**UNDERGROUND WATERS PRESERVATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL 1973**

**House of Assembly, 12 September 1973, pages 725-6**

Second reading

**The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN (Minister of Works**) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Underground Waters Preservation Act, 1969-1970. Read a first time.

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

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

It makes several formal amendments to the principal Act, the Underground Waters Preservation Act, 1969-1970. The purpose of these amendments is to give effect to a decision to transfer substantially the administration of the principal Act from the Mines Department to the Engineering and Water Supply Department. When this transfer is effected the main areas of the principal Act that will still come within the jurisdiction of the Mines Department will be those connected with technical aspects of well sinking.

This transfer of responsibility is in keeping with the overall plan of, eventually, placing responsibility for the preservation and development of all water resources in this State in the hands of a single authority. It is hardly necessary for me to remind honourable members that the economic future of this State is, to a considerable extent, bound up with the manner in which our water resources are developed and husbanded, and the Government is mindful of the steps that must be taken to achieve proper conservation and protection of the water supplies.

Clauses 1 and 2 are formal. Clause 3 amends the interpretation section of the principal Act. This section contains a reference to the Director of Mines, and the amendments will provide that a reference in the Act to the Director can be read as a reference to the appropriate officer of the Mines Department or the Engineering and Water Supply Department, as the case requires. Clause 4 similarly amends section 44 of the principal Act, removing the specific reference to the Mines Department and substituting therefore a reference to “a department of the Public Service of the State that is concerned in the administration of this Act”. This will cover both the departments concerned in that administration.

Clause 5 amends section 50 of the principal Act by deleting a specific reference to the Minister of Mines. Clause 6 amends section 57 of the principal Act by providing that an authorized person, as defined, can also provide a certificate as to certain matters that may be admitted as evidence. Clause 7, by enacting a new section 57a in the principal Act, provides a power for the Minister to delegate his powers and functions under the Act, except this power of delegation. Such a delegation, it is considered, will make for better and more convenient administration of the principal Act.

Mr. COUMBE secured the adjournment of the debate.