

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

SPEECH

BY

The Rt. Hon. SIR ROBERT MENZIES,
K.T., C.H., Q.C., M.P.,

ON THE

SALARIES (STATUTORY OFFICES) ADJUSTMENT BILL 1964.

[From the "Parliamentary Debates," 28th October, 1964.]

Sir ROBERT MENZIES (Kooyong—Prime Minister) [4.8].—I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to provide increased salaries for the holders of the statutory offices included in the schedule to the Bill, the salaries for which are provided by special appropriation. The Bill arises out of the Government's decision to increase with effect from 1st November 1964 the salaries of Permanent Heads and of the holders of certain statutory offices now on the salary levels of £5,900 and £6,900. These salary levels were determined in the early part of 1960. The new salaries will be £7,500 and £8,750 respectively. As honorable members will know, the 1960 review for Permanent Heads and statutory office holders followed a general revision of the salaries of all other offices in the Public Service.

In the last three years there have been substantial changes in the pay structure of the Commonwealth Service. These changes

have arisen as a result of the group by group reviews by the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, the Public Service Arbitrator and the Public Service Board. Major changes have emerged as a result of the series of re-assessments for professional groups, commencing with the Commission's determination of June 1961 for engineers. The salary increases have had regard to all factors relevant to wage and salary fixation, for example, work value, comparative wage justice and economic circumstances.

In order to illustrate the effect of these developments, I mention that the total increase granted by the arbitral authorities for the class 4 engineer in the Third Division at present on a salary of £3,733 amounts to £1,143. The similar increase for the Principal Legal Officer in the Third Division at present on a salary of £3,938 amounts to £1,218. As explained in the paper prepared by the Public Service Board

and already presented to the House, these increases are quoted on the basis of the positions most commonly found within the new salary levels. In the Second Division, the December 1963 determination of the Public Service Board, subsequently endorsed by the Commission, resulted in some offices receiving a higher rate of remuneration than that received by Permanent Heads of departments. The top salary in the Second Division is now £6,465 per annum.

The Government has decided that, in the light of the time which has elapsed since their salaries were last reviewed and of the various developments in the Commonwealth Service and elsewhere, a further review for Permanent Heads and the statutory offices listed in the schedule to this Bill is now required. In determining the new salary levels to be applied, the Government took account of the high level of responsibility

and the complex duties devolving upon the statutory office holders and Permanent Heads.

The salaries for the remainder of the offices not within the jurisdiction of the Public Service Board will be individually reviewed by the Government and the appropriate increases applied as from 1st November 1964. Because the salaries are provided from special appropriations, legislation covering the offices of the Public Service Arbitrator, the Senior Commissioner, Commissioners and Conciliators of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission and the Chairmen and Members of the Taxation Boards of Review, and proposing effect from 1st November in each instance, will be introduced before the end of the present sessional period of Parliament. I commend the Bill to the House.