DOG FENCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL 1961

House of Assembly, 10 October 1961, page 1128

Second reading

**The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN (Acting Minister of Lands)** moved:

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the whole for the purpose of considering the following resolution:—That it is desirable to introduce a Bill for an Act to amend the Dog Fence Act, 1946-1960.

Motion carried.

Resolution agreed to in Committee and adopted by the House. Bill introduced and read a first time.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its objects are to increase the maximum amount payable in each financial year by the Dog Fence Board to owners of the dog fence for the purpose of maintenance and inspection of the fence and the destruction of wild dogs; to increase the maximum that may be imposed by the board as the amount of annual rates in respect of every square mile of ratable land under the principal Act; to abolish the additional rate that the board may declare in respect of ratable land situated within ten miles of the dog fence; and to increase the limit imposed by the Act on the Government subsidy payable to the board.

By section 24 of the principal Act the board is required to pay to the owner of any part of the dog fence such amount a mile of fence as is determined by the board for that year. In 1953, Parliament limited the amount payable to an owner for every mile of fence to £16. As the cost of maintaining the dog fence has increased considerably in recent years, the Government feels that the limit fixed in 1953 should be increased. Accordingly, clause 3 increases that limit from £16 to £30. By section 26 of the principal Act the board is empowered to declare an amount of annual rates payable in respect of every square mile of ratable land. The maximum amount that may be so declared was fixed in 1953 as three shillings a square mile of ratable land. Clause 4 amends section 26 to increase that amount to six shillings.

Section 27 of the principal Act provides that the board may, in addition to the rate declared under section 26, declare a rate not exceeding one shilling and threepence a square mile of ratable land within ten miles of the dog fence. The board has recommended the repeal of this section because it feels that this additional rate is not justified as it imposes an extra charge on the person whom the Act is designed to assist. The Government agrees with this recommendation, and accordingly clause 5 repeals section 27. Clause 6 makes a consequential amendment to section 29 of the principal Act.

Subsection (1) of section 31 of the principal Act provides that the Treasurer shall pay to the board a subsidy at the rate of one pound for every pound of rates declared for each financial year, but the proviso to that subsection limits that subsidy, with respect to rates declared under section 26, to one shilling and threepence a square mile of ratable land. When the Act came into force in 1946 the Act imposed a limit of one shilling and threepence on the amount of rates declarable under section 26 for each square mile of ratable land, but, though that limit was raised to three shillings in 1953, the Government subsidy was limited to one shilling and threepence a square mile of ratable land. The Government feels that the increase in the costs of maintenance in recent years justifies an increase in the Government subsidy, and clause 7 raises the limit placed on that subsidy by the proviso to subsection (1) of section 31 from one shilling and threepence to two shillings a square mile of ratable land.

Mr. LOVEDAY secured the adjournment of the debate.