**CROWN LANDS ACT CONSOLIDATING BILL. 1915**

**Legislative Council, 6 October 1915, pages 1173-4**

Second reading

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. J.H. Vaughan)—This is a consolidating measure and does not require any explanation in detail. It has been referred to the Standing Committee, whose report has been adopted by this House. It makes no alteration of the existing law, but merely consolidates it. This is a Bill for which we been waiting three years in succession,

The Hon. T. Pascoe—It has been promised once or twice.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL—Yes. For three years in succession this consolidating measure was hung up on account of amending Bills going through, and it was desired to see those amendments become law before consolidation was proceeded with. It has been suggested in some quarters that that course should be adopted this year, when another amendment in our Crown Lands legislation will be before the House, but that will mean hanging up this Bill for still another year. The only possible way to get these consolidating Bills through is to go right ahead and clear the lines of all other legislative traffic until we get the measures in the Statute Book, when we can amend them further as desired.

The Hon. J. Lewis—There is nothing new in this Bill ?

The ATTORNEY - GENERAL — Absolutely nothing. It is purely a consolidating measure.

The Hon. F.S. WALLIS—If we are to get another Crown Lands Bill in this session it seems a pity to consolidate the previous legislation without incorporating in it the new laws. For three years, we are told, this consolidating measure has been hung up on account of amendments in the Crown lands laws. Would it not be possible to hang it up still longer to allow of complete consolidation ?

The Attorney-General—It is too late.

The Hon. P. S. WALLIS—It would have been better if the Bill foreshadowed by the Attorney-General had been introduced earlier in the session, so that the course I suggest might have been adopted. It is most undesirable to consolidate legislation and then to immediately start a fresh series of amendments.

The Hon. T. PASCOE—I think the Government have adopted the right course. So long as there is a Parliament and any session of Parliament there will be an amending Crown Lands Bill. I have no idea of what the forthcoming Bill is to contain, but what we can do is to get all the past Statutes before us in one Act before we consider the latest amending measure. If we wait the probability is that some time will be occupied by its. discussion in both Houses, and the end of the session will be so near that by the time the business is finished and the new Bill has been put in its proper place in the consolidating measure, the session will have ended, and another year will be lost. I sup­port the second reading.

The Hon. J. LEWIS—I support the second reading on the Attorney-General’s assurance that the Bill is purely a consolidating one.

I agree with Mr. Wallis that it would be far better to have the latest amendment in the law foreshadowed by the Minister in corporated in this consolidating Bill, but I see great difficulties in the way.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL-I quite agree that Mr. Wallis’s method would be the best way of dealing with the matter if such were possible, but the task of consolidating legislation of this kind is not a simple process. A good many hands have to get to work. The Surveyor-General has to go thoroughly into the matter and report. Other officers of his department have to be consulted, and the Parliamentary Draftsman has to do his work. The Joint Committee requires to sit and take evidence, and if it is satisfied that a consolidating Bill makes no alteration in the existing law it accordingly presents a report to Parliament. With so many stages to go through it is quite impossible to leave the work right to the end of the session. It will be safer to put this Bill through and put up with the disability of having two Acts on the subject at the end of this session instead of the more preferable condition of having the whole of the Crown lands laws within the covers of one Statute.

Bill read a second time; third reading, October 7.