

TO THE EDITOR

THE PROPOSED FIFTH SCHEDULE

Sir,—Following the request of the Committee of Management for suggestions for “modifying” the proposed Fifth Schedule to the Animals and Birds Protection Act which was presented by myself at the March meeting of the Association, an impaired version of the original motions has been sent to certain members for their approval. Of those singled from the membership by its sponsors twenty-two have signed the circular they received; others rejected it. The corrupted version, “the avicultural proposal,” which is of unknown authorship, ⁽¹⁾ makes only small but important deletions and alterations. Some who have given it their support may have been led to believe that it is the desired compromise.

The present Act affords a certain amount of protection to all species not listed in the Fourth Schedule; with rare forms further safeguards are necessary. The avicultural proposal, in the form submitted, opposes any real changes in the Act. Of the sixteen or more species deleted in the avicultural proposal, many are in demand in aviaries. ⁽²⁾

(1) At the August meeting it was stated, in answer to questions put to the chair, that this proposition was the outcome of a conference of members (belonging to that faction with a nucleus of aviculturists) who had desired stronger representation on the Committee now working on the modified version. Dr. Lendon stated that he had “corrected” and made alterations to the circular before it was sent out.—Editor.

(2) For details of changes see Editorial.—Editor.

The deletion of the clause stipulating that applicants for a Special Permit must be recommended by a scientific institution would enable anybody, on any false excuse, to obtain a Permit to take Rare Animals and Birds, even though every attempt had been made to investigate his bona fides. To prevent this happening all applicants should be endorsed by the South Australian Museum or the biological departments of the University, C.S.I.R.O., etc.

Paragraphs (e) and (f) under my Motion A, which have been deleted or altered in the avicultural proposal, were designed to prohibit the overseas export of rare Australian birds and mammals; the impaired version would allow the trafficking in birds to continue unchecked.

Following the President's suggestion, the Committee of Management has tentatively agreed to use the avicultural proposal as the basis for a modified version of my original motions but it is difficult to see how this can be done without defeating the objectives of a Fifth Schedule as envisaged by the supporters of my original propositions.

Yours, etc.,

RICHARD SCHODDE.