**SOUTH-EASTERN DRAINAGE BILL 1931**

**House of Assembly, 31 March 1931, page 285**

Second reading

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. W. J. Denny)—**On behalf of the Commissioner of Crown Lands I move the second reading of the South-Eastern Drainage Bill, which finally passed both Houses of Parliament last session. If did not, however, receive the Governor’s Assent before Parliament prorogued, and must, therefore, be re-introduced pursuant to Joint Standing Order No. 17. This order provides that when a Bill has passed both Houses in one session, but has not received the Governor’s assent before prorogation, it may be introduced in the next session and passed through all stages without delay. It is proposed, therefore, to ask the House not to reopen debate on the matter dealt with in this Bill, namely, the transfer of the administration of the South-East to a new South-Eastern Drainage Board in lieu of the Irrigation and Drainage Commission. Later in the session it will become necessary to bring before the House question of the South-Eastern drainage, rates and the payment of the capital cost of the scheme drains, and a full opportunity will be then afforded Parliament of discussing South Eastern drainage problems. The explanation why the Bill was not assented to before prorogation is simple. Parliament adjourned on November 7 of last year, and was prorogued on November 26. Before the South-Eastern Drainage Act could be brought into operation arrangements for the appointment of the new Board had to be made, and the interval between the adjournment of Parliament and prorogation was found to be too short for this purpose. The Government had no intention whatever of holding up the Bill or ignoring the will of Parliament in any way, and has taken this early opportunity of reintroducing the Bill with the object of obtaining the Governor’s assent as early as possible.

The Hon. R. L. BUTLER moved the adjournment of the debate. Negatived.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clause 1—“Short title.”

The Hon. R. L. BUTLER—I ask the Minister to report progress. It is most unusual to put through a Bill without giving the Opposition an opportunity of adjourning the debate. I understand that Mr. Reidy is very keen on having a chance of perusing the measure.

The COMMISSIONER of CROWN LANDS (Hon. R. S. Richards)—A rather extraordinary position has arisen in connection with the Bill. A comprehensive Bill was introduced last session, but it was decided to cut out all the contentious clauses, and the measure, as passed, merely provided for the changeover in administration. Owing to an oversight by an official the Bill was not presented to His Excellency the Governor for signature during last session, and consequently did not become law. Therefore, it is necessary to run the Bill through again, so that it can be presented for signature. The Bill does not contain a new provision.

The Hon. R. L. BUTLER—So long as the Minister assures me that this is the same Bill as that passed last session I will permit it to go through.

The, COMMISSIONER of CROWN LANDS —I give that assurance. I explained the matter to Mr. Reidy, and he said it was quite all right.

Clause passed.

Remaining clauses and title passed, and Bill taken through its remaining stages.