**RENMARK IRRIGATION TRUST ACT AMENDMENT BILL 1977**

**Legislative Assembly, 26 April 1977, page 3736**

Second reading

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN (Minister of Works) brought up the report of the Select Committee, together with minutes of proceedings and evidence.

Report received.

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

That the report be noted.

The committee met once and heard evidence from representatives of the Renmark Irrigation Trust, the Engineering and Water Supply Department and Parliamentary Counsel. As the report indicates, the committee is of the opinion that the additional moneys provided by this Bill to the Renmark Irrigation Trust will enable it to complete a programme of rehabilitation of its irrigation and drainage works. This work has been proceeding since about 1959. It includes not only rehabilitation of the irrigation works but also some work to be done in relation to reticulation of domestic water supplies. The committee is satisfied there is no opposition to the Bill and recommends it be passed in its present form.

Mr. WARDLE (Murray): I support the Minister's remarks about the Select Committee. It was my good fortune, together with the member for Light, to be on a similar Select Committee in October, 1971 when this organisation appeared and asked for financial assistance which at that time was also granted. I think it ought to be said that most of the work began in 1966 when the Government provided sums of money for a new pumping station on the river bank at Renmark. At that time this was a forward-looking proposal, as it was to provide for rising mains. It was to provide for work on rehabilitating the irrigation distribution system which previously used the method of open trenches but which now mainly uses underground pipes. The conservation of water as a result of the introduction of that system must be considerable. Additional installations of drainage works were also undertaken.

As the Select Committee sees it, the trust has been paying a 5 per cent interest rate that will increase and with the increase in costs of both materials and labour through inflation, it has been impossible for that work to be carried out for the sum originally borrowed. The committee was satisfied on the evidence that all these works are being managed economically and are running according to the time schedule originally estimated for this money to be spent. I add my support to the Bill.

Mr. NANKIVELL (Mallee): The completion of the irrigation and drainage of the area under the control of the Renmark Irrigation Trust is a continuing process. One or two matters of concern were expressed by the witnesses. One in particular was that, although they have allowed for a 12 per cent escalation in costs, inflation might exceed that figure during the period allocated for the completion of the work. The other area of concern was the cost of the money was to increase, as the member for Murray said, from 5 per cent to 10 per cent. I therefore have some reservations whether or not the amount of money voted in this Bill will, in fact, enable the completion of the project, unless everything goes extremely well. An understanding was given, and understood by the Renmark Irrigation Trust. that the door is open and, should this amount not be adequate, other money will be available to it to complete the work. With that assurance in mind, I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

Motion carried.

Bill read a third time and passed.