**SOUTH-EASTERN DRAINAGE ACT AMENDMENT BILL 1983**

**Legislative Assembly, 16 March 1983, page 385**

Second reading

**The Hon. J.W. SLATER (Minister of Water Resources)** obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the South-Eastern Drainage Act, 1931-1980. Read a first time.

The Hon. J.W. SLATER: I move: That this Bill be now read a second time. The principal objective of the Bill is to provide for staggered elections of the two landholder members of the SouthEastern Drainage Board (a four person board) and also provide for the board to be consulted by the Minister prior to the appointment of future board chairmen. Under the present Act the landholder members are elected at the same time and concurrently serve three-year terms. Should both these members be defeated at an election, or both retire simultaneously and the two public servant members, who are appointed by the Governor, retire at or near the same time, the board would obviously lack experienced personnel.

The board desires to overcome this problem by providing in the Act for one landholder member to be elected at two year intervals, and each to hold office for four years. This would ensure continuity of experience and minimise the disruptive effect changes in membership have on boards comprised of such a small number. Under the existing legislation the selection of the board chairman is the prerogative of the Minister and there is no requirement to consult the board on this matter or to seek its recommendation. However, it is considered that such a procedure should be adopted before future chairmen are appointed by the Governor. I seek leave to have the formal part of the second reading explanation inserted in Hansard without my reading it.

The SPEAKER: Is leave granted?

Mr Lewis: No.

The SPEAKER: Leave is not granted.

The Hon. J.W. SLATER: The provisions of the Bill are as follows— Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: I have to ask the Minister whether or not he has finished his second reading explanation. I will try to recapitulate what has just happened. The Minister appeared to have partly read a second reading explanation and then sought leave to have the formal part of that explanation inserted in Hansard without his reading it. I asked whether leave was granted to incorporate that formal material and an honourable member refused leave by calling ‘No’. In those circumstances, I ask the Minister to complete his speech; if he has already completed it, that is all that will be in Hansard.

The Hon. J.W. SLATER: I wish to proceed with the remainder of the second reading explanation.

The SPEAKER: Very well.

The Hon. J.W. SLATER: Clause 1 of the Bill is formal. Clause 2 provides that clause 4 of the Act is to come into operation after the completion of the next board election. This means that the current landholder members will serve their present three-year term, and that thereafter elections will be held at two-year intervals. Clause 3 provides that landholder members of the board will be elected for four year terms of office. One of the members elected at the next election is to hold office for only two years, thus providing for staggered retirements. Clause 4 provides for elections to be held every two years. Other consequential amendments are effected. This clause will come into operation after the next election is held under the Act. Clause 5 provides that the Governor shall not at any time appoint a Chairman of the board unless the Minister has first consulted with the board and considered any recommendation the board may wish to make.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD secured the adjournment of the debate.