November 6, 1969

LEAGISLATIVE COUNCIL

The effect of that amendment was that, when the Governor was properly apprised of this situation, he would empower the Joint Committee to appoint six members from the House of Assembly and one member from the Legislative Council.

However, when the question arose of extending the life of the committee past December of this year, it was apparent that the situation would need examination. Under the previous system of extending the life of the committee by merely extending the terms of office of the members in office, there would be no way of altering the composition of the committee back to its representation of six House of Assembly and two Legislative Council members until a member from the House of Assembly vacated his office, since the terms of the Act there is no provision for such a member being required to vacate his office to restore normal representation.

At the present stand, there is a representation of six Assembly members and one Legislative Council member when the need for that type of representation is long past.

Accordingly, in this Bill it is proposed that (a) the life of the committee will be extended for four years, that is, until December 31, 1973, any further extensions after that time being within the province of future Parliaments; (b) on December 31 of this year, all members in office will go out of office and future members will be appointed for a two-year term; and (c) whenever the Governor is required to make an appointment to the committee, an opportunity will be provided for appropriate representation to be made by the President of the Legislative Council in the light of the composition of the parties in that Chamber, which should ensure that after such appointments the representation by Houses of Parliament reflects the current situation.

I now consider the Bill in some detail. Clause 1 is formal. Clause 2 sets out a formal expiry date for the measure. Clause 3 sets out in detail the mode of advising the Governor of the availability of members of the Legislative Council for appointment and directs the exercise of the Governor's powers of appointment in this regard.

Clause 4 provides for the vacation of offices of members, for appointments for two-year terms thereafter, and for the terms of members appointed to fill casual vacancies. Clauses 5 to 8 effect certain amendments consequent on the adoption of a system of decimal currency. Clause 9 provides that the power to recommend acquisition of land in the South-East may be exercised for the duration of the life of the Act. Clauses 10 and 11 effect decimal currency amendments.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD secured the adjournment of the debate.

DOG FENCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading.

The Hon. C. R. STORY (Minister of Agriculture): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its object is to increase the subsidy payable by the Government to the Dog Fence Board. Section 31 of the principal Act provided for a $1 for $1 subsidy for all rates levied by the board up to a maximum of 20c a square mile of ratable land. The proposed amendment will remove this limitation and provide that the subsidy payable will be in respect of all rates levied, without limitation.

Owing to increasing costs, the Dog Fence Board is finding difficulty in meeting its commitments and in fact is showing a deficit on its operations, and if the proposed amendment is agreed to it will have the effect of restoring the position to what it was before 1953, when the limitation of the amount of the Government's subsidy was provided for by way of a proviso to section 31 of the principal Act as it then stood. This proposed amendment is provided for at clause 7. The remaining clauses are formal or make appropriate amendments consequential on the introduction of the system of decimal currency.

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

GAS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading.

The Hon. C. R. STORY (Minister of Agriculture): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its most urgent and main purpose is to make some amendments to the Gas Act so as to make provision to facilitate the reticulation of natural gas to consumers in the metropolitan area. The opportunity is also taken to make some other necessary and desirable amendments to the principal Act that I will explain as I deal with the clauses of the Bill.

Clause 2 inserts the definition of "gas supplier" in section 5 of the principal Act in its proper alphabetical place. It also strikes out the definitions of "President" and "standard price", which have been obsolete since the Prices Commissioner became the price-fixing authority for gas. Clause 3 makes a formal amendment to section 7 of the principal Act.