

CONSTABULARY (IRELAND) BILL.

MEMORANDUM ON FINANCIAL PROVISIONS.

Presented to Parliament by Command of His Majesty.



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1. One of the objects of this Bill is to authorise the disbandment of the Royal Irish Constabulary and to provide for the payment of compensation allowances to the officers and constables of the Force.

In the Government of Ireland Act, 1920, provision was made for the payment of compensation allowances to officers and constables who might be removed or required to retire. These provisions, with certain modifications, are incorporated in the Bill and applied to all officers and constables of the Force.

The effect of these provisions is that the compensation allowances will be based on length of service with 12 added years (or 10 added years where the pension is calculated in fiftieths instead of sixtieths), with the proviso that the allowance shall not exceed two-thirds of the salary which an officer or constable might have earned had he remained in the Force until compelled to retire by the age limit.

The annual cost of the allowances is estimated to be £1,300,000

2. Under the proviso to Clause 1 (4) the Treasury is authorised to make rules enabling an officer or man who so desires, to obtain an increased allowance during the two years following disbandment, with a compensating decrease during the subsequent currency of the allowance. Thus a constable disbanded after 10 years' service with an allowance of 38s. per week will be able to increase this during the first two years to £2 15s. 6d. a week subject to a subsequent decrease to 35s. 3d. per week.

The additional sum required for this purpose during the first two years is estimated at £100,000 for each year. This will be provided, as is usual in the case of commutations of pension, by advances made by the National Debt Commissioners in return for 10-year annuities charged on the R.I.C. Vote. The resulting annual charge for 10 years on the Vote is estimated at £26,200.

3. The provisions of Clause 1 (4) will also enable officers and constables who desire to emigrate to commute a part of their allowances in order to provide themselves with the necessary capital. It is estimated that to provide for five hundred applications the total capital sum required would be approximately £278,000. The necessary capital sum will be provided by the National Debt Commissioners in return for 10-year annuities charged to the Vote at an annual cost of £36,400.

4. Under Article 10 of the Treaty the total cost of the compensation allowances payable under the Bill except those payable in respect of members of the Force recruited in Great Britain during the two years preceding the date of the Treaty, and except those payable in respect of such proportion of the Force as was stationed at the date of disbandment within the area of the Northern Government, will be recoverable from the Free State Government but will in the first instance be payable from Imperial Funds.

As regards compensation allowances payable in respect of such proportion of the Force as was stationed within the area of the Government of Northern Ireland, it has been agreed that that Government will repay to His Majesty's Government so much of the cost as they would have been required to repay had the provisions of the Government of Ireland Act, 1920, relating to the Royal Irish Constabulary remained in force.

5. In addition to the compensation allowances payable to all officers and constables under the Bill, it is proposed that where any officer or constable on disbandment is compelled to move from his home, the reasonable cost of such removal shall be repaid to him subject to a maximum of one month's pay for unmarried men, two months' pay for married men with less than three children, and three months' pay for married men with three or more children. The Government have further undertaken to pay the actual travelling expenses to any part of the United Kingdom of any officer or constable, with his dependants, who may desire to leave Ireland; and if his family does not accompany him, to pay separation allowance at the rate of 14s. per week for constables and 28s. per week for officers for a period of three months after disbandment. In addition, a Tribunal has been appointed to consider individual cases in which, in their opinion, exceptional hardship not otherwise provided for arises, and to recommend the payment of such additional grant in any such exceptional case as may appear necessary to them. A sum of £300,000 has been taken in the R.I.C. Estimate for 1922-23 for the purposes mentioned in this paragraph.