 were received, and the figures for estimates submitted to the Drug Supervisory Body received by November 4, 1954, were 94 per cent of the possible, the highest percentage ever reached. The figures submitted to the board show that the world licit production of opium is increasing although the demand for opium appears to be falling, and if these two opposing trends persist, problems for the economics of the producing countries and for the control of illicit traffic will arise. This is borne out by the fact that opium stocks held in opium-producing and morphine-manufacturing countries at the end of 1953 amounted to 1,700 tons, sufficient to meet the world's requirements for two and a half years.

According to the British Pharmacopoeia, heroin has its basis in morphia, but it also contains hydrogen and carbon which give it an added potency. The description given by the Pharmacopoeia of heroin addiction is as follows:—

It is more easily acquired than morphine addiction because of the intense euphoria which heroin produces and the absence of unpleasant side effects such as vomiting, etc.

Apparently, the use of this drug produces a very happy feeling. The treatment is the same as for morphine addiction, but heroin addiction is much more difficult to break and the mental and moral deterioration of the addict is much worse than with morphine. It has properties similar to those of morphine but has a more powerful depressant action on the respiratory centre. In phthisis, bronchitis and asthma, it is used for its sedative action on coughs when there is little expectoration.

The danger of addiction is always borne in mind by doctors, and great caution is exercised in its use. I shall now read an extract from the British Medical Journal of 1949, which states:—

Morphine or some related drug can always be used as effectively as heroin. Since 1931 the medical profession has been deprived of heroin in some 26 countries without evident disadvantage. Pharmacological opinion has long held that social dangers overshadow its therapeutic importance. It must be granted that there is justice in the Permanent Central Opium Board's claim of an a priori case for its total abolition.

In view of those facts and those stated by the Minister when introducing this measure, I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading.

The Hon. C. R. CUDMORE (Central No. 2) —This is an important Bill. It is not often that we have an amendment to an Act that has not been considered by Parliament since 1934. The House should give its serious consideration to this matter, and we should all thank Mr. Bardolph for the detailed information he has been able to give us from the chemical point of view. I do not profess to know very much about the details, but I do know that 25 years ago when people had a very bad cough they were mostly given some kind of a mixture, prescribed by a doctor, that contained heroin. I was rather interested to learn from the speech of the Minister that the medical profession now has other drugs that do the same thing, so that heroin is not so much required in making up prescriptions for people whose coughs cannot otherwise be stopped.

I was surprised to learn that heroin has caused so much trouble and has been banned, as it were, in so many places outside Australia. I therefore raise no objection to the principle involved in this Bill that heroin should be barred altogether, which I take it is the main purpose of the measure, but I cannot quite understand why we do not say exactly what we mean and mention heroin in the Bill. It is not mentioned at all, and I cannot see any reason why it should not be. Section 4 of the Act sets out the drugs to which the Act applies, and subsection (5) of that section provides:—

The Governor may by proclamation with such modifications as may be specified in the proclamations declare that this Act shall apply to any of the following drugs, namely,

and then sets them out. This legislation has been commended and approved by everybody, even Canberra, so it must be very good, and it sets out the drugs whereas this Bill departs

from this practice very considerably. Honourable members have heard me speak before about how things are done by proclamation and not put into Bills, and this seems to be a typical case. Section 4 (3) provides:—

If it appears to the Governor that any new derivative of morphine or cocaine or of any salts of morphine or cocaine or any other alkaloid of opium or any other drug or substance of whatever kind is or is likely to be productive, if improperly used, or is capable of being converted into a substance which is, or is likely to be productive, if improperly used, of ill-effects substantially of the same character or nature as or analogous to those produced by morphine, cocaine, or Indian hemp, the Governor may by proclamation declare that this Act shall apply to that new derivative or alkaloid or other drug or substance in the same manner as it applies to the drugs mentioned in subsection (1) of this section.

It is proposed by clause 3 (1) to delete that section and to insert in its place the following:—

If it appears to the Governor that—

- (a) any derivative of morphine or cocaine or of any salts of morphine or cocaine; or
- (b) any other alkaloid of opium; or
- (c) any other drug or substance of whatever kind,

to which this Act does not apply, is or is likely to be productive, if improperly used, or is capable of being converted into a substance which is, or is likely to be, productive, if improperly used, of ill-effects substantially of the same character or nature as or analogous to those produced by morphine, cocaine or Indian hemp, the Governor may by proclamation declare that this Act shall apply to that derivative, alkaloid, or other drug or substance—

- (i) in the same manner as it applies to the drugs mentioned in subsection (1) of this section; or
- (ii) with such modifications as may be specified in the proclamation.

If we want to prohibit heroin let us mention it and amend the section accordingly. That seems to be the proper procedure and not to leave it vague as this does. The Minister said that clause 3 is primarily intended to enable a modified control to be exercised over a new drug called pholeodine. Whether that has anything to do with heroin I have not the faintest idea, but why don't we say what we mean so that everybody can read the Act and know exactly what it is about. The Minister went on:—

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.

I do not know quite how, because it does not mention any particular drug, but the Minister went on to say:—

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.

I do not want to weary the House further now, but in the Committee stages I hope to ask some questions and possibly suggest amendments which will make the Bill, if it is brought here for the purpose of adding heroin and pholcodine to other prohibited drugs, do just that and not wipe out the good effect of the Dangerous Drugs Act, 1934, by simply providing that in future it will apply to anything declared to be so by proclamation. I support the second reading.

The Hon. L. H. DENSLEY secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### STATUTES AMENDMENT (PUBLIC SALARIES) BILL.

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.*

I thank members for allowing me to proceed with the second reading. The long title of the Bill sounds rather formidable, but the matter of urgency is related to a condition created by reason of the fact that certain officers have their salaries fixed by means of Arbitration Court awards whereas others are fixed by Statute, and to bring some salaries—which members will notice have been made retrospective—into line with the time that other salaries were raised. Unless this legislation is passed in time to be taken into consideration this financial year those officers will be penalized to the extent that any increase in salary since December 20 last, when all other salaries were raised, would be in addition to their total salaries next year, which would put them in a rather disadvantageous and unfair position relating to their incomes for another year. By giving me the opportunity to explain the Bill it will be possible for members to give it proper consideration in time for that injustice to be avoided.

The Bill provides for increases in Parliamentary salaries, and in the salaries of judges and of those public servants whose salaries are fixed by Act of Parliament. The justification for introducing the Bill is, of course, to be

found in the increases which have recently been made, and are still being made, throughout the Commonwealth in almost all salaries and wages. The increases, as members know, apply not only to employees covered by awards of arbitration courts and tribunals, but to public servants of all grades, and to judges, members of Parliament and Ministers. South Australia has not taken the lead in this movement; but now that new standards of wages and salaries are established throughout the Commonwealth, justice requires that we should adapt ourselves to them.

The proposed increases are based on relatively simple principles. In the case of public servants whose salaries are fixed by statute, the Bill proposes the same amount of increase as they would have received if they had been covered by the award made by the Public Service Board last February. For judges, Ministers, and members of Parliament, and the holders of the principal Parliamentary offices, the Government is proposing rates which it considers to be justified, both by reference to the Public Service increases, and also by comparison with the rates which are in force or are in course of being adopted in other States. The increases proposed in the salaries of members of the Public Works Standing Committee and the Joint Committee on Subordinate Legislation, though not large in amount, are greater in proportion than the other increases proposed in the Bill. This is justified by the length of time since the salaries were last altered. The salaries of members of the Public Works Committee have not been altered since 1927, and the salaries of members of the Joint Committee on Subordinate Legislation have not been altered since 1939.

The details of the Bill are as follows.

Clause 2 increases the salary of the Agent General from £2,000 sterling to £2,500 sterling. His allowance of £1,000 sterling is not altered. Clause 3 increases the salary of the Auditor-General from £2,750 to £3,500. Clause 4 increases the salary of the chairman of the Joint Committee on Subordinate Legislation from £100 to £200, and the salaries of members of the committees from £50 to £100. Clause 5 increases the amount provided for Ministers' salaries from £21,200 to £28,750. The £21,200 was made up of a lump sum of £19,000 mentioned in the Constitution Act and an allowance in addition of £275 per Minister payable under the Payment of Members of Parliament Act. In view of the new lump sum proposed, the provision for payment of the allowances

of £275 will be repealed. Clause 6 increases the salary of the President of the Industrial Court from £2,500 to £3,250, and the salaries of Deputy Presidents from £2,100 to £2,750.

Clause 7 increases the basic salary of members of Parliament from £1,425 to £1,900. Members representing distant electorates will receive the same additional allowances as at present, that is to say £50 or £75, depending on the situation of their electorates. Clause 8 increases payments made to Parliamentary office holders in addition to their salaries as members. The payments to the Speaker of the House of Assembly and the President of the Legislative Council are increased from £625 to £850. The Chairman of Committees of the House of Assembly will have his allowance increased from £250 to £350, and the payment to the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Assembly is increased from £500 to £700.

Clause 9 increases the salary of the Commissioner of Police from £2,450 to £3,200. Clauses 10 and 11 deal with the salary of the Public Service Commissioner. They provide that the salary of the Commissioner will be increased from £2,600 to £3,500, and this new rate will include his remuneration as the chairman or a member of the Public Service Board. Clause 12 increases the remuneration of the chairman of the Public Works Standing Committee from £400 to £600, and the remuneration of members from £250 to £400. Clause 13 increases the salary of the Chief Justice from £3,750 to £4,750, and the salaries of puisne judges from £3,250 to £4,000.

Clause 14 repeals the Public Officers Salaries Act, 1953. The repeal of this Act is consequential on the provisions of the Bill. Clause 15 provides that the salaries fixed by the Bill for public servants shall be deemed to have come into operation on December 20, 1954. Clause 16 provides that the remaining salaries and other payments fixed by the Bill shall be deemed to have come into operation on the first day of the month in which the Bill is assented

to. Clause 17 enables the Governor, on increasing the current salaries of the Railways Commissioner and the Commissioner of Highways, to direct that the increases shall operate from December 20, 1954. The salaries of these two officers are fixed by the Governor. It is proposed to grant them increases in salary commensurate with the increases granted to other public servants of similar rank, and that the increases should take effect from December 20, 1954. Clause 17 provides the necessary authority for making the increases retrospective. Clause 18 is a machinery provision.

Members may ask why the Bill provides for increases in the salaries of public servants to take effect from December 20, 1954, while the other increases will not operate until the month in which the Bill is assented to. The Government does not, in general, favour the making of retrospective payments, and believes that such payments should only be made where a convincing case is made for them. In the case of the public servants covered by the Bill, there is a strong argument for making the increases retrospective to December 20 last, namely, that all other public servants have received increases dating back to this day. The Government does not, on the other hand, think that there is any special reason for making the other increases similarly retrospective. They are increases in salaries for which, it might be said, Parliament is the appropriate tribunal. Parliament is taking the first opportunity of dealing with them, and there is no reason to expect any undue delay in securing the decision of Parliament on them. In these circumstances justice will be done if the increases take effect from the commencement of the present month.

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

#### ADJOURNMENT.

At 3.31 p.m. the Council adjourned until Wednesday, June 22, at 2 p.m.