

Section 6 (4), Employment Act, 1945.—"There may from time to time be paid out of moneys appropriated by Parliament for the purpose to the members of any Advisory Council or Advisory Committee appointed under this section (not being officers of the Public Service) such fees, allowances, and travelling-expenses as may be fixed from time to time by the Minister of Finance, either generally or in respect of any particular person or class of persons."

It will be observed that only the former Act specifically authorizes the payment of salaries, and when approval was given to the payment to each Chairman of several Advisory Committees authorized under the latter Act of remuneration at a rate of £500 per annum (altered after a period of three months to a rate of £200 per annum and a fee of three guineas for each day on which the Committee is engaged or is travelling on business), plus travelling-expenses, the Audit Office raised with the Director of Employment the propriety of paying a salary or honorarium when the authorizing section spoke only of "fees, allowances, and travelling-expenses." The Director replied that salary or honorarium at an annual rate was within the authority conferred by the statute, and the Audit Office acted on this view of the administering Department subject to reference to Parliament as now made.

Departmental Accounts

The Audit Office has been advised that the various Government Departments and bodies required, by their governing statutes or under section 57 of the Finance Act, 1932, to prepare Revenue Accounts and Balance-sheets will present them to Parliament during the present session either in their annual reports or in parliamentary paper B.-1 [Pt. IV]. The accounts so presented will be for the year 1946-47 or later, except in the cases mentioned below:—

- (a) Public Service Superannuation Fund Board: The Board expects to present accounts for year 1943-44.
- (b) National Provident Fund Board: The Board may present a report, but is unlikely to include accounts therein for the calendar year 1947, as they have not been completed.
- (c) Teachers' Superannuation Fund Board: It is unlikely that a report will be presented. The last balance-sheet submitted for audit was at 31st January, 1945.
- (d) Marketing Department (Milk Division): The Division does not intend to include accounts in the 1946-47 report, as its milk-treating plants had not operated for a complete year at 31st March, 1947.

It is unsatisfactory that preparation of the accounts of the two above-named Superannuation Funds, and of the National Provident Fund, has been allowed to fall into arrears.

Interest on Capital Liability

Reference has been made in previous annual reports to the provisions of section 6 (5) of the National Development Loans Act, 1941, regarding the payment of interest to the Consolidated Fund by those accounts which have a capital liability constituted by section 6 (1) and (2) of that Act.