

an unusual procedure, in company practice at any rate; that is, to elect a chairman at the commencement of each meeting. I was wondering whether there was any particular reason for that provision.

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I would refer Mr. Willesee to the top of page 34 because in this provision it states that the council shall consist of not less than three nor more than seven proprietors, and as far as one can see all the decisions must be unanimous. In a block of four units, and if the decisions must be unanimous, why cannot there be four in the company? Because with three making the decisions, with one person left out, three possibly could change their minds after four to six months; but one proprietor out of the four would find himself in the position of having no say in regard to the block of units. I think a small number like four would be sufficient.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Before you sit down, would you mind being specific on the point.

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: It says the council shall consist of not less than four and not more than seven. If we have a big block of 50 flats, such as in South Perth, the council appoints its representatives up to the number of seven; and that is quite acceptable because they are elected. However, it seems that when there are four, three are elected, and one has to sit out. I think it might be easier, in the case of small numbers, to alter the whole thing altogether.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: It is not less than three and not more than seven. Four could be on it.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: There could be elected three, four, five, six, or seven; but where it is not more than three, the council shall consist of all the trustees so that one man could not make up the minds of two.

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Leave it as it is and see how it works.

The Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I would point out to Dr. Hislop that where unanimous decisions are necessary, if the individual has a mortgage he does not get the vote; it is the mortgagor who has the vote. It will not be the individual unit owner who will vote where unanimous decisions are required unless he is free of debt. If he has a mortgage, he does not get a vote; it is the mortgagor who votes for him.

Schedule put and passed.

Title—

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I shall do my best to answer the questions which have been raised.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 10.38 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 18th October, 1966

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The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (7): ON NOTICE

MEAT

Lamb: Guaranteed Price, and Subsidy

1. Mr. MITCHELL asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is there a guaranteed price for export lamb in operation this season?
- (2) If so, what would be the price per pound of lamb at works in accordance with this guarantee?
- (3) Who receives the subsidy, if one is paid, to bring the price up to guaranteed level?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) Yes, but only for lamb sold to the United Kingdom.
- (2) Approximately 14.3c per lb. shipped from the 1st September up to the 30th November, and 12.8c from that date to the 28th Feb-

ruary after providing for killing charges.

- (3) The exporter.

PROBATE

Deceased Persons' Estates in Excess of \$40,000

2. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

- (1) During the year ended the 31st December, 1965, how many deceased persons left estates valued for probate in excess of \$40,000?
- (2) Of these, how many in total fall within the general classification of farmers, graziers, pastoralists, agriculturalists, orchardists, and allied designations, including where prefixed with such as "formerly," "retired," "widow of," etc.?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) 176.
- (2) 91.

GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS

Observatory Site: Personnel Employed, and Evacuation during Emergencies

3. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Premier:

Respecting the new Government offices on the old Observatory site:

- (1) How many persons are employed in the building?
- (2) Has an examination or tests been made into the matter of emergency evacuation of the premises?
- (3) If so, when and with what result?
- (4) What is the actual or estimated time which would be taken to clear the building completely of all personnel?
- (5) Is it a fact that some experts from outside the State have been called upon to advise regarding the danger, time factor, and/or other considerations involved in the event of necessity for hurried evacuation?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) 1,232.
- (2) Emergency evacuation procedures have been prepared and examined by Civil Defence and Emergency Services and the Western Australian Fire Brigades Board.
- (3) In September, when the procedures were found practical and able to deal with all emergencies.
- (4) Estimated time six minutes.
- (5) No. The procedures were investigated and formulated by the department.

RAILWAYS

Wagons: Receipts and Despatches at Country Sidings

4. Mr. GAYFER asked the Minister for Railways:

What number of railway wagons was received and despatched for the years ending the 30th June, 1965, and 1966 at the following sidings—

Gwambygine
Edwards Crossing
Kauring
Mackies Crossing
Youraling?

Mr. COURT replied:

Wagons loaded in and out were as follows:—

	1965		1966	
	In	Out	In	Out
Gwambygine	23 (1)	8 (5)	35 (2)	12 (6)
Edwards Crossing	42 (6)	6 (2)	48 (6)	16 (8)
Kauring	21	5	21	7 (3)
Mackies Crossing	46 (2)	8	25 (2)	2
Youraling	33	Nil	22	Nil

(The figures in parenthesis denote livestock which are included in the totals.)

VETERINARIANS

Number in Country Districts, and Government Subsidy

5. Mr. GAYFER asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) How many veterinarians have set up practice in country districts in Western Australia since the introduction of the scheme of Government guarantee of salary was introduced?

- (2) Where are these veterinarians stationed?

- (3) How much subsidy has been paid out by the Treasury for each year since the inception of this scheme?

- (4) Which shire councils are involved in this scheme?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) (a) Under the subsidy scheme—7.

- (b) Not under the subsidy scheme—3.

- (2) (a) Boyup Brook.
Bridgetown.
Katanning.
Narrogin.
Northam.
Dalwallinu.
Wyalkatchem.

- (b) Albany (2 practitioners).
Manjimup.

- (3) Year ended the 30th June, 1963—\$1,014.80.
Year ended the 30th June, 1964—\$1,771.00.
Year ended the 30th June, 1965—\$2,237.84.
Year ended the 30th June, 1966—\$1,640.97.

- (4) Upper Blackwood.
Bridgetown.
Katanning.
Narrogin.
Northam.
Dalwallinu.
Dowerin-Wyalkatchem.
Esperance—now advertising for a
veterinary practitioner.

MURESK AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

Suspension of Students

6. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister
for Agriculture:

- (1) Why was action taken against only 10 students at Muresk when a number of others were also involved in the festivities?
- (2) Is he aware—
 - (a) such festivities have been indulged in for a number of years;
 - (b) when the alleged offence took place the principal was not present at the college;
 - (c) one of the students was not involved but was nevertheless included in the group disciplined;
 - (d) one student who had not been included in the original group volunteered to be associated with those charged?
- (3) In view of the high cost to parents of maintaining students at Muresk, does he not consider the punishment meted out a very severe financial burden on the parents concerned?
- (4) Under such circumstances and in view of the standing of many of these parents in the community, would not a more just act have been to have called all parties into conference on this matter?
- (5) Was the punishment decided by a meeting of the staff under the deputy principal in the absence of the principal?
- (6) Is he aware that a senior staff member has for a number of years failed to set a temperate example to students attending Muresk?
- (7) Was the apprehending master a previous student of Muresk; if so, how long ago?
- (8) If the offence was considered so heinous, why are the students to be readmitted next year?
- (9) Has there previously been a similar kind of punishment imposed?
- (10) Had any of the students concerned been previously disciplined by college authorities; if so, how many?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) No other students are known to be involved in the incident.
- (2) (a) No.
(b) Yes.
(c) No. All the students suspended admitted participation in the incident to the principal.
- (d) No.
- (3) No.
- (4) No.
- (5) No.
- (6) No.
- (7) Yes; 1954-55.
- (8) Although the offence is serious, the punishment is considered adequate and it is not desired to deprive the students of an opportunity to obtain the diploma.
- (9) No. In some cases expulsion has been imposed for serious breaches of the rules.
- (10) All the students concerned have previously been disciplined.

FEDERAL BASIC WAGE

Government Employees: Application

7. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Labour:

- (1) How many Government employees work under awards or agreements based on the Federal basic wage?
- (2) When was the Federal basic wage applied to the awards or agreements concerned?
- (3) What was the reason for the adoption of the Federal basic wage in each instance?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) 13,540.
- (2) Government departments and instrumentalities have been bound by a number of Federal awards for varying periods. For example, waterfront awards covering all States have been in force for up to 50 years. Maritime awards have included the Western Australian Government as a respondent for periods up to 30 years. Several Federal railway awards have included Western Australia for the past 10 years.
For public servants from the 7th January, 1966. A number of Government boards and agencies which adopt public service rates of pay, were placed on the Federal basic wage from the same date. A railway award was similarly amended this month.
- (3) Where employees are bound by a Federal award, the Federal basic wage automatically applies. The Civil Service Association requested that the basis of adjustment of

clerical division salaries be related to the average margin paid at age 26 level in the clerical automatic ranges of New South Wales and Victoria. The Public Service Commissioner made acceptance of this basis at that level conditional upon acceptance of the average margins over a comparable basic wage; viz. Federal, and agreement was reached accordingly.

By agreement, the Federal basic wage was subsequently adopted for other divisions of the service.

QUESTIONS (3): WITHOUT NOTICE

MIDLAND ABATTOIR

Installation of Meat Hall

1. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is he aware of a proposal to install a meat hall at Midland Abattoir and require all country-killed meat to pass through same and be subject to a fee?
- (2) If "Yes," does he not agree that such a measure would represent a direct tax imposition on country abattoirs?
- (3) As it is the Government's policy to assist decentralised industry, will he undertake to have the matter investigated with a view to preventing such action and thus assist country industry?

Mr. NALDER replied:

I wish to thank the honourable member for giving me some prior notice of this question. The answer is as follows:—

- (1) No.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) If and when the Midland Abattoir Board submits a proposal to the Government, that proposal will be considered. That is all I can say with reference to the situation at the present time.

WYNDHAM MEAT WORKS

Visit by Mr. E. S. Clementson

2. Mr. RHATIGAN asked the Minister for the North-West:

- (1) In view of the fact that last week Mr. E. S. Clementson and party visited and inspected the Wyndham Meat Works, is the Government contemplating either selling or leasing those works to Mr. Clementson and/or his company?
- (2) If the answer is "Yes," can the Minister say whether any further credit will be made available by the Government to this Sydney builder?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) If Mr. Clementson visited Wyndham, I suppose it is only logical that he would be interested in seeing the meat works. I can assure the member for Kimberley that Mr. Clementson visited the works of his own volition, and the visit had nothing to do with the Government whatsoever.
- (2) There is no change in the situation of which I advised the honourable member some weeks ago regarding the Wyndham Meat Works.

MAIL TO THE ARMED FORCES IN VIETNAM

Unsatisfactory Delivery

3. Mr. BRAND (Premier): On the 4th October, the following question without notice was asked by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition:—

In view of the very unsatisfactory delivery of mail to and from members of the forces in Vietnam, will he have urgent consideration given to the problem with a view to making suggestions to the Army through the appropriate channels for the more expeditious handling of mail matter?

Following my undertaking to approach the Federal Minister for the Army, I have now received a reply and I request that it be tabled.

The reply was tabled.

BILLS (9): ASSENT

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills:—

1. Leslie Solar Salt Industry Agreement Bill.
2. Industrial Lands (Kwinana) Railway Bill.
3. Agricultural Products Act Amendment Bill.
4. Fruit Cases Act Amendment Bill.
5. Legal Practitioners Act Amendment Bill.
6. Cemeteries Act Amendment Bill.
7. Evidence Act Amendment Bill.
8. Debt Collectors Licensing Act Amendment Bill.
9. Plant Diseases Act Amendment Bill.

PENSIONERS (RATES EXEMPTION) BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Brand (Premier), and read a first time.

BARRACKS ARCHWAY

Removal: Motion

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Premier) [4.45 p.m.]: I move—

That in the opinion of this House, the Barracks Archway should be

removed so that Parliament House and its surroundings can become the focal point of the western end of St. George's Terrace.

In moving this motion, Mr. Speaker, I realise that I do so in an atmosphere of great interest to the community in this State, and I also realise that it is a matter of controversy. The motion is brought to this House as a result of my undertaking that this Parliament would be given a final opportunity to debate the issue.

It has been decided that there shall be a free vote as far as the Government side is concerned, and no doubt the position is the same so far as the Opposition is concerned. In those circumstances every one who is at all interested is quite free to vote according to his conscience and according to his opinion on this very vexed and controversial matter.

I would like to refer members to the early history of Parliament House. Having made an examination of the papers which are available, it is quite clear that all through the period that Parliament House has stood on this site—and even prior to the decision to build it here—it has been envisaged that the Barracks, as we have known them, would disappear and give way to the general concept of the Parliament House building at the end of St. George's Terrace. That decision has been in the minds of town planners, and others associated with them in similar works, right down through the history of the State.

It is clear that even in those days—September, 1901—it was necessary to set up a committee to resolve the various points of view which were expressed by the members of Parliament and the general public. It is also clear that it was decided the Barracks should not be pulled down immediately but that they should be left temporarily until such time as Parliament House was completed, and the people could then decide what should be the future of the Barracks.

As you are aware, Mr. Speaker, the plan which was accepted by this House, and which was prepared by Professor Stephenson and Mr. Hepburn—who was the Town Planner at the time in Western Australia—set out a system of roadworks which provided for a sunken freeway system which would pass through the area where the Barracks stood. Right throughout the whole period of the preparation of the plan, it was clear that in the event of the freeway system going through the area occupied by the Barracks buildings, the buildings would have to go—at least, all of that part which in any way intruded into the area proposed for the freeway. In the case which Professor Stephenson prepared, he clearly laid it down that this would be so. On page 175 of the report, Professor Stephenson said—

The eventual removal of the Barracks, and the temporary State Gov-

ernment buildings adjacent to them, should be rendered possible by the development of the Observatory site as the headquarters for all Government Departments. This would offer an adequate traffic solution, and would provide a clear vista to Parliament House along the length of St. George's Terrace. The most important street in the State demands an important terminal treatment. The position of Parliament House suggests that such treatment was in the minds of those who selected the magnificent site which is unsurpassed in Australia.

On page 185 it was further stated as follows:—

For vital traffic needs and for general improvement of the City, the Old Barracks, an inadequate and obsolete office building, together with the temporary buildings adjacent to it, should be displaced. Although there may be a sentimental attachment to the Old Barracks, which for reasons long since passed was placed in a commanding position, it is not a building of distinction or architectural merit.

The facts are that it took so long to complete the building of Parliament House—it was commenced in 1901—that the Barracks grew to be a building of some age and, indeed, because of that fact a number of people took a sentimental and traditional interest in it. I think it is fair to say, however, that in all the discussions that have taken place it was accepted that the Barracks would have to go. The Government itself finally made a decision to demolish the archway, but it was I who prevailed upon the Government to preserve it in order to see for ourselves just what it would look like and whether it would fit into the general picture and conception proposed by the town planners.

It is a matter of history as to what has happened since then. Maybe I should have been more precise in saying that the Government would review the situation when the Barracks Archway stood on its own, and would then make a further decision. However, as the situation developed I found myself in the position of being asked how we were going to test public opinion, and it became clear to me that there was no satisfactory way of doing this other than by taking a poll of some description. This was done, but in the meantime other interests held polls.

In my opinion, however, these polls did not decide anything clearly. I think it is fair to say that a great deal of concern has been expressed by people because of what they believed to be the attitude in respect of the outcome of the poll. I was asked by the Press whether I would be bound by such a poll, but I think it should be clear to everyone that it would be

difficult for me, as Leader of the Government, or for any other leader, to be bound by an opinion poll or polls that people are prepared to take. We are elected to make the decisions that are necessary. However, I did say I would test public opinion on this issue and that has been done.

It is clear from the poll we held that the womenfolk of the State are very interested in this question. Naturally they are interested in preserving the archway because of its historical and sentimental value. On the other hand the opinion of menfolk on this question seems to be divided. I think 43 per cent. of the menfolk questioned were in favour of the archway remaining while 41 per cent. were against it, which, of course, makes my opinion, and the opinion of other Ministers, and indeed those males who favour pulling it down, not so strange after all. In an open-minded sort of way, one must put aside the emphasis that is placed on sentimentality and tradition and come down on the side of those who favour the argument put forward by the town planners and those who are employed to advise on this matter.

In making its decision, I point out that the Government is supported by the opinions of the regional town planners; and I am sure no-one could say that Professor Stephenson is one who does not have a full regard for the value of historical buildings. I would think it is fair to say that Professor Stephenson is one who has a great regard for old buildings, because he sees them as monuments and memorials to history; and he would not be one who would make a decision to pull down the Barracks or the archway unless he had thoroughly studied the position and felt that that was the right course to take. He has placed emphasis on the fact that we have a golden opportunity to develop this part of our city and make it a great attraction in the future.

If we take the trouble to read the earlier reports concerning the planning of this area, we will see that the proposition then put forward was similar in outline to that which we have accepted in the plan of 1956. Certainly in the earlier plan there was provision for fountains and gardens where the Freeway is now to be built, and there was to be a terraced approach from St. George's Terrace to a very fine looking Parliament House. But as everyone knows, we could not possibly afford to build the sort of Parliament House that was originally envisaged, with its domes, spires, and so on. The State simply could not afford it, and at the time we completed Parliament House there was insufficient money to even think of a building of that type.

I also point out that the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority came right down on the side of the Government and said that the archway should be removed in order that we might proceed with the original plan. That authority set out the

position very clearly, and the publicity in connection with the matter reads as follows—

Perth's top planning body—the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority—has decided to recommend to the Government that the archway be removed.

The authority's decision and the arguments supporting it will go to Town Planning Minister Logan tomorrow.

He is expected to place the report before State Cabinet next week.

Premier Brand said today that he had not received a report on any decision by the authority on the archway.

MRPA is Perth's most influential and broadly representative planning authority.

It consists of 11 members including the Commissioner of Main Roads, the Chief Engineer of the Metropolitan Water Supply Board, the Surveyor-General and the Town Planning Commissioner.

Other members include representatives of the Chamber of Manufactures, the Perth City Council and other local government authorities.

Water Board chairman M. E. Hamer is chairman of the authority.

The authority clearly stated in its report that the archway should go; and, more recently, Mr. Finn, of the Chapter of Architects indicated publicly that his organisation felt the archway should be removed in order that we might continue with the original plan. Therefore, surely the Government cannot be criticised for accepting the advice of such professional organisations as those to which I have just referred—and not forgetting that the original proposals of Professor Stephenson included a recommendation that the archway should be removed.

I would point out, too, that the Government, in the event of a decision being made to remove the archway to some other location, or a more appropriate site in order that it might be preserved as a historical monument, offered to pay half the total cost involved, which was estimated to be \$60,000. But nothing was done about raising the other half of the money required to move the archway. In fact, no effort was made to have the public subscribe, and therefore I can only conclude that the public were not really interested in moving the archway from its present site.

I want to make it clear that in this vote, which will be taken as a free vote, we would like to see a decisive decision made by Parliament. It is the intention that the motion should also be debated in the Council, so that both Houses will be given the opportunity to express an opinion. But, in the event of the opinion not being decisive, I wish to advise that the Govern-

ment will feel that Parliament is not able to make a decision either, and that we should therefore leave the archway where it is.

Mr. Hawke: What would the Premier regard as being a decisive decision in this House?

Mr. BRAND: We will see the outcome. I am not evading the point, but I feel if the vote is reasonably balanced we should concede the fact.

Mr. Tonkin: Is this another two-way bet?

Mr. BRAND: No. We are not going to press on with the demolition if there is an indication in this House, or in both Houses, that people cannot make up their minds, and if the voting is fairly evenly balanced.

In the event of the decision being made to leave the archway where it is, I for one will feel we have lost an opportunity to develop the west end of St. George's Terrace into something that can be really quite attractive.

I am surprised at the number of people who have placed great emphasis on the status and standing of Parliament, but who now want to set it aside as a secondary consideration; because I believe that its place at the head of the Terrace, as envisaged by the original planners, is where it should be. There should be no impediment such as would be provided by the archway if it remains.

Many experts say that the whole area can be beautified, improved, and made so attractive as to have the present structure blend in with the background of Parliament House. Those who watched the television show some weeks ago on Channel 7 will recall that Mr. Norton, who is in charge of our Art Gallery, clearly showed from his drawings why he felt the archway should go. This is how I feel, and it is how the Government feels on this matter.

It would have been a much easier way out for the Government in the first place to say that it would leave the archway where it is. We believe it is our responsibility to make a sincere decision. We believe this as strongly as the people who are here today, and as those who have written to me on many occasions, believe their point of view to be right. They sincerely believe that the archway should remain where it is. This is their genuine opinion. But some of them will not concede the point that we, too, have a genuine and sincere opinion that the archway ought to be removed.

People have referred to the Government and to myself as being arrogant; but once again it is fair to say that it was simply because we were opposed to their views. We all know that people become stirred up in controversies such as this, and we respect their opinions and their attitude. Having said that, however, I

feel it is the Government's duty to decide that the archway should go after having left it where it is and after having seen it standing there for some time.

It must be appreciated that the Government spent some thousands of dollars to underpin the archway so that it could stand in its present position and give people an opportunity to see how isolated it is after the removal of the wings of the Barracks.

All in all, I believe the Government's attitude has been fair and reasonable. The outcome of the polls were not decisive enough for us to bypass Parliament. Whenever there has been a real controversy about a particular issue—whether it has been about Kings Park or the river—there has always been a clamour for Parliament to make a decision to legislate for its protection; and rightly so. But in this case, because it was sensed that Parliament may not agree to retain the archway, there has been no pressure for Parliament to have a say. So I move this motion just as clearly as the words will explain.

Mr. Cornell: Are you in a position to indicate at this stage what work will be done if the archway stays where it is?

Mr. BRAND: No; except to say that if Parliament is indecisive about the archway remaining, the Government—and in the final analysis the authorities responsible for the development of the Freeway—will have to spend money on the archway to make it look as attractive as possible. There are some town planners and others in authority who are running around saying what can be done to make the archway attractive. Clearly they do not have to find the money.

In any case the Government, Parliament itself, and all authorities associates with this area, would like the best possible to be done to make it attractive so that it will fit into the overall picture of Parliament House. I also want to say that I appreciate the few letters I have received from the people who have been kindly and decent about this matter, and who have urged us to stand firm on what we believe. It is some satisfaction for me to know that both the young and the old in the community are mindful of the situation that exists, particularly when it is necessary to have regard for the opinions of people who feel so strongly about the whole issue.

I also want to make it plain that in the event of Parliament accepting an amendment to this motion, which plans to defer any action on the archway for, say, one or two years, I for one would feel that it would be a decision to leave it where it is. It is quite clear that once the temporary buildings below Parliament House are removed the archway will not fit into the picture at all. It will stand as isolated as it does at present. I believe

that we have the scene before us, and it is for us to make a decision one way or the other.

In the event of Parliament deciding that the archway should go, it is the intention of the authorities, and of the Government, to proceed with its demolition immediately, because I think that would be the right thing to do.

I regret the controversy, and I regret the personalities and the issues that surround a question on which the Government made a decision—and it was a very difficult decision to make—because it believed that it should think of the future plan that was conceived by Sir John Forrest, as Premier, and others right from the earliest days of Parliament House.

MR. TONKIN (Melville—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [5.8 p.m.]: I do not think this question should have been brought here at all; nor do I think it should have been brought forward in this form. The motion poses two questions: One that the Barracks Archway should be removed; and there may be some who would be prepared to support that. But the other point is that it should be removed so that Parliament House and its surroundings can become the focal point of the western end of St. George's Terrace. There are a number of members who are not concerned about that aspect of the matter; they may have other ideas about the focal point of St. George's Terrace, but they cannot indicate their ideas if they support the motion in the way it is worded.

If this motion is supported it must be taken that those who vote for it agree both with the demolition of the archway and that Parliament House should become the focal point of the western end of St. George's Terrace; and this is creating the impression in the minds of the community that all that members are concerned with is that the view from Parliament should not be interrupted.

Mr. Brand: That is not so.

Mr. TONKIN: That is the impression abroad; and it does nothing to enhance the prestige of members of Parliament, because it is creating the impression in some minds that we are only concerned with Parliament House and how it will look. As it is worded, the motion involves such a decision, and people would be justified in coming to that conclusion.

Mr. Brand: If they want to decide any other issue let them do so.

Mr. TONKIN: The question as to whether the Barracks should remain or be demolished has been exercising the minds of the people of this State for several years. According to *The West Australian* of the 24th February, 1966, no less than 3,000 people, in 1963, signed a petition which was presented to the Government asking that the Barracks should remain.

On the 17th February, 1966, there appeared in *The West Australian* a statement headed, "Old Barracks Plea Fails." That plea consisted of a request to the Government that the Barracks should be allowed to remain for five years, in order that, in the meantime, the people could have an opportunity to determine whether they should have it demolished or not.

On that occasion the Premier said he would stand by his promise to leave the archway intact for a reasonable period. I would like members to dwell upon the next words used by the Premier, because they are most important in this controversy. The words are, "So the Government and the public could weigh its appearance against the modern facade of Parliament House." Here we have the words, "the Government and the public." There is no mention of Parliament at all; no thought that this would ultimately be referred to Parliament for a decision. It was to be left intact to enable the Government and the public to weigh its appearance and, no doubt, having weighed it, to come to a conclusion.

When he was asked if it was intended in any way to improve the archway, the Premier said "No," because he believed the public would be able to come to a decision on the condition in which the archway was to be left. That would confer no advantage, of course, on those who wished to retain the archway, because it is now seen in its worst possible condition.

So, left in that way, it could be calculated to influence people who were not too sure one way or another that it was desirable to leave the archway there, because it did not look too nice; but, despite this advantage, every time an attempt was made to ascertain public opinion, the vote was in favour of the retention of the archway. In the issue of *The West Australian* of the 17th March it was reported that radio station 6IX had held a kind of poll among its listeners, with the result that 2,688 votes were cast for the retention of the archway, and 59 for its demolition.

Mr. Craig: How did the radio station conduct this poll?

Mr. TONKIN: It obtained replies by telephone and by letter. Of the 2,000-odd telephone calls received, 96 per cent. favoured the retention of the archway. On the 22nd March, the Premier indicated that the Government was ready to consider rebuilding the archway; the Premier said that the Government was receptive to ideas. But he now complains that the public, or those interested, did not take up the suggestion, and assumed from that the public was not at all concerned about that aspect.

He knows full well that is not stating the position correctly. He knows that the builder who had the contract for demolishing the Barracks stated unequivocally that the archway would not stand removal;

that the condition of the bricks was such that it would not stand being removed. Upon that advice being received, those who were interested in this possible means of preserving the archway felt it was useless to proceed.

Mr. Brand: Our own Architectural Division gave the estimated cost and indicated it could be removed.

Mr. TONKIN: I have no doubt it did give the Premier the estimated cost, but I hope it is not the same Government department that gave the estimate of \$6,700,000 for building 600 feet of covered underway.

Mr. Brand: The same department of which you were Minister for three or six years.

Mr. Williams: Six years too long!

Mr. TONKIN: I now turn to the next definite statement made by the Government. In *The West Australian* of the 15th July of this year the Premier was reported to have said that the Government would leave it to the public to decide whether the archway stayed. Indeed, the first announcement was that the Government and the public could judge, but the later announcement, on the 15th July, was to the effect that the Government would leave it to the public to decide. Is bringing the matter before Parliament leaving it to the public to decide?

Mr. Bovell: What is your decision on this matter?

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister will hear that in good time, and in my time. When the Premier was questioned as to how it was expected to obtain public opinion on this matter he said—I would say quite truthfully—"I do not know."

Mr. Brand: That is true. I did not know the best method of going about it, and I said so.

Mr. TONKIN: He went further; he said this matter would be discussed by the Cabinet in the following week. Whether the Cabinet made a decision the next week I have no way of finding out.

Mr. Rushton: Would you have preferred that he should make no decision?

Mr. TONKIN: There was an indication, firstly—it could not be taken as anything else but a straightout assurance—that the public would decide the matter. He said it would be left to the public to decide whether the archway stayed or whether it was demolished, and that the method of ascertaining the public's opinion was to be considered by the Cabinet in the following week. It was then that the Premier said, "The public ought to be able to make a judgment on the archway as it now stands." He said the public ought to make a judgment—not Parliament, and not the Government. So there is further emphasis upon the assurance that this was a matter to be decided by the public.

This afternoon, the Premier said the Government was not to be blamed for

accepting the advice of authoritative persons and bodies who were advising the Government that the archway should be demolished. If that is the true situation, then the Government had no right to spend public money in underpinning the archway; that is, if the Government intended to pull it down in any case. This was nothing more than a gesture, and it was fooling the public.

Mr. Brand: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. Court: He was honouring a promise.

Mr. TONKIN: He was fooling the public, if the Government intended to accept authoritative advice from persons and bodies, especially after having indicated that the public would decide the matter.

Mr. Bovell: Who are you trying to fool now?

Mr. TONKIN: If it was not intended that the public should decide the matter, then not a penny should have been spent on underpinning the archway.

Mr. Brand: It would not have stood up.

Mr. TONKIN: If it was intended genuinely that the decision of the public would be the deciding factor, then the decision of the public ascertained in the best possible manner by the Government should be the decision. It was a clear-cut decision, and I would be quite happy if our party got such a decision at the next election.

Mr. Hawke: We will get better than that.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You have high hopes.

Mr. TONKIN: We should note the difference between the way the Government is treating this question and how it treated the question of whether the Freeway should be constructed past Parliament House in cutting or in tunnel. Because of the indications given to me by members on the Government side of the House, it is my opinion that if a free vote had been allowed on the motion which I moved it would have been carried. But the Government made it a party matter.

Mr. Brand: There was no suggestion to the contrary.

Mr. TONKIN: So the members on the Government side of the House were not free to vote on that question; in other words, the Government decided that issue.

Mr. Bickerton: The Minister for Works gave the figures.

Mr. TONKIN: But on this issue the Government presents the matter to Parliament and is prepared to allow a free vote to be taken. Why the different treatment on this occasion?

Mr. Brand: Because it is a public controversy and a matter of public interest.

Mr. TONKIN: So in the view of the Premier, the surroundings of Parliament House and the matter of Parliament House being the focal point did not come into

the first question. We can disregard that aspect so far as the tunnel and the Freeway are concerned, and we must have a Government party decision on it. But in respect of the matter now before us, because it is difficult for the Government to decide—and the Government should have decided it—it now brings the matter to Parliament on another two-way bet. It is a case of, "Heads I win, tails you lose."

Mr. Bovell: You cannot get the Totaliser Agency Board out of your mind.

Mr. TONKIN: That is what the Government's proposition amounts to, because it has been indicated this afternoon that the Government has to be satisfied, irrespective of the vote which is cast, that it is a clear-cut decision. Of course if the vote goes the way the Government wants it to go, it will be accepted all right; but if it does not, the Government will want to have another look at the matter.

That is what has been happening all along the line, with the Government or the Premier hoping that in one of these appeals to the people the right decision will turn up. When *The West Australian* made the first serious attempt to gauge public opinion, a coupon was printed in one of the issues for the public to fill in. I agree that the response was disappointing, because this was a subject on which an attempt was being made to obtain a result which would be conclusive.

Nevertheless, 11,035 coupons were received by that newspaper, of which 9,681 were for the retention of the archway and 1,354 were against it; or, reduced to small figures, it was a proportion of 7.15 to 1—a little more than 7 to 1 in favour of the retention of the archway. That was the result of the first serious attempt to ascertain or to gauge public opinion. I suppose it could not be asserted what the public vote was, but that survey gave an idea of the public viewpoint.

Mr. Brand: What is the circulation of *The West Australian*?

Mr. Bovell: In excess of 176,000 a day.

Mr. TONKIN: I could not say. The response was disappointing, but the Premier would not be talking about the circulation of that newspaper if the vote had been the other way.

Mr. Brand: Of course he would.

Mr. Elliott: Neither would the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. TONKIN: Then one television station subsequently decided to ascertain the opinion of the public, and it paid for the conduct of a Gallup poll. I do not pretend to know whether Gallup polls give a fair indication of what is likely to happen, but I did read where it was asserted that they are correct within 2 per cent. of the result that would be obtained; and that assertion did not come from the Opposition side of the House. Apparently the Government felt that a Gallup poll was one way

in which public opinion could be ascertained, because it was prepared to spend money to have one conducted.

I now turn to the first poll—the one conducted by the television station. Although I did not have the opportunity of watching the television feature that particular evening—and from what I have heard I regret that very much—I believe that when the result of the poll was conveyed to the Premier he showed his chagrin in no uncertain way.

Mr. Dunn: It's a pity you did not see the programme.

Mr. TONKIN: It was a disappointment to me, and I have no doubt that if the result had been the other way the Premier would have been wreathed in smiles and would have applauded the result.

Mr. Brand: Your imagination is running wild.

Mr. TONKIN: He would have said it was an indication that the public wanted the archway to be demolished—even on the result of the interviews with a limited number of people. The next public opinion poll was that conducted for the Government itself, for which it paid. I understand the survey was made by an organisation which is very skilled in this kind of sampling of public opinion. The Premier says all that this poll showed was that the public was divided. Let us examine the result, which is as follows:—

	Per Cent.
Leave the arch where it is	49.2
Demolish the arch	34

On the clear-cut question as to whether the archway was to be left or knocked down, 49.2 per cent. said to leave it there, and 34 per cent. said to knock it down. That to me is a fairly wide margin. That does not indicate such a close division of opinion that one is unable to ascertain what is really desired.

The other percentages somewhat alter the situation. The percentage of those who wanted the archway removed to another site at public expense was 4.9. Obviously they did not want it demolished and they thought that the public generally should carry the expense of preserving it. Therefore, if any judgment at all is to be made on that 4.9 per cent., I say the people who comprise that group have indicated that they do not want the archway demolished.

Mr. Brand: They want it removed, even at that cost.

Mr. TONKIN: Maybe; but if they had been told at the time that the contractor who has been doing the demolishing was of the opinion that the bricks in the archway would not stand removal, it is quite a probability that they would have voted for the retention of the archway in its present position. It is not conclusive, but it is a logical conclusion.

Mr. Brand: Quite an illogical conclusion. They were told it would cost \$60,000.

Mr. TONKIN: Surely the Premier is not going to claim that the people who have supported the removal of the archway to another site at Government expense were really in favour of the demolition of the archway.

Mr. Brand: They were in favour of shifting the archway.

Mr. TONKIN: Were they in favour of the demolition?

Mr. Brand: Obviously.

Mr. TONKIN: I am quite prepared to leave the matter out of calculations altogether. So we get back then, if we take that approximately 5 per cent. off our 100 per cent., to 95 per cent. Of that 95 per cent., 49.2 per cent. favoured the retention of the archway in its present position.

Mr. Hawke: It would be a bigger percentage of 95 per cent.

Mr. TONKIN: As the Government had stated unequivocally that it intended to leave this for the public to decide, and having regard for the fact that we have been informed that these public opinion polls are within 2 per cent. of being reliable, the public has decided; and the Government had a right to abide by the decision. To do anything else is a breach of faith.

This building was, according to my reading, erected in 1863. Despite the Premier's disparaging remarks about it not being of any architectural prominence—

Mr. Brand: I did not say that. A lot of the professional people have said that.

Mr. TONKIN: —it is a very good example of Gothic architecture of the middle nineteenth century, which is a period of revival of this type of architecture, and, as such, is of special interest to quite a lot of people in the community. We do not all think the same way on any question, thank goodness. Some people will spend \$400 to buy a penny of a certain vintage. Such persons are few, but they do exist, and they do this for a special reason.

Other people will pay large sums for pieces of furniture which are falling to pieces. They do this because the pieces of furniture are of ancient vintage. They are of a certain era, and anyone knows that antique furniture will bring much more than the most modern stuff which might be 10 times as good. I have seen some of the most fragile furniture—furniture on which a person could scarcely sit—bring large sums of money at auctions because certain people desired to buy it. It is a good thing we are not all cast in the same mould.

Mr. Court: Hear, hear!

Mr. TONKIN: Of course we can all say that with feeling, according to our point of view.

Mr. Hawke: Some members on the Government side were not moulded at all.

Mr. W. Hegney: Some are mouldy.

Mr. TONKIN: In the community is a very large section which sets some store by the maintenance of these historical buildings which provide a link with the past—and the older the buildings, the greater the appeal. No doubt feelings of that kind are actuating quite a lot of sincere people who have become very concerned about the situation. No wonder they have told the Premier they regard the Government as being arrogant. I have been saying that for months.

Mr. Brand: For years.

Mr. TONKIN: Let me remind the Premier that on the question of reclamation of the river, the Government's decision was not to bring it to Parliament because Parliament might deny the Government the right to proceed.

Mr. Brand: It went to Parliament.

Mr. TONKIN: The decision of the Government at the time was to bypass Parliament.

Mr. Brand: It went to Parliament.

Mr. TONKIN: It has been to Parliament since, because of public pressure and opinion.

Mr. Brand: The biggest area of reclamation was carried out by you, and it did not come to Parliament. The only worth-while reclamation that was done did not come to Parliament under your Ministry.

Mr. TONKIN: I would not stop the Premier getting that in if it does him any good.

Mr. Brand: It does. It is a good, hard, cold fact.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. TONKIN: The people have good reason for saying that the Government is arrogant and overbearing because it has taken advantage of opportunities to bypass Parliament when it very well might have referred matters to Parliament; and that was one of them. Let us recall what was in the minute of the Minister for Works—"If this is referred to Parliament, Parliament might deny the Government the right to proceed." Because of that risk, it was not referred to Parliament; but this matter has been, because the Government is on a spot with it and wants to be relieved of the obligation of making the decision.

If we forget for the time being the various arguments which might be advanced as to whether or not it is desirable that the archway should stand in its present position, we cannot forget the fact that it was the Government itself which stated that the public would be allowed to decide, and it was the Government which spent money in order to allow the archway to stand so that the public would have

an opportunity of making up its mind about it. Having done that, the Government has an obligation to accept that opinion.

The Government had open to it any method it desired to implement in order to ascertain public opinion; and if it had not a clue as to how it could obtain public opinion, the Government had no right to say in the first place that the public would be allowed to determine the matter. If the Government made that statement intending all along to demolish the archway, then there was no sincerity behind it at all, and it was a mere gesture to overcome a difficult situation which developed at the time.

In all the circumstances I say that this motion should be opposed; and now I hope I have allayed the anxiety of the Minister for Lands.

Mr. Bovell: Party politics on your part.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Crommelin.

BILLS (2): RETURNED

1. Public Works Act Amendment Bill.
Bill returned from the Council with an amendment.
2. Fisheries Act Amendment Bill.
Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

FLUORIDATION OF PUBLIC WATER SUPPLIES BILL

In Committee

Resumed from the 13th October. The Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair; Mr. Ross Hutchinson (Minister for Works) in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported after clause 12 had been agreed to.

Clause 13 put and passed.

Clause 14: Certificate to be evidence—

Mr. TONKIN: I desired to speak on the clause on which progress was reported.

Mr. Bovell: That clause has been put and passed and we are now on clause 14.

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister knows I rose to discuss this question. Progress was reported at the time on the clause.

Mr. Bovell: Why didn't you get to your feet?

Mr. TONKIN: One cannot deal with a clause until the number of the Bill is mentioned by the Chairman and the clause is called.

Mr. Bovell: The Chairman called, "Order!" and read the clause, and you sat in your seat.

Mr. TONKIN: If the Chairman wants to insist, I will accept that situation; but I will say what I want to say somewhere else.

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot go back to clause 13. We are on clause 14.

Mr. TONKIN: Clause 14 refers to a certificate that purports to be signed by the Minister. Should not definite proof be required that the certificate has been signed by the Minister? Why should not the signature have to be proved? Why should it not have to be demonstrated that it is an authentic certificate? This implies that anyone can come along with a certificate which has the Minister's name on it, and can say that this certificate was given by the Minister.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: It does not imply that at all, and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition knows it does not.

Mr. TONKIN: Will the Minister explain what it does imply?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: It is a matter of great regret as far as I am concerned that the honourable member did not get to his feet on the clause on which he wished to speak.

Mr. Tonkin: I thought it might be.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: This is of great regret to me, but it is not my fault nor is it the fault of the Chairman.

Mr. Jamieson: The Minister can recommit.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Let me finish. If members must interject, interject after a period in order that I can complete what I am saying.

Mr. Jamieson: If the Minister is so unhappy about it, he can recommit the clause.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: As I have said, this is no one's fault other than that of the honourable member. We are talking on clause 14 where a certificate is evidence. This is a time-honoured way by which certificates are given credence and belief. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition, himself, introduced this type of legislation on many occasion as, indeed, have all those members on the other side of the Chamber who have been Ministers in the past. There is nothing strange or exotic about this kind of action.

Mr. Hawke: There is certainly nothing exotic about it.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 15: Proof of certificate of analyst—

Mr. TONKIN: Here is the same thing again, but this time it is in a worse form. The analysis of the water is a most important matter because it is considered there is a very narrow margin of safety. According to this clause it does not have to be proved who the analyst is, whether he is properly registered, or whether he has carried out his analysis in the proper way. Nothing has to be proved at all; but a certificate may be produced and everything in it has to be accepted.

It has to be accepted that the man who issues the certificate is, indeed, an analyst, and is the analyst whose signature appears. It has to be accepted that the result shown in the certificate is the result of his

analysis. As I have said, nothing has to be proved at all; all of this has to be accepted by this provision. Surely there should be some sort of protection. The water supply authority ought to be put to the burden of some proof in the matter, but none whatever is required in connection with this.

Surely, at some stage or other some authentication is required and desirable; and it should not be that all that has to be done is to make an assertion that this is the certificate given by the analyst; that he carried out his examination or analysis properly, and that this is the result. Yet, these points I have mentioned have to be accepted without any argument at all. Surely that is taking it a bit too far. The people are entitled to more protection than is provided.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: This is the same sort of principle as the one on which the Deputy Leader of the Opposition spoke in the previous clause. The simple fact of the matter is that the system is built up whereby an analyst will determine the level of minerals in the water, and the level of fluoride in the water in order to ascertain that it is within reasonable proportions. The clause, in providing that his signature purports to be sufficient evidence, exemplifies a method which has been utilised in legislation from time immemorial in this House.

Mr. Hawke: Immemorial?

Clause put and passed.

Clause 16 put and passed.

New clause 16:

Mr. TONKIN: Without and reflection on you, Mr. Chairman, I say that as you have called on me in connection with this new clause, I expected I would have been given the opportunity to deal with clause 13 today. I do not blame the Chair, because the remedy was in my own hands and, possibly, it was my fault. I was relying upon what is usual practice and that the Chair would look to the member who was dealing with the matter when progress was reported. However, I move an amendment—

Page 12—Insert after clause 15 the following new clause to stand as clause 16:—

Damages for loss caused by fluoridation to be recoverable.

16. Damages for loss, illness or injury suffered by any person as a result of the addition of fluorine to a public water supply shall be recoverable by action from the Crown in right of the State.

I do this because I do not accept what the Government and its supporters say on this matter and, that is, the safety of fluoridation has been absolutely proved. I have very good reason for not accepting what they say, because I can refer to

other questions, in connection with the safety of certain things, on which medical men have violently disagreed.

Recently we had in this State Sir Derrick Dunlop, and he spoke about fluoridation and the risk of side effects. He said there was no risk from fluoridation at all, and I quote from *The West Australian* of the 14th of this month—

The argument against fluoridation, though ludicrous political nonsense, was doing much harm, Sir Derrick Dunlop said in Perth yesterday.

The article then goes on to say who Sir Derrick is, and it continues—

"This is one topic on which I have strong views," he said. "I am 100 per cent. for fluoridation."

Fluoride was a natural substance appearing in water to a fairly high extent, he said.

Fluoridation meant simply bringing the fluoride content to a level in which it occurred naturally in water in many places.

Fluoride was a poison when given in enormous quantities, but so were many other substances which were accepted as not dangerous when taken in reasonable quantities.

There was no danger in adding fluoride to water to bring it up to a reasonable level—one part in a million.

Sir Derrick is quite definite on the fact that there is no possibility on any danger. Immediately alongside this article, Sir Derrick had something to say about the contraceptive pill, and I quote—

Close Watch on the Pill

The contraceptive pill was one of the most valuable drugs ever introduced, Sir Derrick Dunlop said yesterday.

So far there was no reason to think that taking of the pill was dangerous.

"As far as we know it is a safe drug," he said.

A close watch was being kept on the pill for any side-effects. A full judgment could be made in 20 years.

Sir Derrick Dunlop is quite content for the people to take this pill for 20 years and possibly be very seriously damaged in the meantime. If, in 20 years' time, it is found there are dangers, then all the people who have suffered in the meantime are a write-off, and it is just too bad for them.

Mr. Rushton: Would you argue the same way on the question of penicillin?

Mr. TONKIN: Sir Derrick Dunlop is prepared to wait 20 years. What he is saying now is that he thinks it is all right but he does not know. Of course, quite a lot of eminent people are saying the same about

fluoride; and not only eminent people, but organisations with substantial prestige, such as the Department of Hygiene in France, and the judges in Sweden who declared that the absolute safety of fluoride had not been established. Yet, Sir Derrick is quite prepared to say straight-out that this is safe; there is no need to worry about it, because it is perfectly safe. He is at the same time saying that, with the contraceptive pill, it may be 20 years before the effect is known.

I quote now from *The West Australian* of the 12th June—

Doctors Warned on Drug Effects

Commonwealth health authorities have warned doctors throughout Australia that the tranquilliser drug amitriptyline may have harmful effects when combined with alcohol and barbiturates.

Suspicion was first aroused by the deaths of three people in Perth late last year.

The drug, which has usually been prescribed for psychiatric disorders, was available without restriction in Western Australia till February, when it was placed on the prescription-only list.

Where are these people who are supposed to safeguard the health of the community? Is it right that a drug should be sold openly on the market without restriction, when it is a drug which is possibly responsible for the death of people? All that the health authorities are prepared to say is that in future this is to be prescribed. Now, I read on from the same article—

Perth Deaths

The Perth deaths—those of two men aged 40 and 48, and a 26-year-old woman—occurred between October and December last.

They were not connected, but post-mortem examinations revealed that amitriptyline was a common factor.

The two men had consumed fairly heavy quantities of alcohol immediately before the deaths and the woman had taken barbiturates.

Experiments

The suspicion that the drug might have contributed to the deaths was strengthened by experiments carried out on mice by Professor Mary Lockett at the W.A. University.

The Public Health Commissioner, Dr. W. S. Davidson, sent a report with details of the experiments to the Commonwealth Drug Evaluation Committee.

In a statement published last month in the *Medical Journal of Australia*, the acting Director-General of Health, Dr. R. E. Downes, warned doctors of the drug's possible harmful effects.

Amitriptyline is often prescribed for anxiety and depression, insomnia and guilt feelings.

It is marketed in various parts of the world under the trade names . . .

The members of the medical profession are quite prepared to allow this drug to be marketed freely when the cases I have mentioned have occurred, which suggests the practice might have been responsible for deaths. They cannot say for certain, because they do not know; but, in the meantime, they allow people to continue to take the drug to find out for themselves. That is the attitude towards fluoridation. Here is a further report published in *The West Australian* of the 11th August—

U.S. Restriction On Pill Lifted

Washington, Monday.—The United States Food and Drug Administration has decided to lift its ruling which requires women not to use the birth control pill for more than two years.

The department claims the pill is the surest and most effective contraceptive available to women.

However, it will continue to warn doctors of the possibility of side effects resulting from use of the pill.

Its cautious approval has been based on a report by a ten-member advisory committee of obstetricians and gynaecologists who have made a nine-month study.

In the report, published yesterday, the committee said there was not enough information to prove or disprove claims of tragic side effects.

That is a lovely situation, is it not? There is insufficient information to prove whether the drug is safe one way or the other, but even though the department is concerned about it, and is cautious, people still continue to take it. Yet we are expected to accept the declaration that fluoride is perfectly safe.

Dr. Henn: Fluoridation of water supplies has been tried out for 25 years.

Mr. TONKIN: Oh no it has not! There is no country in the world which has carried out a controlled programme for 10 years, let alone 25 years.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Yes, in the United States.

Mr. TONKIN: There is no country in the world which has carried out a controlled experimental programme on fluoride for 10 years.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: It all depends on what you mean by "controlled," I suppose.

Mr. TONKIN: Controlled means controlled. I am telling the Minister, because obviously he does not know, that the experimental plans at Grand Rapids and Evanston were not carried on after five years. I read to members the other day the statement that the information that was

given at the conference of doctors on certain experiments had leaked out, and there was such a clamour over this that it was proposed to put the drug on the market immediately and promote it; and, of course, that is what was done. The Minister cannot name a single town—

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: There have been controlled experiments, in effect, whereby millions of people have been drinking fluoridated water all their lives.

Mr. TONKIN: I am telling the Minister there is not.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Oh!

Mr. TONKIN: The only way the Minister can prove that, is to name one town, and if he does so I will prove he is wrong. Let the Minister name one town where controlled experiments on the fluoridation of water supplies have been carried on for a period of at least 10 years.

Dr. Henn: What is your answer to this statement in the report published by the World Health Organisation—

The biological effects of fluoride have been described in nearly 3,000 experimental and clinical reports in the past 20 years.

Mr. TONKIN: That is not true, either.

Dr. Henn: That was written in 1958.

Mr. TONKIN: That is not true, and the member for Wembley knows it is not true, because those 3,000 papers referred to the whole literature, much of which is opposed to fluoridation.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: At first blush one may be inclined to think that there is something of merit in this proposed new clause. It could be construed that whilst I, as Minister in charge of the Bill, might say that fluoridation is safe and has been proved to be so for well over a quarter of a century—that is, with artificially fluoridated water—and where it has been proven safe—

Mr. Tonkin: You mean naturally fluoridated water.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: What did I say?

Mr. Tonkin: You said artificially fluoridated water.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Yes, for over 25 years, where people have been drinking artificially fluoridated water—

Mr. Tonkin: Where?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: In the United States for 25 years.

Mr. Tonkin: The experiments started in 1945.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Well, 21 years. In addition, people have drunk naturally fluoridated water for the whole of their lives in our time, and their ancestors and relations before them have drunk it. Having said this and being conscious

that fluoridation is safe and beneficial, one might ask: As fluoridation will cause no damage, why not accept the clause? However, if one were to fall for this, one might as well fall for the three card trick, because if the clause is included in the Bill one could expect people to say, "You said this procedure is completely safe—"

Mr. Kelly: Well, are you not satisfied?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Just a moment. People would say, "You said this procedure is completely safe, but at the end of the Bill you have inserted this provision, so apparently you are talking with your tongue in your cheek". They will say that a clause has been placed in the Bill which will enable one who suffers any loss, illness, or injury as a result of fluoridation to claim damages. Therefore, one cannot win on this clause and it would be completely foolish to include it in the Bill.

I have had a discussion with the Minister for Health on the matter, and it could be conceded that if anyone could prove—without the insertion of this clause in the Bill—that he had suffered loss or injury as a result of fluoridation, no Government would object to paying damages to such a person; but to write such a clause as this into the Bill is inviting one to promote all sorts of complaints in regard to fluoridation, and the Government cannot accept the clause.

Mr. TONKIN: After the Country Party conference at which the party reversed its policy on fluoridation, I read in *The West Australian* that it would agree to fluoridation provided there was provision in the legislation for the compensation of people who would be harmed by it in any way; that is, either as a result of taking it into their own bodies, or as a result of their stock being poisoned.

Mr. Jamieson: It is not much good appealing to them, because there is only one in the Chamber.

Mr. TONKIN: I am wondering how the Country Party, in this coalition Government, in view of that direction from its conference, can vote against this amendment? It is idle for the Minister to say—seeing he has such outstanding proof from all these eminent authorities who declare day by day the absolute safety of fluoridation—that if this clause is put into the Bill it is an indication the Government does not consider fluoridation of water supplies to be safe.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I am not saying it. The people would be of that opinion and the value of the legislation would be lost.

Mr. TONKIN: That is a bit thin, because the people have to take fluoridation whether they like it or not, and the inclusion of this clause would not allow them to escape it. However, the clause is an added precaution, and I will prove later that fluoridation is not safe. I will prove that the case to which the member for Wembley referred in the journal, *Annals*

of *Internal Medicine*, is not true. I have since had an opportunity to refer this case to a doctor and he agrees entirely with me on my interpretation.

Dr. Henn: I hope you will give me his name.

Mr. TONKIN: I will give it to the honourable member provided the name remains with him, but I have no intention of putting anybody on the spot over this argument. I am in a position to name some of the children who were at the Princess Margaret Hospital, and the persons at Princess Margaret Hospital who made the statement to which I refer, but I will not do so. The history of the promotion of fluoride all over the world is one of reprisals against those who dared to swim against the stream.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: What a lot of nonsense!

Mr. TONKIN: What happened to Berry after he published, in conjunction with Trillwood, his finding on the effects of enzymes? What happened to Polya in Tasmania when he became vocal on this question?

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: If he discontinued writing those things, he was discredited in the eyes of those who know.

Mr. TONKIN: I went to Dalkeith one night when a civil servant had the temerity to get up and speak as a parent, but the Minister for Industrial Development reported him to the Public Service Commissioner and he was on the mat a few days later.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I would like to have the details of that case, too.

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister can have the details! Ask the Minister for Industrial Development or the Public Service Commissioner. I was present at the meeting and heard the statement made.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You would say anything.

The CHAIRMAN: I think we had better get back to the discussion on this proposed new clause.

Mr. TONKIN: I am sorry, Mr. Chairman, but surely I am entitled to tell the Minister how these things do happen. It is a very simple matter to go along with the tide. There was a somewhat similar occurrence concerning the subject we were discussing this afternoon when a certain gentleman who is obtaining a great deal of Government business felt it desirable to support the Government's attitude. He was a former Government servant but is now in private practice. That is easy, but one has to hand it to the man who is prepared to risk his job and his future for what he thinks is right; and, fortunately, there are still a few men who are prepared to do this.

I am telling the Minister something he does not know. Berry suffered so much that

he stopped all his research and would not proceed any further. So did Rapaport, who made a statement about fluoride being responsible for mongolism.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. TONKIN: Before the tea suspension I verbally contradicted the member for Wembley on a statement he made purporting to come from the World Health Organisation to the effect that there were in existence some 3,000 papers justifying the safety of fluoride. I thought I had better make good my contradiction, and I propose to do so by quoting verbatim from the report of the expert committee of the World Health Organisation—

The rich literature on the subject comprises nearly 3,000 research publications in the last twenty years. Important findings have been confirmed in the laboratories of many countries. It is not implied that this research field is unique in freedom from controversy.

In other words, the committee states that not the whole of these papers were in support of the safety of fluoridation, but there was a divergence of opinion; and that would have been the fair way to present this information to the Committee and not give the impression that the whole of the literature in these 3,000 papers supported the safety of fluoride. Of course, they do nothing of the kind; and that is the sort of thing we have to contend with when arguing this question as to whether this is safe or not.

I have here a publication purported to be signed by H. A. Cook, B.Sc., (Lond.), A.R.C.S., F.R.I.C., 14 St. Alban's Street, Jermyn Street, London, S.W.1. He says—

We, the undersigned, all members of the medical, dental, veterinary and chemical professions, wish to place on record our considered opinion that it is wrong to fluoridate public drinking water supplies.

It is our opinion that published research work has shown clearly that the toxic effects of fluorides, even in trace quantities, are such that fluoridated drinking water may be harmful, or even dangerous, to many people, particularly in its long term effects, which have not been sufficiently investigated, and that it is therefore quite wrong to force everyone to consume artificially fluoridated water.

We are quite prepared to accept published evidence that small amounts of fluorides may have some beneficial effect on the teeth of children, but wish to state that, in our opinion, the only methods which may be safely employed for this purpose are those giving the fluoride in measured dosage, such as in tablet form, on medical prescription only, so that its use is

completely restricted to the children for whom it is considered necessary.

Then follows the names of some 100 doctors of medicine, doctors of science, doctors of veterinary science, and of the sciences of pharmacology and toxicology.

There are 100 who are prepared to subscribe to that statement; and in the face of that we are told there is no doubt whatever this is perfectly safe and harmless.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr. NORTON: I cannot understand the Minister's objection to this amendment because it will safeguard the public; and if he is as sure as he makes out that there are no dangers in the fluoridation of water, he should accept this amendment with pleasure. It is evident from the various reports we have had during this debate that there is no certainty as to the safety of the artificial fluoridation of water.

I would like to quote from the report of a Select Committee on fluoridation which was presented to the State House of Parliament in the State of Michigan, United States of America. This report was presented to Parliament on the 24th April, 1964, and portion of it reads as follows:—

- (i) The hearings and subsequent Committee study sessions produced voluminous material both pro and con, particularly documented evidence and reports on the subject, case histories of persons affected by fluorides, and statements by recognised individuals in various health fields, as well as promotional materials by those who stand to gain other than healthwise. Conflicting viewpoints were so evident that it is the emphatic recommendation to the Legislature that a danger possibility does exist, that more research is definitely needed, that a similar committee be continued, possibly empowered to impanel a sub-committee of impartial professionals in the field, such as doctors, dentists, statisticians, attorneys, bio-chemists, etc.

- (ii) The relatively short period (less than fifteen years) that the adding of fluoride to public drinking water began on an accelerated basis, together with the controversy that has raged since that time, gives warning that this experiment has yet to prove itself. There has not been sufficient elapsed time when one compares this period with that of the span of life of a human, to say that while there may be some benefit to children, that there is not the danger of cumulative harmful

effects on adults of continued exposure to fluoride.

- (iii) The 1 p.p.m. concentration provides no margin of safety. It is the initial conclusion of the Committee that no control of fluoride intake into the human body is possible. Intake from sources other than water, namely food, drugs, and air contaminated by fluoride is unpredictable. Even if a constant fluoride level in drinking water could be maintained throughout a water system, the amount of water drunk varies from person to person and tolerance to drugs differs in individuals.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would point out to the honourable member that this is not a general debate on fluoridation of water supplies; we are dealing with this one clause.

Mr. NORTON: With reference to the danger to human beings; and that is the purpose for which this clause is being added.

Mr. Tonkin: For compensation.

Mr. NORTON: If they suffer damage.

The CHAIRMAN: I will expect the honourable member to relate his remarks to the clause.

Mr. NORTON: The report of this Select Committee deals with the various ill-effects that can come about. The particular section which I just read points out that different children or people drink different quantities of water, thus subjecting themselves to danger from an accumulation of fluoride within their bodies. Therefore, if one gets fluorosis poisoning, one has to have some protection. I have no doubt, Mr. Chairman, that if you had children without fluorosis poisoning you would expect compensation for any damage done. The Select Committee report goes on—

Young children, for whose teeth fluoridation is designed, drink very little water.

- (iv) Illnesses from fluoride in water and acute and chronic fluoride intoxication have been reported in numbers. It was difficult, because of time limitations, to assess all the scientific material, but the Committee felt that these reports would not have appeared in many recognized medical journals were they not valid: Hence the recommendation for a moratorium and for more research and study.

I would like to point out here that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has stated that the period during which fluoridation of water supplies has taken place has been insufficiently long; but there are countries like South Africa, where the water is naturally fluoridated where some ill-effects have been found. I

have no doubt that if the position were studied by the medical profession, it would agree that fluoride is a danger to the human person. I refer to the concentration of fluoride within the bones of the body.

I understand that in a normal case, the body bones contain about 130 parts per million of fluoride; but it has been found that by taking fluoride at one part per million in water, the ribs have increased to 500 parts per million and the vertebrae to 540 parts per million. With an increase of fluoride to eight parts per million in drinking water, the ribs have increased to 6,300 parts per million, and the vertebrae to 5,400 parts per million. This accumulation has taken 20 years.

If a person is unlucky enough to get fluorosis of the bone as a result of an accumulation of fluoride, he should be compensated.

Mr. DAVIES: I am surprised the Minister has not seen fit to accept this amendment. I would have thought he would be only too happy to put into the Bill a provision which would back up his own argument that there is no danger from putting fluoride into the public water supplies.

I understand that in some towns throughout the world where the public water supplies are fluoridated some measure of protection or compensation has been provided in case people are able to prove they have been adversely affected by fluoride. It is not a case of everybody putting every little ache or pain down to fluoride; it is a matter of a person being able to prove to the satisfaction of some competent authority that the addition of a type of fluorine to water has had an adverse effect on that person's health.

I feel the argument raised against this by the Government could be turned back on the Government. The Minister says if this clause were added to the Bill it would be an admission of weakness and would be a suggestion that there is a danger to health from fluorine. By the same reasoning, I believe any person could argue that there must be a danger, because the Government is not prepared to provide for the payment of compensation. I do not think the one argument advanced by the Minister for refusing to accept this amendment is a very valid reason.

In the Bill, there is a clause which provides for the making of regulations. We do not propose that this amending clause shall provide an entree for the making of claims against the Government. I should imagine that under the provisions of clause 16 the Government may make regulations to provide for an adequate form of appeal, or a tribunal, which probably would make it hard to get conclusive proof. By that I mean the Government, by the making of regulations, would be able to protect itself.

Not only can fluoride have an effect on the health of people, but, as has been mentioned, it can affect crops.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must draw the honourable member's attention to the fact that this clause has nothing whatsoever to do with crops.

Mr. DAVIES: Thank you for drawing my attention to that fact, Mr. Chairman. I was referring to an earlier debate when the likely effect of fluoride on crops was mentioned. I hope that fluoride will not harden dogs' teeth.

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot allow this at all; the honourable member must keep to the clause.

Mr. DAVIES: We already have enough difficulty with dogs. The point is that adequate machinery should be set up to protect the Government and the public, in case a person who claims to be affected by fluorine can prove conclusively that some damage has been done to his health. The argument which the Minister put up was not very convincing, and I believe the point can be argued both ways. Indeed, I am sure that many people are saying there must be some danger because the Government will not provide any form of compensation if a person's health is affected.

Mr. TONKIN: In order to obviate any possible misunderstanding between you, Mr. Chairman, and myself as to whether what I am saying is relevant, let me point out if I may, with respect, that the case for my amendment depends on being able to establish that definite harm may result from the use of fluoride. The Minister avers there is no possibility of harm and that to include a clause of this nature would be an indication that the Government is doubtful, and would cause people to think that there was doubt.

To justify the inclusion of the proposed new clause, we are endeavouring to show that we cannot accept the statement that no harm can be caused, because so many reputable scientists of standing will not accept it themselves.

I have here a paper to which I have previously referred. It came from the French Ambassador in Canberra and is dated the 12th September, 1966. The French Ambassador states the opinion of the men who would give such an opinion in France, and he refers to the Conseil Supérieur de l'Hygiène, which is the health department in France. The letter is addressed to a resident of Wembley and reads as follows:—

I refer to your letter of June 9th requesting information on the subject of fluoridation in France.

The competent authorities in France have just forwarded to us the following particulars:

As far back as 1955, the "Conseil Supérieur de l'Hygiène" had declared

themselves against the fluoridation of public supplies of drinking water and water used for cooking purposes and in the preparation of food. They considered that the innocuousness of consuming, over an extended period of time, food, and especially water to which fluoride had been added, even in small, strictly controlled doses, had not been sufficiently established and proved, and that, under these circumstances, fluoride should be administered individually, on a doctor's or dentist's prescription and under their supervision.

To this day, the "Conseil Supérieur de l'Hygiène" have not modified their position on the subject.

There is a forthright declaration that that department of a nation does not accept the statement that the use of fluoride in water is absolutely safe and that its safety has been proved.

Dr. Henn: The people do not drink very much water in France.

Mr. TONKIN: What has that to do with the question? I have here, also, a statement from one of our Western Australian scientists. It will get over the objection raised by the learned gentleman from Wembley. The letter is dated the 3rd October, of this year, and reads as follows:—

Fluoridation of Water Supplies

One aspect of the scheme for sodium fluoridation of all Government water supplies appears to have been completely overlooked. This is: Upon what specific scientific authority is it asserted that long-continued ingestion of sodium fluoride can do no general harm?

The opinions of dentists and medical practitioners are usually cited, but these people know little or nothing of the general harm that can ensue.

As a scientist, I assert that any increase above the normal level of free fluorine ions in the blood-stream will most certainly inhibit the manufacture by the body of vital enzymes, resulting in a shorter life expectancy. A rise above normal of sodium ions will result in the extraction of calcium from teeth and bones, causing bone fragility and tooth cavities later in life.

Only pharmacologists and toxicologists are qualified to give a proper professional and fully-informed answer to fluoridation problems, and all I have read condemn it. The only safe fluoridation that can be carried out in public water supplies would be by using one part of calcium fluoride in 5,000,000 parts of water. This would cause no harm in any direction and might benefit the one to 15-age group.

Sodium fluoride is definitely dangerous and highly poisonous.—J. G. Porteus, E.D., PhC. (Adel.), Dongara.

In the face of the numerous opinions which can be quoted by people who do not accept the statement that fluoride is absolutely safe, there is an obligation on the Government to include in the legislation a provision for compensation should the Government's opinion be wrong. Otherwise, the unfortunate individual who has no choice and who will have this fluoride compulsorily forced upon him for the whole of his life has no possible redress. Surely that is an unfair situation.

If we, as a Parliament, are asserting that there can be no harm and that we are sure it is safe, then we should say that if we are wrong—and there are people who say we are wrong—a wronged person shall be able to sue and be compensated. If that is not a fair British outlook, I do not know what is. If no provision is made in the legislation for claims against the Government, then surely that is a new policy for a democratic country.

The inclusion of this clause will mean protection for the unfortunate individual, if such there be, who can prove and amply demonstrate that he has been harmed by being obliged to take fluoride. We are going to compel people to take this fluoride for the whole of their lives whether they want it or not and whether they will benefit or not, because we believe that no harm can come to those people, but that a lot of children will benefit. That may be the right attitude to take; but, surely, it cannot be denied that we should provide that in the event of somebody being able to demonstrate he has suffered as a result of the ingestion of fluoride, he should be able to obtain compensation.

So far as the Government is concerned, there is no risk of any possible harm. We have been told that millions have been ingesting this fluoride with no harm. So all we have to do is include this clause in the legislation; and, according to the view held by the Government, there is no risk. I do not hold that view, but I want to do my utmost to see that the people who have no say in this matter shall be protected to the extent that they can claim damages if they are injured by having fluoride forced down their throats against their will.

I hope the Government will have second thoughts on this matter and do the fair and decent thing.

Mr. JAMIESON: It will be recalled that during the second reading debate I mentioned this aspect when I referred to the fact that the Country Party at its recent conference had second thoughts after having agreed to the fluoridation of water supplies. That party had second thoughts as to what would be the result of its action. As I understand

the situation, a motion very similar to the amendment now proposed, was moved.

I have not been convinced either way on this matter, and I clearly indicated that to the Minister and Chamber. I feel no harm can be done by Parliament accepting the amendment and making doubly sure that everybody is protected in the event of being affected by fluoride. From statements made about the harm which can be caused, we have a complete difference of opinion. Some members have made statements from which it would appear there could be no harm, but others quoted cases—the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has repeatedly done so—which show that harm may be done.

If a person suffers harm by an action of Parliament—and in this instance there is no way of getting away from the fluoride except perhaps by providing rainwater tanks—then I think we should be prepared to make provision to pay for any damage that is done to the health of that individual.

I doubt whether harm will occur; I could not say that it would occur; but to relieve the minds of those who think it might occur, it is desirable to support this amendment. The people who are concerned will at least have the right to legal protection and compensation if their health does fail through the ingestion of fluoride. They will have recourse against the people who caused them to ingest the fluoride. I suggest there would be no harm in accepting the amendment and placating the fears of the people who are worried about the possible effects of fluoride.

Mr. NORTON: There is just one other point I wish to make about the danger of adding fluoride artificially to the water supplies in this State, and I refer to the effect fluoride might have on the other minerals which are already in the metropolitan water supply. Nothing is known of the action of sodium fluoride when combined with other minerals which are naturally in our water supply. Already there are 533 parts per million of chloride in the water which is pumped from the bores in the summertime. In addition there are 402 parts per million of sodium; and I understand that to neutralise the action of fluoride we must have an amount of calcium in the water. At present only 13 parts per million of calcium are in the water which is pumped from the bores and, as a result, there may be some doubt about the advisability of adding sodium fluoride because of the effects it might have when combined with other minerals. It certainly should not be added unless reasonable tests have been carried out in this regard.

Mr. KELLY: I think the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has given us good reasons why the Minister should unbend a little and take some notice of what the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has been saying.

Instead of that the Minister has had a one track mind in his handling of the Bill. I am at a loss to understand the Minister's attitude, because he has put forward very little argument against the new clause.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: There is no necessity to state the same thing over and over again.

Mr. KELLY: It would be all right if the Minister said something when he did speak.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I did.

Mr. KELLY: So far the Minister has not put forward anything which would convince us. I think he failed dismally by not submitting cogent reasons why we should take a particular course of action. Time and again the Minister has stated that there is no danger from fluoridating our water supplies. Therefore, under those circumstances what harm can result from agreeing to the new clause?

I have with me a report of the National Health and Medical Research Council, Canberra, and I take it the member for Wembley would agree that that publication would carry a tremendous amount of weight in the Federal capital, and it should carry some weight here. There is a table in this report which sets out the approximate estimates of water intake, excluding milk and water in food, of a child of eight years, and it gives the figures of the hottest and coldest climates in Australia. The table is as follows:—

Hottest Climate (Australia).	
Midsummer (over 90° F.)	Midwinter (over 60° F.)
Litres	Litres
Maximum 2.5	Maximum 1.5
Minimum 1.0	Minimum 0.75
Coldest Climate (Australia).	
Midsummer (under 70° F.)	Midwinter (under 60° F.)
Litres	Litres
Maximum 1.5	Maximum 0.75
Minimum 0.5	Minimum 0.5

A child—and it is the children about whom we are mainly concerned—could quite easily take far in excess of the safe amount of fluoride because of the consumption of water during a hot day.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: That is not so at all.

Mr. KELLY: It is so. That is where the Minister is falling down. He is not prepared to give us any reasons why the publications we have been quoting are wrong. If the Minister has the information, he certainly has not given it to us.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I have told you over and over again.

Mr. KELLY: Although the Minister has spoken on a number of occasions he has given us no information which would convince us.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: There are none so blind as those who cannot see.

Mr. KELLY: This publication goes on to state—

From these estimates and assuming the upper safe level of fluorine intake from all sources for children of eight years of age to be 1.5 mg. fluorine per day Table II has been prepared showing the recommended fluorine concentration related to the temperature zones (normal maximum temperature) shown in Maps 1 and 2.

I would explain that according to this manual a litre is 1½ pints, and that would be a very small quantity of water for a child to drink daily. Therefore he could quite easily absorb in excess of the safe amount of fluoride.

I can see no reason at all for the Minister refusing to accept the new clause if he is confident he is doing the right thing and that no harm will result from the use of fluoride.

Mr. BICKERTON: The Minister will recall I was one member who supported the fluoridation of water supplies at the second reading stage. I still support it because, like the Minister, I cannot see that any harm will occur from the use of fluoride. Therefore I am rather surprised that the Minister will not accept the new clause, because it is only a protection. While I support fluoridation, I firmly believe the Bill would be improved with the inclusion of the new clause; and, furthermore, this new clause would show those whom we are trying to benefit that we have faith in our belief that fluoride is a good thing. I do not think it is too late for the Minister to report progress to have another look at this matter.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: It would act in a way contrary to what you think.

Mr. BICKERTON: I do not think so. If we agree to the new clause it will show we have faith in our beliefs; and, if we are proved wrong, at least those against whom an injustice has been done by our lack of judgment will have some redress, assuming that they can prove to the competent authority that fluoride is in fact the cause of a particular complaint.

If it were found that the new clause was being abused, action could be taken to amend it. I certainly hope the Committee will agree to the proposal.

Mr. HALL: During the second reading I instanced the case of an elderly lady in the Albany Regional Hospital for whom I transported fresh water for drinking purposes. She always felt that because chlorine had been added to the water in that area to kill the bacteria, it was contaminated. I wonder what her reaction would be today to this proposal. The Minister for Industrial Development asked me in a jocular way how the old lady got on while I was attending Parliament. I was able to reply that the lady had passed on. However, I wonder what her thoughts would be if she were alive today.

She used to say that she could detect a bitter taste in the water and she would drink nothing but fresh water. The point I wish to make is that fluoridation could have an effect on elderly people. No doubt there are many elderly people in hospital today whose friends and relatives are taking them fresh water to drink because they are probably worried about contamination of the water supplies.

The woman I have mentioned could have laid a complaint against the Government and claimed compensation, because a pipeline was charged with chlorine to remove bacteria and this was detrimental to her health.

New clause put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes—17	
Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Kelly
Mr. Brady	Mr. Moir
Mr. Davies	Mr. Norton
Mr. Evans	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Graham	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Hall	Mr. Toms
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. May
Mr. Jamieson	
Noes—23	
Mr. Bovell	Mr. Hutchinson
Mr. Brand	Mr. Lewis
Mr. Burt	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Court	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Craig	Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Dunn	Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Durack	Mr. Runciman
Mr. Elliott	Mr. Rushton
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Williams
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. I. W. Manning
Dr. Hena	
Pairs	
Ayes	
Mr. Curran	Mr. Hart
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. Gayfer
Mr. Rowberry	Mr. Crommelin
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Nimmo

New clause thus negatived.

Title put and passed.

Bill reported with amendments.

PERTH MEDICAL CENTRE BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 12th October.

MR. BRADY (Swan) [8.21 p.m.]: Since taking the adjournment of this Bill dealing with the Perth Medical Centre, I have been through the records of Parliament, and I find it interesting to note that similar legislation ran into difficulty in another place. Apparently a similar Bill was introduced in another place without the constitutional requirements being met and, as a consequence, it was subsequently withdrawn. That, no doubt, is the reason why the Minister has introduced the Bill in this House.

As the Minister said, the Perth Medical Centre Bill is a very important measure. It creates a new aspect as far as medical activities are concerned in Western Australia. Its purpose is to establish a medical centre in the Hollywood area which will ultimately embrace the Medical School at the University, the Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, the Radiological Clinic, and a

number of similar organisations. Its activities will be centred in that particular area.

It is interesting to note from the Minister's introduction of the Bill that the University Senate and the Government are working very closely to bring about the best results, medically, for all concerned. The Bill will provide advanced treatment, physical examination, rehabilitation, and long-term and day-care for people who require it. In addition, teaching facilities will be provided for doctors, medical students, nurses, and ancillary workers.

It would seem that all sections of the medical profession and connected activities are to be catered for and embraced in this medical centre. Very much could be said in regard to this medical centre, and, while the Minister mentioned that it was an important Bill with an important purpose, I cannot help but feel that its activity was originally triggered off at the time the present Opposition was the Government when, it will be recalled, the Hawke Labor Government introduced legislation to enable the University Senate to raise a loan for £150,000 which was guaranteed by the Hawke Government.

The legislation went through the House and became the University Medical School Act. It will be remembered that in 1955 there was a great public drive for donations to enable a medical school to be set up at the University. That was ultimately achieved, thanks to the generous support from all sections of the community at the time. It might be interesting to relate that, to some extent, the same people and the same organisations that got behind the medical school appeal in 1955 are, at the moment, planning a similar drive to help the kindergarten appeal in Western Australia.

I have noticed while moving around various parts of the metropolitan area that certain people are active, and certain organisations are moving up to a point when an all-out appeal will be made to the public to help the Kindergarten Union, which is a very worth-while organisation, and which, I understand, is about to build a new centre for kindergarten purposes.

When introducing the legislation the Minister said that although this may have been envisaged 10 years ago, he had given it the green light in 1964 by the creation of a medical centre joint planning committee. I want to give the Minister full marks for setting up that committee; though I do not mind taking a bit of humble pleasure myself, knowing that I was the honourable member who introduced a deputation to the Premier at the time from the B.M.A., requesting the Premier's blessing on the launching of this University medical scheme.

So the Minister and I can congratulate ourselves on our efforts to help this worthy

cause. It seems that the Minister was very wise in his choice of the planning committee which was subsequently appointed. I refer particularly to those members who went overseas; namely, Dr. Rowe, Principal Medical Officer, Professor E. E. Saint, of the University Medical School, and Mr. Fairweather, from the Architectural Division of the P.W.D.

These members of the committee went overseas and examined medical institutions in various countries, particularly in the United States and in Britain. They brought back a report which favoured the setting up of this medical centre in Hollywood. Apart from this they brought in a number of suggestions in regard to the scheme.

It appears that the committee travelled to Israel, Denmark, Britain, and the United States, and got together information on what it considered were the most important activities of the medical centres overseas.

As I see the position, the fundamental principles in the Bill are to make facilities available to all concerned. The people in Western Australia, no matter where they are, or who they are, will have available to them the facilities of this particular medical centre. It will have as its purpose the provision of a comprehensive diagnostic and therapeutic service for what could be a population of 250,000 people.

As you will probably appreciate, Mr. Speaker, that is about 25 times the size of the normal electorate in the metropolitan area. Provision will also be made for an efficient outpatients diagnostic and therapeutic service, thus sparing the load on the inpatient facilities. There will be buildings as required for the patients and staff, according to whether the patients are acutely ill, moderately ill, or under the process of rehabilitation, or whether they are undergoing occupational therapy. Adequate facilities for the acute and long-term care of elderly patients are to be provided, and I shall deal with this aspect later on.

The centre is designed to permit future expansion of the Medical School and of the Public Health Laboratories. The laboratory buildings will be designed to permit modification of function and expansion. The facilities at the centre will cope with between 600 and 700 general hospital cases, and a full range of diagnostic and out-patient facilities will be provided. Further, a radiotherapy institute and public health laboratories will be established. There is provision for a relocated medical school with departments of medicine, surgery, psychiatry, pathology, and microbiology; for a nurses' training school; for quarters for resident nurses and doctors; and for parking facilities for patients, their relatives, and the staff. This project will be of immense public importance, and I am sure it has the support of all sections of this House.

It is interesting to note it is estimated that no less than \$33,000,000 will be involved in the construction of this project, and of this the University will finance approximately \$8,000,000. It appears that the scheme will have to be implemented in stages and built over a period of 10 years. From the remarks of the Minister during the introduction of the measure, I understand that the first stage will be the building of the nurses' training school which will be started in the early part of the second half of this financial year.

The Bill proposes to reserve certain areas of land, and this is dealt with in the schedule to the Bill. Once this Bill becomes law the land in question will become a Class "A" reserve, upon which the medical centre will be built.

The term "medical centre" is defined as—

includes the aggregate of any medical school, hospital and other place whatsoever built on the reserve wherein any form of diagnostic, therapeutic or rehabilitative treatment of patients is performed or given or medical education and research carried out and all clinics, dispensaries, outpatient departments, services, offices and undertakings maintained on the reserve in connection with or incidental to any such medical school, hospital or place.

There has been much forward thinking in respect of this project, and for that reason I am pleased to support the measure wholeheartedly. I am sure that members on this side of the House will do likewise.

Seven or eight of the clauses deal with the functions of the trust which is to be set up to manage this medical enterprise, if I might term it as such. The trust will comprise five members, one of whom shall be a person appointed by the Governor on the written nomination of the Minister of Public Health and the Senate of the University; two shall be persons appointed by the Governor on the written nomination of the Minister of Public Health; and two shall be appointed by the Senate of the University to hold office during its pleasure. The members of the trust will have to shoulder very heavy responsibilities.

I am not happy with subclauses (4) and (5) of clause 10 relating to meetings of the trust. The first states that all questions arising at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the votes of the members present and voting, and for that purpose the member presiding has a deliberative vote. The second states that in the event of an equality of votes the member presiding has a casting vote as well as a deliberative vote.

Mr. Court: Shades of the member for Mt. Hawthorn!

Mr. BRADY: For the 18 years that I have been in this House the party to which I belong has been opposed to the dual-vote principle. On this occasion the

Government is not satisfied with giving the chairman a deliberative vote; it also seeks to give him a casting vote. It is remarkable that the fluoridation measure which is on the notice paper does not contain a similar provision. It would seem that the Government and the departments have not unanimity of views on the question of giving the chairman a deliberative as well as a casting vote. Later on it may become necessary for me to move for the deletion of this provision.

It should be sufficient to give the chairman a deliberative vote, and to provide for an issue to be determined by a majority of votes. Should there be an equal number of votes then the question should be decided in accordance with the procedure adopted by the Australian Labor Party; that is, to regard the question as being negative.

The trust is to be empowered to borrow money on such terms and conditions as the Treasurer approves. The Bill provides that notwithstanding the provisions of any other Act, each hospital on the reserve declared to be a teaching hospital shall have a managing body and an appointments committee, which will be charged with the duty of making appointments to the medical staff.

I am glad the Bill is now on its way through this House; it will be the means of providing greater medical facilities for the people of Western Australia. I was pleased to hear the Minister say that consideration will be given to the preventive side, as well as the curative side, of medicine. It cannot be emphasised too strongly that the more we can do to further preventive medicine the better it will be for all concerned. This is the reason why on occasions I have been tempted to speak on matters relating to public health, alcoholism, nicotine poisoning, and similar subjects, although my comments have not always been well received by you, Mr. Speaker. If more were done to further preventive medicine the less would be the need for curative medicine.

Mr. Hall: We would be better off if we did not need medicine.

Mr. BRADY: I agree, but that will only be brought about by preventive medicine. In the Bill "medical education" is defined as the instruction of medical and dental students, nurses, and students of any services ancillary to medical or dental treatment. I would ask the Minister to give us the reason why dental treatment has received prominence. Where emphasis is laid on dental treatment, I can imagine that people in the optometry profession, and specialists in diseases of the nose, eyes, and ears would want their fields to be included in medical education.

I was disturbed to hear within the last 24 hours that the optometry course at the University of Western Australia will be transferred to either the Sydney or Melbourne University for the reason that only part-time lecturers are available here and not a great number of students are

applying for enrolment. It is a backward step to transfer the course away from Western Australia. I hope that in the near future it will be possible to provide a full-time course with full-time lecturers in optometry.

My final remarks relate to aged people. I hope that much will be done on the geriatric side in the medical centre. If there is one section of the community requiring attention more than any other it is the aged and the pensioner group. For various reasons these people find it very difficult to obtain suitable accommodation. Sometimes this arises through upsets in the families. The aged folk might have worn down their relatives, and caused friction. They might then try to find other accommodation. Generally they are not successful and finish up in "C"-class hospitals, rest homes, and similar places. I hope that provision will be made in the medical centre for geriatric cases.

I think it was this morning's paper which contained an article concerning a new system for the treatment of elderly people in England. It is known as the "in-and-out" system. The elderly folk are placed in a hospital for six months and are then discharged for six months. According to the article, this system is working wonderfully both for the aged people and for the families concerned.

Because of our occupation, most of us in this House know many old people who are facing difficulties because of their age. Many of the families concerned are also facing difficulties because they are trying to do the right thing by their aged parents and are allowing them to remain at home with them. It is a strange thing, but I have found that our New Australian folks are able to handle the problem concerning their elderly parents more satisfactorily than are we of British stock. Invariably I have found that the aged people in "C"-class hospitals and rest homes come from families of British stock. Many European families manage their affairs in such a way as to enable them to keep their elderly folk with them to the end.

I hope that somewhere along the line the medical centre will devise a way by which we in this country will be able to keep our old folk with us in the family centre as much as possible.

I support the measure and hope that ultimately we will have a medical centre worthy of Western Australia and one of which we will be as proud as we are of the Medical School established in 1955.

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe—Minister for Works) [8.47 p.m.]: I thank the member for Swan for his warm support of the Bill. It is true, as the honourable member said, that the present Opposition, when in Government, had plans for the establishment of a medical centre similar to the plans submitted in this Bill—

or plans for a University hospital, or call it what you will. I also remark upon the fact that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, when Minister for Works, introduced a Bill to close University Avenue on a date to be proclaimed. This avenue, as members know, is the road which runs between the Radiological Clinic and the Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital.

Subsequently, after this Government came into office, the plans began to develop and a committee was appointed, after which the practical work began. Preliminary practical steps have already been taken towards the establishment of this medical centre. It will be, as the honourable member hopes, a medical centre of which we can all be very proud.

As the honourable member has said, the action of the Opposition in establishing the Medical School was a precursor to this medical centre. Already fine work has been carried out in the Medical School and a very good graduate has been produced by this school. It has operated under somewhat difficult conditions but upon the completion of the medical centre, the conditions will be second to none in the world.

The whole plan will in all probability, take 15 years to complete—it may be more or it may be less—and will cost many millions of dollars. However, the work will be done in phases so as not to inconvenience the hospital building programme throughout the State. As a matter of fact, the Medical Department has for some time been working towards the time when more loan moneys could be allocated to the building of the medical centre. It was partly because of this that a great deal of emphasis has been placed on the building of regional hospitals and the improvement in the building of new and smaller country hospitals.

The honourable member referred to dental treatment and queried why this should be associated with the medical centre. On reflection he will realise, of course, that a close liaison exists between medical men and dentists. Indeed, dentists often refer oral surgery to the medical side, and it is appropriate that provision be made at this medical centre for dental treatment facilities.

I could not agree more with the sentiments expressed by the honourable member concerning old people, and the necessity for the Government to do all in its power to provide for their medical and rehabilitative treatment. In more recent times the whole emphasis has been on trying to rehabilitate old folk in order that they might be able to participate in community life. The desire has been not to keep them too long in aged people's homes. It is not always possible to rehabilitate old folk to the stage where they can return to community life but it has been done and is being done at present.

Only two or three years ago the Government appointed for the first time a Director of Geriatrics, and he has done some remarkable rehabilitative work in the various institutions and homes throughout the metropolitan area. His teachings have spread to many parts of the State.

In general it can be said that rehabilitative treatment is aimed at trying to get old people on their feet again and keep them moving. Sometimes the rehabilitative treatment seems rather harsh and cruel when these old folk do not want to move around a great deal. They would rather sit down. However, the very beneficial effects which have resulted from this rehabilitative treatment are evidence enough of the effectiveness and humanness of the policy. I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair; Mr. Ross Hutchinson (Minister for Works) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 9 put and passed.

Clause 10: Meetings of Trust—

Mr. W. HEGNEY: The member for Swan mentioned plural voting, and this is provided for in clause 10 subclauses (4) and (5). This is entirely opposed to present-day practice. For the Minister's information I might mention that a similar provision is contained in the fluoridation Bill.

I am sure that on a previous occasion—I do not know the particular measure—the Minister for Works had his attention drawn to this particular matter and agreed to delete the provision for plural voting.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I cannot recollect that.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I think that is the case. The principle I have just mentioned obtains in regard to the Egg Marketing Board, the Potato Marketing Board, and other boards. No plural voting exists in connection with elections for this Chamber or another place. The system of a person having two votes belongs to the dark ages.

In regard to this clause, we have two ways open to us. We can either delete subclause (5) altogether, or amend it to provide that in the event of an equality of votes, the question shall be resolved in the negative. I am definitely opposed to plural voting, and to test the feeling of the Committee I move an amendment—

Page 6—Delete subclause (5).

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I have heard the honourable member express his views on this matter on many occasions in this

Chamber and I appreciate how strongly he feels about plurality of voting.

Mr. Graham: And so does Parliament.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I do not think there is a great deal of force or effectiveness in the honourable member's argument when it comes to resolving matters of the kind the trust would deal with. One of the principal things which should be avoided is a lack of decision. Of course, this applies in many spheres, but when decisions cannot be arrived at there is, very frequently, no progress made; and a lack of decision has caused more dismay than the taking of decisions has ever done. This subclause is inserted for the purpose of ensuring that a decision is reached. It does not mean to say that the member who is presiding at the meeting will vote one way or another; it could be that he would negative his own vote.

Mr. J. Hegney: He might have it both ways!

Mr. Moir: The Minister does not believe that, does he?

Mr. Bickerton: A complete change of tune.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: It is possible and, indeed, it might well be so.

Mr. Graham: Why not put an extra man on the committee and do away with a dual vote?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I do not think there is any necessity for removing this provision from the Bill. However, the Bill is not my own particular baby, and if the honourable member wishes, I will speak to the Minister in another place and tell him of the suggestions.

Mr. Graham: Why not adjourn for 10 minutes while you run up the corridor?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: At this juncture, I do not think there is any necessity to accept the honourable member's amendment.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: The Minister was formerly the Minister for Health and he is in charge of the Bill. This is not a complicated question; and, surely, members on the Government side can realise the justification for my very simple amendment.

The Minister tells us that the presiding member might negative his own vote. How simple can one get! Can anyone imagine a responsible man who is going to be the presiding officer at a meeting of this particular trust, which is going to be involved in the expenditure of millions of pounds, negating his own vote? One moment the presiding officer is going to vote one way and the next minute he is going to vote another way.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I said it was possible.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: The Minister says it is possible, but I say it is almost impossible.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: It is not impossible.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I say it is almost impossible, because the type of person who is going to constitute the trust will not blow hot and cold at the one meeting.

The Minister says it is necessary to obtain decisions. The trust consists of five persons, and I do not suppose a meeting would be held every day. A meeting would only be held at intervals, and surely on many occasions—if not on practically all occasions—the five members of the trust would be present. Three members could vote one way and two members could vote another way and that would constitute a majority. Similarly four members could vote one way and one member could vote another way and that would be a majority. If four members are present and two voted one way and two another, that would constitute equality of voting. Surely it is a simple request to ask that the committee wait a day or two until the five members are present and a majority established without having to resort to plurality of voting.

I am not the only person who is opposed to plurality of voting. I think that on each and every occasion that an amendment such as the present one has been moved the Government has accepted it. I think the Marketing of Potatoes Act and possibly the Marketing of Eggs Act, and similar statutes, are examples of what I am saying. Those Acts provide that where there is an equality of votes the question shall be resolved in the negative. What is wrong with that? Surely members on the Government side realise that is not asking too much. Why should any member of the trust have two votes? The members are appointed and they are responsible people. I cannot visualise many occasions when there will be such a divergence of opinion that the members of the board cannot arrive at a decision.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Keep talking.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I have not had much of a chance lately because the Minister has been talking so constantly. I know the Minister does not mean to pass the buck to the Minister for Health, but he has suggested he will ask the Minister for Health to have a look at this point. We, in this Chamber, want to have a look at it; we are a deliberative Chamber, and I am surprised this particular provision has appeared in a Bill of this nature. I am surprised that plurality of voting has appeared when I consider the attitude of this place to this particular matter over the last few years. Therefore, I am going to ask again that subclause (5) be deleted.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I would prefer it if the honourable member did not press his amendment at this juncture. As I said previously, I will take his remarks to the Minister for Health and suggest that, all things being equal, he might agree to the amendment in the other place.

The only reason I do not accede to the request here is because there could be some matter of a resolution on a deadlock which it might not be wise to give away at this point of time. I ask the honourable member to be reasonable. I will go along with his suggestion and put forward his proposal, as sympathetically as I can, to the Minister for Health. I think it is fair and reasonable to suggest that he should wait to see what happens after I have spoken to the Minister for Health.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I have just looked at the Bill which has been disposed of after much deliberation, and that is the fluoride Bill. I am not referring to this for the purpose of dealing with another Bill which has already been dealt with, but I am referring to it for the purpose of explaining what the Minister has already agreed to in that Bill. I should like to quote subclause (5) of clause 6 of that measure as follows:—

(5) At a meeting of the Committee—

- (a) four members form a quorum;
- (b) a question arising at the meeting shall be determined by a majority of the valid votes of the members present at the meeting.

Mr. Graham: That is the same principle.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: The Minister has agreed to that and it is his Bill in regard to fluoride. I am only asking for the same principle to be adopted here for the purposes of uniformity, and the Minister is hesitant about accepting the amendment.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: The same set of circumstances need not necessarily apply. I am not quite certain how this will work and that is why I am a little hesitant to agree to this deletion.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: The Minister knows very well how it will work. I am quite serious when I say that if the Minister had had a portfolio for only five minutes, there might be some reason for allowing a little latitude, but the Minister has been a Minister for years and, in fact, he was Minister for Health for years. The Minister administered the Health Act for many years, and now he is acting in the capacity of the Minister representing the Minister for Health in this Chamber.

If the Chamber has agreed to this particular provision in the fluoride Bill, why not agree to it in this Bill? The principle is the same. I think it is too silly for the Minister to adopt this attitude and refuse to accept an amendment of this nature. If there is a vote taken on this, I hope every member on the Government side will use his common sense.

Mr. Hawke: What common sense?

Mr. Graham: They would not be on that side if they had any common sense.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes—18

Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Jamieson
Mr. Brady	Mr. Kelly
Mr. Davies	Mr. Molr
Mr. Evans	Mr. Norton
Mr. Graham	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Hall	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Toms
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. May

(Teller.)

Noes—24

Mr. Bovell	Mr. Hutchinson
Mr. Brand	Mr. Lewis
Mr. Burt	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Court	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Craig	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Crommelin	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Dunn	Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Durack	Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Elliott	Mr. Runciman
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Rushton
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. Williams
Dr. Henn	Mr. I. W. Manning

(Teller.)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr. Curran	Mr. Cornell
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. Gayfer
Mr. Rowberry	Mr. Hart

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 11 to 20 put and passed.

Schedule put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

FIRE BRIGADES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 11th October.

MR. BICKERTON (Pilbara) [9.16 p.m.]: Before dealing with the contents of the Bill, I wish to bring to your attention, Mr. Speaker, a matter which is applicable not only to this legislation but also to other Statutes. On taking the adjournment of the debate I called for the parent Act and I discovered that it was available together with loose amendments going as far back as 1961. I know there are other Statutes that have amendments which are still not incorporated in the parent Acts and which were made even before 1961. I am not being critical about this, but I would point out it is rather difficult to take the adjournment of a debate on a Bill and then find that one has to go through the parent Act and incorporate all the outstanding amendments—which is quite a task—so that one can make sense of the amending Bill before the House.

This is made all the more difficult when a member has not a great deal of time in which to compare the amending Bill with the parent Act, but in this case I have had sufficient time because the Minister was good enough to adjourn the debate on this measure for a week. However, sometimes a member has only a day in which to study an amendment to an Act particularly.

This is difficult when an amendment, or amendments, in a Bill actually amends previous amending Acts which have not been consolidated with the parent Act, because, in order to carry out his task in a proper manner, a member has to obtain a copy of the parent Act and insert all the outstanding amendments.

I know that the officers of Parliament House do a certain amount of this work when time is available, but obviously it is impossible for them to keep up with all the amendments that are made to the various Statutes. I was wondering, therefore, whether you, Mr. Speaker, would give some consideration to appointing an officer, or assigning an officer to be engaged full-time on this work so that members may have at least one House copy of each Act of Parliament completely up to date with all the amendments. I have seen the officers of this House employed on this work, and they do as much as they can during the parliamentary recess; but, as I have said, it would be impossible for them to keep up with this task and continue with their normal duties.

If an officer were to be engaged solely on this work we could have at least one copy of each Statute brought entirely up to date at the beginning of each session. In this instance I was saved the trouble of bringing the parent Act up to date by inserting the various amendments, because I was able to borrow an up-to-date Act from somebody else.

In speaking to the amendments to the Fire Brigades Act which are contained in this Bill, I would first like to mention the work that is carried out by the Fire Brigades Board. In this public utility, firemen are more or less our unsung heroes. They do a mighty job in a conscientious manner, and these remarks apply particularly to the members of the volunteer fire brigades which operate in the various country districts. Therefore, I would be remiss if I did not, in passing, pay a tribute to the services which these men render to the community.

Many of the amendments contained in the Bill are, as the Minister stated, purely of a machinery nature. For example, many of them merely seek to deal with the change to decimal currency. Another provision, which seeks to amend section 2 of the Act, has reference to the administrative staff, and the Minister proposes to amend this section in the Act by substituting the word "other" for the word "administrative," because the word "administrative" is too restrictive in that there are many staff members other than administrative staff. The Minister intends to bring these officers under the Act.

Other amendments in the Bill have been brought about as a result of substituting the word "other" for the word "administrative," otherwise the parent Act would not

read sensibly. The main provision in the Bill seeks to fix, between the various bodies involved, a rate which is contributed for the upkeep of the fire brigade services. Those bodies comprise the Treasury, local government authorities, and insurance companies.

In 1963 the Act was amended to provide a system of apportioning the contributions made by the various bodies I have mentioned. Under the system agreed upon the insurance companies contributed 64 per cent. of the contributions, the local governing bodies 20 per cent., and the Government 16 per cent. This system operated for three years and, that period having expired, it became necessary to introduce another amendment to the Act so that the legislation could continue to operate, and this is the amendment I will deal with in the main.

Members should realise that if this method of apportioning the contributions is passed on this occasion, the provision becomes part of the parent Act, and the basis of the amendment which operated for three years will apply for all time, unless some good reason is brought forward to amend the Act in the future. The method used in 1963 to arrive at this apportionment of contributions was based on a five-State average—so we have been told by the Minister—and the reason given by the Minister for not altering the method of apportionment in this instance is that the five-State average has not altered.

I suppose this reason is as good as any, but this is where the Minister and I part company. Nevertheless, we come together again on some of the subsequent amendments in the Bill. First of all, I consider the Treasury should be responsible for the cost of maintaining the Fire Brigades Board. The local governing authorities should not enter into the matter at all. If this were the position, the Treasury would be able to make a better deal with the insurance companies on the amount of money they subscribe towards the upkeep of the fire brigade services. After all is said and done, the local governing authorities do not contribute towards the cost of the police force, the schools and other public utilities in country towns. They do not have to contribute towards an ambulance service, although I know many of them donate money to provide such a service. Therefore, why should they be responsible for making contributions for the maintenance of a fire brigades board?

If the Treasury were made solely responsible for the cost of maintaining the Fire Brigades Board and its services, I am certain it would ensure that the insurance companies would make the maximum contribution towards this cost, and I believe this should be so, because of all the bodies which are contributing money for the upkeep of the Fire Brigades Board, the only ones that make a profit from

the deal are the insurance companies. They are the only bodies which obtain any benefit apart from the benefit that is obtained by the Government in providing a public utility. However, the Government already does this in many other spheres without expecting the local governing bodies to contribute towards the cost of administration or maintenance.

The Government has its own insurance company in the State Government Insurance Office, and I have no doubt it would be a good proposition for the State Government Insurance Office to have a monopoly of fire insurance business showing a small profit, or even conducted on a non-profit basis. The contributions that are made by the local governing bodies towards the fire brigades services are not easy to find, and again the old question of the city *versus* the country arises.

In the country towns we must bear in mind that the local authorities have a small number of ratepayers from whom to draw their revenue, and I think I am right in saying the fire insurance premiums in the country are higher than those prescribed in the city, particularly where the fire brigade service in the country is perhaps not quite as adequate as the service provided in the city. Therefore the ratepayers of the various country districts which provide the money initially seem to me to be paying twice. If the State Treasury were responsible for financing the maintenance of the Fire Brigades Board, no doubt the total cost would be spread throughout the State on a more equitable basis than it is under the present system of apportioning the contributions between the various local governing bodies, the Treasury, and the insurance companies.

After making some inquiries it seems to me that, in the meantime, the Government should investigate this aspect; namely, adequate distribution of the cost of maintenance of the fire brigade services, in view of the fact that the insurance companies are the bodies which are obtaining the most benefit from the work performed by the Fire Brigades Board, because it is working in their interests. This is so, because the more efficient is the work performed by the fire brigades the less danger there is of fire and the cost to the insurance companies is less. In view of this, it would seem that the apportionment of the maintenance costs would be more equitable if the insurance companies contributed 80 per cent., the Treasury 10 per cent., and the local governing bodies 10 per cent. Until a better system is evolved such an apportionment would be more equitable.

I intend to support the second reading of the Bill with the object that the Minister may be prepared to listen to some reason in the Committee stage. I have therefore mentioned these matters to give

the Minister some idea of what is in my mind in regard to the apportionment of the contributions that are made by the various bodies towards the upkeep of the Fire Brigades Board.

Another amendment in the Bill makes it possible for any employee of the Fire Brigades Board to be in charge of an operation. The present Act refers to the officer in charge or the second in command; and, without going into the parent Act, this Bill amends the Act to provide for "any employee of the fire brigade." That is fair enough. I understand it is something which has been going on for many years and, no doubt, because the Act is being amended, it has been decided to make the position official rather than unofficial, as it has been in the past.

Whilst we are on this matter, I understand that if a fireman is placed by the chief officer in charge of headquarters at Fremantle, he receives an extra 10c per hour; an extra 75c per hour for other out stations; and \$2 for stations in the country. If this responsibility which is placed upon him is to be made official under the Act, perhaps it would be a good opportunity for the Minister to have a look at the rates which have operated for quite a considerable time.

Reading from a copy of the Minister's speech, he had this to say in connection with this matter—

The present Act prescribes the powers and duties of the Chief Officer at fires and delegates those powers, in the absence of the Chief Officer to the officer in charge. In the metropolitan area officer coverage is provided by shifts operating for 24 hours per day, seven days each and every week, but despite these arrangements there are occasions due to sickness, or when an officer is on duties away from the station, or is incapacitated on the fire ground, when a fireman will be in charge of a crew until a relief officer can be provided. Also, in certain country towns, permanent and volunteer firemen work together and the permanent fireman is required to take charge of the volunteer crew. In other country towns manned solely by a volunteer brigade, the senior volunteer fireman at the fire takes charge.

The process of delegation of authority to the senior fire brigade member at fires is an essential and time-honoured practice recognised by additional payments under industrial awards. In fulfilling the responsibilities committed to him, a fireman may find it necessary to exercise some of the powers at present granted only to the Chief Officer, or, in his absence, the officer in charge, but as the Act currently reads he would be precluded from taking such steps as may be vital to the saving of life and property.

I am certain it was not the intention of the original legislators to limit the powers of any person rightfully in charge of a fire crew, and the amendments sought to sections 34 and 60 are to correct this anomaly and to provide, at all times, for the community, the best protection from the hazards of fire.

The Minister outlined the purposes of this amendment; and further on in the Bill he has amended sections relating to penalties in order to bring them to a figure which is more realistic in comparison with today's costs. Therefore if the Minister is going to be realistic with the penalties, I ask him to be realistic with the amounts paid to these people who are placed in charge as, to the best of my knowledge, they have not been amended for some time.

The Minister, when dealing with the increases in penalties had this to say—

Section 35 deals with the power to make regulations. One of the express powers is for the imposition of penalties for breaches of the regulations, to a maximum of \$40. This limit has also stood for many years and the amendment sought is for the substitution of a maximum of \$100, which is realistic in the light of current values.

We are being realistic in the light of current values so far as penalties are concerned, and I consider the amount paid to men in charge could also be adjusted to a realistic rate. I will not make an issue of the increase in penalties from \$40 to \$100. I agree the penalty was fixed a long time ago at the figure of £20; and values have altered considerably. So it is only right that the figure should be made more realistic.

However, whilst speaking about these penalties being increased, I would like an assurance from the Minister that these increases shall not apply to breaches of the regulations by employees in the course of their duties. Under the regulations, employees are liable to a penalty of \$20 for a breach of a regulation. The one concerned is regulation 133, page 1203 of the appropriate *Government Gazette*, and it deals with offences by employees under regulation 135, subregulation (7).

I sincerely hope the increase in penalties will not apply to breaches of the regulations by employees, because the fine under the regulations—as I view it—was fixed at a minimum rate, because those fixing the fine fully realised the penalty of £10 would not be the only penalty a permanent fireman would pay in the case of a breach of regulations. He would quite likely concede much seniority, probably be transferred to another station, and perhaps be downgraded, etc.; so the deterrent is quite adequate, even without a fine at all. However, the regulations prescribe a fine

of £10 as a nominal figure, and this has been so for some time. I do not know whether there has been any complaint about it, but I certainly would not like to see that fine increased in accordance with the increase in the other penalties.

Section 72 of the parent Act is also amended, again with the intention of increasing penalties. I seek the same information from the Minister on this amendment as on the other. There is another amendment which states that in the case of the local government representative on the board being defeated, he shall hold the seat until a successor is elected. This does not seem unreasonable to me, except as to how he could represent a municipality on a board when the people who should have elected him have rejected his services.

I suppose he can be a member to some degree, but one certainly could not say he was representing a municipality if, in effect, the electors of that municipality decided they no longer wanted him. I think perhaps more harm would be done by having a vacancy for a period of three months and robbing the local government association of a representative than would be done by his holding office until such time as a successor is elected by the people. So, as I said previously, it is my intention to support the second reading.

MR. HALL (Albany) [9.40 p.m.]: I rise to say a few words on this measure. By way of question and answer during the last session of Parliament, I queried the actual section we are dealing with to-night—section 15, which is amended by clause 4.

In looking at the measure in its entirety I find that by the addition of the word "other" in the administrative side of the section, and taking away the actual word "administrator" it enlarges the activities of the board and gives more elasticity in regard to appointment to the board.

An employee representative on the board can put the employees' side of a question; and the employees have been debarred from having this done for many years. It is a worth-while move to alter the administrative section by including the word "other." Later on in the measure reference is made to the fact that there can be a representative of the employees on the board. I think the employees are entitled to air their views. They probably know more about the practical side of things than the officers, although most of the officers are drawn from the ranks, and many have come up through the volunteer ranks and have experience in that field.

The member for Pilbara mentioned the extension of time for a member of the board who was defeated as a result of a local authority election. I would refer here to a question I asked on this subject during the last session of Parliament. I refer to

page 147 of the *Votes and Proceedings*. I asked the following question of the Chief Secretary:—

FIRE BRIGADES BOARD: LOCAL AUTHORITIES' REPRESENTATIVE

Appointee

- (1) Can he advise the name of the successful applicant for the position as representative of the local authorities on the W.A. Fire Brigades Board?

The reply was: S. J. Prunster. Continuing—

- (2) How many applications were received for the position, what were their names, and from which shires were they nominated?

The answer was as follows:—

- (2) Three candidates.

A. W. Parry: nominated by the Town of Bunbury.

S. J. Prunster: nominated by the Shires of—

Armada-Kelmscott.
Busselton.
Collie.
Goomalling.
Katanning.
Kellerberrin.
Kwinana.
Pingelly.
York.

and the Towns of—

Geraldton and Northam.

Incomplete nominations for Mr. Prunster were also received from Brookton and Waroona Shires.

R. Smithson: nominated by the Town of Albany.

There was a misdirection of correspondence and I was informed that the member nominated in Albany received Mr. Parry's letter and Mr. Parry received Mr. Smithson's letter and no-one knew who was elected. As a result of the question I asked, I found there was an anomaly in the Act, so I forwarded a copy of the question and answer to the Town Clerk of Albany. As a result of this, the following article appeared in the *Albany Advertiser*:—

MLA Exposes Anomaly in Fire Board Election:

Albany MLA Jack Hall has exposed an anomaly in the method of election for the W.A. Fire Brigade Board.

As a reaction to that I received a letter from Mr. Prunster outlining his disappointment of my knowledge of the case.

I replied to Mr. Prunster as follows:—

Reference your letter to me of the 26th September, 1965, appertaining to election of yourself to the Fire Brigades' Board as local Government representative, to schedule referred to.

Firstly, let me say that I do not belittle your ability to sit on the Board, . . .

Mr. Prunster had many years of volunteer fire brigade service long before he became a member of the Fire Brigades' Board, and he would be competent and capable of carrying out his duties.

The SPEAKER: Order! Which part of the Bill are you dealing with?

Mr. HALL: I am dealing with clause 4: the components of the board. This whole matter emanates from questions I asked in the House. The member for Pilbara said earlier tonight that he could not quite understand how a member of the board could still sit on the board when he had been defeated at an election. At the particular time to which I am referring, Mr. Prunster had been beaten in a local shire election by one vote.

Mr. Bovell: Was he not elected by the shire concerned?

Mr. HALL: He was defeated on this occasion, and a defeated member cannot sit on the board. To go further, I question the constitutional right of anyone to sit on the board, under the provisions of the Fire Brigades Act. Part IV, Constitution of the Board, reads as follows:—

The Board to be constituted under this Act shall consist of ten members, as follows:—

- (a) Two members shall be appointed by the Governor, one of whom shall be appointed by the Governor to be the President of the Board.
- (b) Three members shall be elected by the insurance companies carrying on business within the State.
- (c) One member shall be elected by the Council of the city of Perth.
- (d) One member shall be elected by the municipal councils and roads boards of the municipal and road districts mentioned in Part II of the Second Schedule to this Act, and by the municipal councils or road boards the districts of which or portions of the districts of which may hereafter be included in Part II of the Second Schedule pursuant to section five of this Act.

Without elaborating any further, the schedule is very comprehensive and many shires and towns are mentioned. To continue—

- (e) One member shall be elected by the municipal councils and roads boards of the municipal and road districts mentioned in Part III of the Second Schedule to this Act and by the municipal councils or

road boards the districts of which or portions of the districts of which may hereafter be included in Part III of the Second Schedule pursuant to section five of this Act.

When a member is defeated in his particular electorate or shire, how can he constitutionally remain on the board? The Act sets out the position very precisely. The amendment in the proposed subsection reads as follows:—

(2) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (1) of this section, a member of the Board whose seat as such a member becomes vacant in the circumstances set out in paragraph (b) of that subsection shall continue to hold office until the vacancy so occasioned is filled by the election of a new member pursuant to the provisions of section eleven of this Act, and while continuing to hold that office shall have and may exercise all the rights and powers of a member of the Board as fully and effectually as he could have done prior to his seat as a member of the Board becoming vacant.

That proposed amendment exemplifies what I raised by question and answer last session, and it will get over the anomaly we now have. In other words, clause 4 will allow a certain amount of elasticity and a member will be able to sit on the board even after he has been defeated.

I would reiterate that I do not condemn the man sitting there today. I think he has all the powers and rights to sit on the board and he will probably be re-elected, without very much doubt, by the shire which he previously represented. However, in this particular clause we find an attempt by the Government to get over the difficulty, so that a defeated member can sit on the board. I do not condemn the Government for its action, because it is probably trying to retain the services of a particularly valuable man. Nevertheless, the elasticity is significantly there, and cannot be denied. On page 1186 of the *Government Gazette*, dated the 28th April, 1965, the form for the election of a member is set out and is as follows:—

Each such local authority may nominate a candidate for election as a member of the Board to represent the local authorities comprised in such local authority's group, and the completed nominated paper shall be forwarded to the returning officer so as to reach him not later than 12 o'clock noon on the 21st day of October.

If there is more than one candidate, there has to be a plebiscite and a vote is taken.

It cannot be denied that by way of question and answer in this House, I had unearthed this weakness, and the Government tried to forestall and carry on under the existing circumstances prevailing. I

do not condemn the action in this case, because the man is a very capable and efficient representative of the local shire. However, if it is elastic enough to allow for one, it can be juggled in the future.

Referring to the strength of the fire brigade at Albany, on the 12th October, 1965, I asked the Chief Secretary the following question:—

In view of the increased population to 14,000 of the Shire and Municipality of Albany and increased oil bunkering through the Port of Albany (17,632 tons per year June, 1965), can he advise if the permanent fire brigade personnel is at sufficient strength to meet all emergencies, including ships' fires?

The Chief Secretary replied—

Fire protection at Albany is provided by permanent and volunteer brigades. The combined strength is considered sufficient to meet emergencies arising from the known risks involved.

I wish to refer to the near catastrophe which occurred at Albany last December and January, when the town was almost completely engulfed by fire. The risk of losing the town was very evident and prominent. Were we at sufficient strength? Not at any time could we master the emergency which had arisen. Had we been at our official strength in all the services, so that we could have checked to see that burning-off had been done, perhaps the near catastrophe would not have occurred at all. If it had not been for the grand efforts of the civilians of Albany and the efficiency of the Shell Company employees, Albany could easily have been devastated.

The papers wrote up the details of the fire, and such details even got into the English papers. I will quote from the *Albany Advertiser* as follows:—

The severe bushfires which threatened Albany and Denmark recently received considerable publicity, although somewhat exaggerated, in the March 26 edition of a London newspaper.

The Evening Standard reported that two Western Australian towns, Albany and Denmark, had been saved from a dozen bushfires by a dramatic change of wind.

It was an act of God; that is all that saved the town of Albany on that particular day when people were moving their furniture and goods out of their homes in Festing Street and bulldozers were trying to hold back the fire. Were we at strength?

The ships at the wharf would not allow their crews off in case they were needed to man the fire-fighting equipment on the ships and at the wharf. On that particular day every organisation in the town made its fire-fighting material and equipment available and every man who could

be spared was allowed to leave his job to help with the fire fighting. Again I say, "Were we at sufficient strength?"

After the fire, the police hit at the town fire brigade. That was a nice example. The police were out fighting as hard as the firemen, but brought the fire brigade under ridicule because of certain matters. The civil emergency service was also brought into the argument. Let us see if we had sufficient strength.

Our population at Albany has gone from 8,000 to 14,000 or 16,000, which brings me very forcibly to the statement made by the member for Pilbara on the amount of contributions which are being paid by insurance companies to the Fire Brigades Board. We cannot overrate our municipal and shire councils, and we cannot overrate the Government any more.

The owners of the properties which were saved by the civilians on this particular occasion should give them a first-class dinner, as did the Shell Company for its employees in appreciation of the excellent manner in which the employees carried out their duties. I also give full commendation to the C.W.A. women who, on that day, went amongst the firefighters and kept up the stimulants by way of cups of tea.

If we take the number of services that have been increased in the towns of Albany, Bunbury, Northam, Geraldton, and Kalgoorlie it will be found that the permanent services have to carry specialised firefighting equipment as set out by the insurance companies. Rightfully so. However, the whole matter should be reviewed. Let us learn from what occurred at Dwellingup.

The people who are being protected are undoubtedly the insurance companies. I commend the measure, but I think the Government has gone around the problem in section 15, in a funny manner. The member for Pilbara has suggested that perhaps we should give the member of the board an extension of time of three months when he is so capable and efficient.

MR. CRAIG (Toodyay—Chief Secretary) [9.58 p.m.]: I thank the member for Pilbara and the member for Albany for their support of this Bill. As stated by them, it does not contain any extensive alterations or amendments to the Fire Brigades Act. Possibly the one case for any controversy at all is in regard to the rates of contribution which are required to be met by the Government, by the local authorities, and by the insurance companies.

The member for Pilbara suggests that the Government contribution should be at a lesser rate, and also that the local authorities' contribution should be at a lesser rate. However, he suggests that the insurance company rate should be increased because as he states, or as he

considers, they are the ones who are profiteering, or making a profit, on the present basis of contribution.

The basis, or the formula, has been in existence for many years and it is also a system that is used in all the other States of the Commonwealth. I suppose the question could be as broad as it is long because whatever figure is arrived at is passed on to the consumer, or the person concerned. In the case of the Government, it is passed on by way of taxation; in the case of the local authorities, by way of rates; and with the insurance companies, by way of their premiums.

I feel sure that the Treasury would not be agreeable, at this stage, to paying a substantial sum towards increasing the Government contribution.

Mr. Bickerton: The Treasurer should be happy if it is reduced.

Mr. CRAIG: That may be so. However, I undertake to give close consideration to the suggestions put forward by the member for Pilbara to see if we can pursue the matter along the lines he suggested. I might say that none of the parties concerned has raised any objection to the continuation of the present basis of contribution.

The honourable member also referred to the rates paid to employees who assumed the responsibility of officer in charge where circumstances make this necessary. As far as I can recall, I have not received any representations from the union in this connection but, no doubt, it will take advantage of the honourable member's comments and follow them up with some representations to me.

As regards penalties for breaches of the regulations, my impression of this was that that they did not apply to employees, and the honourable member sought an assurance that this was so. I can only repeat that that is my interpretation of the amendment.

He also referred to the representation on the Fire Brigades Board of a defeated council member. This matter was raised also by the member for Albany. Perhaps there may be some confusion over this and I shall refer firstly to the point raised by the member for Albany, who referred to one, Mr. Prunster, who was defeated in a council election but continued as a member of the Fire Brigades Board—I think that was what he implied.

I shall correct his impression in this regard. When Mr. Prunster was defeated as a councillor he had to resign from the Fire Brigades Board, but following this, the councils in the fire district concerned nominated him for membership of the Fire Brigades Board. They are quite entitled to do this under section 7 of the Act which states quite clearly that the board shall consist of 10 members, and then it mentions the 10 members and states that one shall be elected by the councils of the

municipal districts or portions of the municipal districts from time to time included in part II of the second schedule. That section of the Act refers to the schedule which, in turn, refers to the shires that are included in a particular fire district; but it does not specifically state that the member nominated shall necessarily be a member of a council.

Therefore, any council in the particular fire district to which the honourable member referred could nominate anyone to be a member of the Fire Brigades Board, and that nomination would need the support of the other councils within the district. I suppose the reason for this might be that no-one might be available in a particular fire district who would be prepared to take on the office as a member of the Fire Brigades Board. Then again some ex-councillor who had given years of sterling service to the board, and the councils in his particular district, might find that those councils were desirous of retaining his interests by nominating and electing him as a member of the Fire Brigades Board. That is one of the reasons why the Act is worded in the way it is.

I would like to correct the impression of the member for Albany that it was the Government who wanted Mr. Prunster to remain on the Fire Brigades Board. The honourable member was rather critical of the Government in this regard but I can assure him the Government had nothing to do with it. This matter was completely in the hands of the local authorities concerned.

Mr. Hall: The local authorities wrote to the Minister for Local Government to have the matter rectified, did they not?

Mr. CRAIG: I do not recall that. I have already outlined the procedure that was followed in the case of Mr. Prunster and it is unfortunate that his name came into this discussion—

Mr. Hall: Yes.

Mr. CRAIG: —because he has been a very valuable member of the Fire Brigades Board.

Mr. Bovell: And most conscientious.

Mr. CRAIG: He shows a considerable interest in the affairs of the districts he represents. However, I thank the two members for their support of the Bill and I commend it to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair; Mr. Craig (Chief Secretary) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 13 put and passed.

Clause 14: Section 37 amended—

Mr. BICKERTON: This is the clause to which, in the main, I referred during the second reading and to which I wish to move certain amendments to provide for a more equitable apportionment of contri-

butions. I think a more equitable distribution would be 10 per cent., 20 per cent., and 80 per cent.

Mr. Craig: That's 110 per cent!

Mr. BICKERTON: I mean, 10 per cent., 10 per cent., and 80 per cent. I wish to move, in line 22, to delete the word "sixteen" and substitute the word "ten"; in line 23, to delete the word "twenty" and substitute the word "ten"; and in line 24, to delete the word "sixty-four" and substitute the word "eighty."

The Minister referred to this matter during his reply to the debate and he said that interference with the contributions of the insurance companies could increase the premiums. However, as I said before, I still believe the best method of operating the Fire Brigades Board would be for the Treasurer to be solely responsible. Then I feel sure the Treasury officials would be keen to keep an eye on the insurance companies to see what they were making out of the deal. There is no reason why the Government could not make use of the State Government Insurance Office in this connection, and if most of the Government insurance were carried by that office it would be of considerable benefit.

I still believe that the insurance companies are the only ones who will get anything out of the proposal in the Bill. The Minister said as far as he knows no objection has been raised by the local authorities. I have spoken to the officials of the association and they say it is an embarrassment to a number of local authorities. The Minister said they just put up their rates to meet the costs, but I believe I am right in saying that people in country districts are already paying higher premiums than people in the city. I believe a more equitable distribution would be made if the whole business was run by the Treasury in conjunction with the insurance companies, preferably the Government's own company.

In towns like Port Hedland there are not a great number of ratepayers from whom the contributions can be raised and many towns would find it difficult to meet the 20 per cent. that is required. I move an amendment—

Page 5, line 22—Delete the word "sixteen".

Mr. CRAIG: I cannot agree with the amendment. I said previously that the formula is based on the five-State average, and that no objection had been forthcoming in regard to the present formula. Perhaps I misled the honourable member by making that statement because some objections were raised several months ago by all parties concerned when it was known that the Bill would be introduced to continue the contributions on the basis outlined. After being informed of the continuation of the present formula no objection was received from any of the parties.

Mr. Bickerton: I was speaking to them yesterday.

Mr. CRAIG: No objection has been raised since that information was passed on to the parties concerned. So far as the Government's setting up its own insurance office to handle this matter is concerned, the honourable member referred to this during the second reading and I said that his suggestions would be investigated. I understand that the State Government Insurance Office is not in the position to handle all types of fire insurance. I may be wrong, but I believe that is so. On the other hand insurance companies cover the entire field of fire insurance. Accordingly, I oppose the amendment.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes—18

Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Jamieson
Mr. Brady	Mr. Kelly
Mr. Davies	Mr. Molr
Mr. Evans	Mr. Norton
Mr. Graham	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Hall	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Toms
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. May

(Teller)

Noes—24

Mr. Bovell	Mr. Hutchinson
Mr. Brand	Mr. Lewis
Mr. Burt	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Court	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Craig	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Crommelin	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Dunn	Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Durack	Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Elliott	Mr. Runciman
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Rushton
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. Williams
Dr. Henn	Mr. I. W. Manning

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr. Curran	Mr. Hart
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. Gayfer
Mr. Rowberry	Mr. Cornell

Amendment thus negatived.

Mr. BICKERTON: It is obvious from the Minister's remarks and the vote of the Committee that the Minister has satisfied himself that the Treasury is happy to pay 16 per cent. of the fees for the upkeep of the Fire Brigades Board. From the information I have, the local government association is not happy with the 20 per cent. As the Minister said when he put these figures forward, he received no further objection after the first one. I daresay the local authorities thought it would be better for them to accept the 20 per cent. in case it was raised to 25 per cent.

I realise the amendment I propose to move will leave me 10 per cent. short of the 100. But that is not difficult to overcome, because it would be a matter of substituting the words "seventy-four" for the

words "sixty-four" in line 24 on page 5. I think the Minister will agree this is more reasonable so far as the insurance companies are concerned, because apart from the profits they are making, they will be saving another 6 per cent. on what they would have paid had my original amendment been carried. I move an amendment—

Page 5, line 23—Delete the word "twenty."

Mr. CRAIG: The reasons I advanced for not accepting the previous amendment apply in this case. I see no reason to accept a compromise of an arrangement for the disbursement of costs which is apparently acceptable to all the parties concerned.

Mr. HALL: I cannot understand the Minister's action. He must realise that the responsibility of the shires and municipalities is increasing with the advancement of the State. The revenue they receive is limited, but they must provide the necessary fire protection, and the facilities required by volunteer firemen. This protection is provided for the benefit of the insurance companies. That cannot be denied. The member for Pilbara keeps hammering that point, and the shires and municipalities should be relieved of this rating so that the money can be applied to the development of the shire generally. I support the amendment.

Mr. GRAHAM: The member for Pilbara is to be commended for the step he has taken. The Minister has sought the easy way out.

A member interjected.

Mr. GRAHAM: If the honourable member who interjected had been awarded 20 strokes of the birch by the Government or by Parliament, I daresay he would be thankful if the Government amended the sentence to 10 or 15 strokes. If I understand the contention of the member for Pilbara correctly he feels it is an imposition for the local authorities to be called upon to make a contribution in this matter.

If I take out a policy with an insurance company, surely it is a business arrangement between myself and the company concerned. If an instrumentality is set up to reduce to a minimum the liability or the call upon the insurance companies, then the insurance companies should make a contribution in their own interests. The local authority does not own or control the fire brigade. It is something which is set up by the Government under legislation for the financial benefit of the insurance companies.

Because local authorities of late have not been particularly vocal does not mean they are satisfied with the arrangement. Members—and more particularly members of the Government—would be aware that local authorities have been complaining of the magnitude of their task and the limited access they have to the purse of the public to raise moneys.

The amendment does not suggest that local authorities should be relieved of the burden placed on the Government; it suggests that the insurance companies, whose real responsibility it is, should be called upon to bear a greater burden. Why has the Government this solicitude for the insurance companies? Surely it should have more concern for local authorities which find it impossible to meet the many demands made upon them.

I do not intend to give a discourse on some of the things it was my good fortune to see abroad, but when one compares the circumstances here with those in other parts the position is really staggering. Indeed I had a conversation with the Deputy President of the Shire of Perth, who agreed that the shire could not claim to have one playing field of which it could feel intensely proud; nor did it have one recreation area to which it could point with complete pride. He said there was a shortage of facilities in the way of libraries and child centres.

Mr. J. Hegney: Swimming pools.

Mr. GRAHAM: He also mentioned the shortage of halls to serve the interests of the public, centres for the aged people, and so on.

This local authority is doing a tremendous job in a tremendous area—in a most rapidly-growing section of the metropolitan area—and the job is completely beyond it. In not agreeing to the proposition that the insurance companies should bear a greater charge the Government, for some unaccountable reason, is siding with the insurance companies and placing the burden upon the local authorities which, I repeat, are finding it difficult to devise new ways and means to raise money to carry on their ordinary work. Every member will be aware of the scope of local authorities; of their various activities, and of the increasing demands made upon them.

Yet the Government will not make a move, because apparently it has greater affection for the insurance companies than it has for the local authorities. In the interests, not of the local authorities, but of the citizens in this State, I hope that some members who usually range themselves behind the Government will on this occasion ensure that justice is done. Only some insignificant point in the Bill is involved, and it cannot be deemed as part of party policy to be followed by every member on the Government side.

Mr. TOMS: Originally the proportions contributed by the local authorities and the Government were 2/9ths each, and the insurance companies 5/9ths. When the Act was amended three years ago the contributions of the local authorities and the Government were reduced to 20 per cent. and 16 per cent. respectively. The Government should have regard for the local authorities which have to make finance

available to provide the amenities and facilities for their ratepayers. It is only fair that local authorities should contribute the same percentage as the Government. A reduction of 4 per cent. will make a considerable amount available to local authorities for the provision of amenities such as playing fields.

The only ones to benefit from the services of the fire brigades are the insurance companies, which already receive premiums from the ratepayers for fire protection. In addition, the ratepayers are required to contribute the percentage which local authorities have to pay to the Fire Brigades Board. Even if the Minister cannot agree to a reduction from 20 to 10 per cent., as proposed by the member for Pilbara, he should give consideration to reducing it to the percentage that is paid by the Government.

Mr. J. Hegney: What is the reason for this disparity?

Mr. TOMS: I do not know. The Minister should give consideration to adjusting the contributions. It is only fair for the insurance companies to pay the bulk of the funds required. As members of Parliament we should be concerned with the safeguarding of human lives in fires, and not the safeguarding of the profits of insurance companies.

Mr. BICKERTON: The Minister said all he was concerned with was that the formula had been agreed to. If that is his attitude why are these matters brought before Parliament when there is no intention to alter the rates which are suggested, regardless of whether or not the case merits consideration? This makes a mockery of Parliament.

There may be many reasons for the formula to be agreed to. A rumour could be spread that if it was not agreed to the fire premiums would be increased. The people concerned with local government with whom I have discussed this matter are unanimous in their view that it should not be the responsibility of local authorities to make contributions to the Fire Brigades Board. They already have to provide services to their ratepayers, and to construct and maintain roads. Surely they should not be expected to provide funds to the Fire Brigades Board. Already most ratepayers have to pay fire premiums to insurance companies; and, in addition, they are called upon to make contributions through their local authorities to the board.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes—18	
Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Jamieson
Mr. Brady	Mr. Kelly
Mr. Davies	Mr. Moir
Mr. Evans	Mr. Norton
Mr. Graham	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Hall	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Toms
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. May

(Teller)

Noes—24

Mr. Bovell	Mr. Hutchinson
Mr. Brand	Mr. Lewis
Mr. Burt	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Court	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Craig	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Crommelin	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Dunn	Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Durack	Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Elliott	Mr. Runciman
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Rushton
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. Williams
Dr. Henn	Mr. I. W. Manning

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr. Curran	Mr. Hart
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. Gayfer
Mr. Rowberry	Mr. Cornell

Amendment thus negatived.

Mr. BICKERTON: I will take this opportunity of endeavouring to extract from the Minister the assurance that between now and the time the measure passes in another place he will have inquiries made of the association of the local authorities to ascertain its views on this matter.

Mr. CRAIG: I do not know what the honourable member thinks I am. I have said that on this question an agreement was reached between the parties concerned. They were advised that the existing rates would continue and no objection was forthcoming from them. Prior to that I obtained the views of the Local Government Association and also of the insurance interests. I repeat, no objection was forthcoming from the local authorities when they were advised that these rates would continue. What other assurance is required of me I do not know. I am not going back to the local authorities now to ask whether they have any objection. They had the opportunity weeks and weeks ago to object.

Mr. BICKERTON: I am sorry the Minister has become belligerent. Perhaps it is because he is tired. Sometimes he is co-operative. However, before this Bill goes to another place I will endeavour to obtain some information on this matter from the Local Government Association and present it to the Minister so that the Minister who will be handling this Bill in another place will, perhaps, be in a position to give a little more information than the Minister here has given us.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 15 to 26 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 10.46 p.m.