CONTROL OF WATERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL 1975

House of Assembly, 11 March 1975, page 2778

Second reading

**The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN (Minister of Works)** obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Control of Waters Act, 1919-1925. Read a first time.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I move:

*That this Bill be now read a second time*.

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation inserted in Hansard without my reading it. Leave granted.

Explanation of Bill

This short Bill makes a small number of metric and decimal currency amendments to the principal Act and, more importantly, ensures that regard may be had to certain environmental considerations by the Minister when he considers certain matters under the principal Act. To consider the Bill in some detail: Clause 1 is formal. Clause 2 makes a metric amendment to section 2 of the principal Act by converting one acre to .5 hectares. This represents a slight increase in area, a hectare being a little more than two acres. This expression occurs in the definition of "domestic purposes” in that section, and it is self-explanatory. Paragraph (b) of this clause makes a formal amendment.

Clause 3 amends section 8 of the principal Act and again converts one acre to .5 hectares. Clause 4 inserts a new section 14a in the principal Act which enjoins the Minister, when he is considering a matter under section 11 or 14 of the Act, to pay regard to certain environmental considerations and, in effect, permits the Minister to refuse his permission if he considers that there is any substantial danger to the environment. Sections 11 and 14 of the principal Act deal with permission to drain land, and the reason for ensuring that environmental considerations are taken into account in this area is, amongst other things, to have regard to a motion of the House of Assembly passed on October 17, 1973. For the convenience of members I set out this motion, as follows:

That, in the opinion of this House, substantial areas of remaining wet-lands in South Australia should be reserved for the conservation of wildlife, and where possible former wet-lands should be rehabilitated.

It is suggested that intended new section 14a is self-explanatory, in that it enables the Minister to have regard to environmental and other factors and further to impose conditions to any permission he does give in relation to drainage, so long as those conditions are related to environmental matters. Clause 5 amends section 22 of the principal Act, which provides penalties, by increasing these penalties quite substantially and, at the same time, converts them to decimal currency.

Mr. RODDA secured the adjournment of the debate.