**RENMARK IRRIGATION TRUSTS ACT FURTHER AMENDMENT BILL 1919**

**House of Assembly, 20 November 1919, page 1960**

Second reading

**The COMMISSIONER of CROWN LANDS** —The purpose of this Bill is to allow the Government to advance to the Renmark Irri­gation Trust a sum of not exceeding £18,000 for the erection of pumping plant and the construction of channels to irrigate the greater portion of the land adjoining Ral Ral Avenue, and known as Block “E, ” and aggregating between 1,700 acres and 1,800 acres. The resi­dents of Renmark have for some considerable time strongly urged upon the department the necessity for making this land available for the settlement of local returned soldiers, who will in many cases, if settled in the immediate neighborhood, receive substantial help from their relatives. Portion of block “E,” which is excluded from the proposal, is already watered by a channel from Ral Ral Avenue. Other portions are watered from temporary pumping plant erected by Mr. E. Pitt, who purchased a large portion of this land from the Chaffey Bros, debenture holders, and has sold several hundred acres to private purchasers. The Government propose, subject to satisfac­tory terms being arranged with Mr. Pitt, to purchase an area of approximately 475 acres of freehold land under the Soldier Settlement Act, and in addition to include in the area for soldier settlement about 750 acres of Crown land adjoining. Under ordinary circumstances the latter would probably have been included in the Ral Ral scheme, but its severance will not in any way affect the latter. The cost of the pumping plant and channelling will be recovered from the settlers who receive water from the channels. In the case of soldier settlement, this will be paid by the Government, and made a part of the cost to the soldier of his block. Private settlers will have to make their own arrangements with the Trust for the supply of water. Neither the Government nor the Trust accept any responsibility in respect to any contracts made between Mr. E. Pitt and the purchasers of his land. Block “E” country has been very favorably reported upon by those who have inspected it, and the Government are assured by the Renmark Repatriation Committee and other residents that there will be a very active demand for the land by soldier settlers. It immediately adjoins a number of very flourishing orchards and vineyards, and its producing capabilities and the methods to be adopted to bring the land into a productive state have already been demonstrated. The Renmark soldiers and their friends are anxious that this land should be made available for the coming winter’s planting, and consequently, it has been necessary to introduce legislation before the negotiations with Mr. Pitt are finalised. No amount will be advanced to the Trust until satisfactory arrangements have been made with Mr. Pitt, and until the Trust agrees in writing to accept the full responsibility for the repayment to the Government of any amount advanced. In this connection it should be mentioned that approximately three-fourths of the amount of loan will be represented by the £10 per acre charged on land to be allotted for soldier settlement if the scheme is consummated, and that consequently the Soldier Settlement Department is practically responsible for the repayment of this portion of the amount to the Government. I move the second reading.

Mr. GUNN secured the adjournment of the debate until November 20.