

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Wednesday, October 7, 1959.

The PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir Walter Duncan) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m. and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.**SOUTH-WESTERN SUBURBS DRAINAGE SCHEME.**

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—Does the Government intend to introduce a Bill forthwith to implement the report of the Public Works Committee on the floodwaters drainage scheme to serve the south-western suburbs? If so, will it be introduced in this Chamber first?

The Hon. N. L. JUDE—Legislation will be necessary in connection with this matter and certain sums have already been provided on the Estimates. Whether the Bill will be introduced in the Legislative Council or in another place has not yet been considered.

DIFFERENTIAL RATING.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—In cases where the unimproved land values rating system is in force in a local government area is it legal for the council to apply differential rates within a ward?

The Hon. N. L. JUDE—We have Crown law opinion on this matter, but it would appear to need clarifying and no actual test case has occurred. Cabinet will shortly be considering a draft clause on this matter and possibly legislation on it will be introduced this session.

WANDILO AND GLENCOE RAILWAY (DISCONTINUANCE) BILL.

The Hon. N. L. JUDE (Minister of Railways) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to authorize the discontinuance of the railway between Wandilo and Glencoe, and for other purposes. Read a first time.

The Hon. N. L. JUDE—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its object is to enable the Railways Commissioner to remove the railway line between Wandilo and Glencoe. This line, of 3ft. 6in. gauge, was authorized by statute in 1903. It was closed on July 1, 1957, by order of the Transport Control Board dated May 7, 1957, following a report by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works dated May 2, 1957. The committee recommended that the Commissioner be authorized to take up and remove the rail tracks, buildings, and other works connected with the railway and

either call tenders for their purchase *in situ* or, if in his opinion it would not be to the best advantage to accept any tender or if no tender were received, use, sell, or dispose of the materials as he deemed expedient. This recommendation was subject to the proviso that the effect of such action would not be to abrogate any provision of the Railway Standardization Agreement relating to the South-Eastern Division.

Although the Government was advised that from a strictly legal point of view it would not be a breach of the agreement to have the line pulled up, it was considered desirable to advise the Commonwealth of the proposal. Accordingly the Premier wrote to the Federal Minister for Shipping and Transport and was advised in July of this year that the Commonwealth Government had no objection to the removal of the rail tracks, buildings, and other works connected or used with the line, and regarded as terminated any obligation imposed on the State under the standardization agreement. Legislation is required to permit the Commissioner to remove the tracks and accordingly this Bill provides by clause 3 that the Commissioner may take up and remove or otherwise dispose of the railway, including the buildings and other works connected or used in connection with it, and sell or otherwise dispose of the materials or any of them as he deems proper.

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

NURSES REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN (Minister of Health) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Nurses Registration Act, 1920-1958. Read a first time.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—I move—
That this Bill be now read a second time.

For some time I have been rather keen to introduce this Bill, the objects of which are to provide some status for nursing aides and to assist in getting the necessary nursing establishment for our hospitals. The Nurses Board of South Australia has had in mind for some time a proposal for the training and enrolment of nurse aides and information was sought from the other States of the Commonwealth regarding their attitude to such a scheme. At a Ministers' conference in 1956 it was agreed that Victoria be authorized to call a conference with representatives from each State to consider the terms of training and practice for

nurse aides and reciprocity between the States in regard to them. However, no action was taken because the subject of nursing control in that State became a matter for Government consideration during that year. New legislation was drafted and a new body, known as the Victorian Nursing Council, was created and given powers, far in excess of those given to the old Nurses Registration Board, to control all aspects of nursing, including those relating to nurse aides. Following this, some of the other States acted independently in the matter of nurse aides, and it has now been ascertained that South Australia and Queensland are the only States without a training scheme for nurse aides.

The purpose of this Bill is to give status to a large number of persons performing nursing duties in nearly all hospitals, but who have had no organized training. They can be divided into two groups. There are, first, nurse attendants. These are adults who for various reasons are unable to undertake the course of training for general nurses. Some have not the necessary educational standard and others are not able to live in at the training school because of home commitments. The second group comprises nurse assistants, being girls who are too young to commence training or who have not the necessary educational standard. Nurse aides can be employed in the nursing of the chronic sick and patients who are not in need of highly-skilled surgical or medical care. General nurses can thus be released for the more serious cases. The standard of training proposed for nurse aides will be similar to Part I of the course of training undertaken by a general trainee, but at a lower level. Steps will be taken to ensure that a nurse aide is not compelled to undertake duties for which she is not trained and are the province of the trainee or trained general nurse.

Following a period of 12 months' training and the passing of the required examination, a further year of nursing under the supervision of a registered nurse, in a hospital approved by the Nurses Board, will be undertaken before the trainee will be eligible for enrolment as a nurse aide. The Bill is in substantially the same form as the amendment made in 1954 (as amended in 1956) to provide for the training and enrolment of mothercraft nurses. Clause 4 inserts into the principal Act a new Part IIIB consisting of seven new sections. Section 33h will provide for a roll of nurse aides. Section 33i will provide that persons entitled to enrol will be those

who have passed the prescribed examinations and passed through the prescribed course of training. Section 33j will make provision for the enrolment of persons trained outside the State along lines similar to those concerning mothercraft nurses. Section 33k will provide that a person must be of good character, 19 years of age, and of sound health. The age of 19 years is provided as it is considered that the age of entry for training should not be less than 17, and it is contemplated that the complete course will involve 12 months of training and a further year of nursing under supervision. Section 33l will make the necessary consequential additions to various sections of the principal Act concerning enrolment. Sections 33m and 33n will provide the conditions upon which enrolment may be cancelled along similar lines to those which apply to mothercraft nurses.

Clause 3 makes consequential amendments to the principal Act. Clauses 5, 6, 7 and 8 are also consequential. They make applicable in respect of nurse aides the penal provisions against unqualified persons. Clause 9 extends the regulation-making power to the making of provisions regarding nurse aides. Clause 10 provides that the Bill will not come into force until it is proclaimed. It is considered desirable that the necessary regulations should be prepared before the amendments become law. I have every confidence in commending this Bill to the consideration of honourable members. The standard of our nurses is on a very high plane, but there is much nursing that could be carried out by persons who perhaps do not have the necessary educational qualifications to be able to pass exams, to handle dangerous drugs, and to deal with certain types of surgical care. There is room for another type of nursing that looks after many of the more simple cases which in the past have been nursed in the home, but which today are attended to in hospital. I think that this legislation will help in providing hospital staffs without in any way prejudicing the standard of service provided for medical care and attention.

The Hon. Sir Frank Perry—Will the nurse aides have to live in the same as nurses do?

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—I should think that these young girls would. These are the younger girls who later, if they possess the natural attributes of this profession, may be induced to continue and obtain the necessary educational qualifications to become qualified nurses. Nurse attendants need not necessarily live in. The Government is desirous of obtaining some alteration in the housing of nurses.

It is not provided the world over, and I think it is quite practicable for nurses who are qualified and who are no longer required for lectures or to be under the supervision of the matron, through some assistance provided, to be offered alternative arrangements. They may arrange for their own accommodation, as do those who are engaged in other occupations, and live away. It could be desirable for them to get away from the environment of this type of work seven days a week. Apart from the question of whether they live in or live out, I think that this Bill is a desirable contribution to the nursing strength of our hospitals.

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

MILLICENT AND BEACHPORT RAILWAY (DISCONTINUANCE) BILL.

The Hon. N. L. JUDE (Minister of Railways) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to provide for the discontinuance of the railway between Millicent and Beachport, and for other purposes. Read a first time.

The Hon. N. L. JUDE—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its object is to enable the Railways Commissioner to remove that portion of the Beachport to Mount Gambier Railway which lies between Beachport and Millicent. The Beachport to Mount Gambier line of 3ft. 6in. gauge was authorized by statute in 1876. The section between Beachport and Millicent was closed on November 1, 1956, by order of the Transport Control Board dated September 11, 1956, following a report by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works dated August 30, 1956. The committee recommended that the Commissioner be authorized to take up and remove the rail tracks, buildings, and other works connected with that portion of the railway and either call tenders for their purchase *in situ* or if, in his opinion, it would not be to the best advantage to accept any tender or if no tender were received, he use, sell, or dispose of the materials as he deemed expedient.

This recommendation was subject to the proviso that the effect of such action would

not be to abrogate any provision of the Railway Standardization Agreement relating to the South-Eastern Division. The Government was advised that from a strictly legal point of view it would not be a breach of the agreement to have the line pulled up, but it was considered desirable to seek the views of the Commonwealth on the proposal. Accordingly the Premier wrote to the Prime Minister who replied in December, 1958, that the Commonwealth Government had no objection to the removal of the rail tracks, buildings, and other works connected or used with the line and regarded as terminated any obligation imposed on the State under the Standardization agreement.

Legislation is required to permit the Commissioner to remove the tracks and accordingly this Bill provides by clause 4 that the Commissioner may take up and remove or otherwise dispose of the railway including the buildings and other works connected or used in connection with it and sell or otherwise dispose of the materials or any of them as he deems proper.

Clause 5 declares that the remainder of the railway, that is the portion between Millicent and Mount Gambier, shall be deemed to be the railway authorized by the original enabling Act.

Clause 3 is merely an interpretation clause describing the portion of the railway which is to be removed by reference to a plan which has been deposited in the office of the Surveyor-General.

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

LAND SETTLEMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

STATUTES AMENDMENT (PUBLIC SALARIES) BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 2.44 p.m. the Council adjourned until Tuesday, October 13, at 2.15 p.m.