

do so. I was a guest of the Swan River Conservation Board and the Bunbury Conservation Board on a trip up and back. I would mention that it takes a good skipper to navigate this course because the length of the boat is nearly as great as the width of the river.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: It is lovely, too.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Yes, it really is a lovely trip and I suggest that we cannot really know our river unless we see it from the river itself. One does not get any opportunity of seeing it from the road at present.

There are many problems in regard to the further development north of the Causeway. I am not making this suggestion to anyone but, if I had any money, and was in a position to buy land, I would buy it north of the Causeway as quickly as I could. In 10 years' time, and as soon as the development takes place, the value will be increased 500-fold.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: Would the Government resume the land if people were to buy it?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: If it involved the one and a half chains, the Government would resume because it is most essential to keep one and a half chains for the benefit of the community.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: You might have started a mild land boom.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I am sure this will happen regardless of whether or not I mention it here.

There are no other points to be raised in connection with this measure. I will ask the Minister in charge of the legislation to convey to the board the complimentary remarks made by the two members who spoke to the Bill. I am satisfied this measure will allay the feelings of many people in regard to the river.

I think each and every one of us appreciates the value of the river. Of course, there are certain disabilities, and I think every one should appreciate these, too. In Perth, we are positioned somewhat similarly to Sydney. In order to reach the heart of the city of Sydney, one has to travel over a lot of water and, when rather extensive sections have to be bridged, this is very costly. Here, we have the same position because of the very wide stretches of water. Invariably it is the widest parts which one wants to bridge and this creates a disability from a transport point of view. However, the river is one of our heritages and, as a Parliament, we quite agree that we like the river as much as anyone else and we will endeavour to maintain it.

As I said, I will check on this question of the board, or department, before the Bill goes to the third reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 5.53 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 4th October, 1966

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

QUESTIONS (13): ON NOTICE SCHOOL AT BENTLEY Site

1. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister for Education:

Where is the site of the proposed new primary school for Bentley as

listed on this year's Loan Estimates?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

The site is at the corner of McKay Street, Bentley, and the service road leading to the W.A. Institute of Technology.

NATURAL GAS

Piping to Metropolitan Area

2. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

(1) In view of the interest and action being taken to secure natural gas for industrial purposes in both South Australia and Victoria, why is the Government of this State apparently disinterested in the discoveries close to Perth?

(2) What action, if any, is contemplated to pipe this gas to the metropolitan area?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

(1) The honourable member is mistaken in thinking that the Government is disinterested in discoveries of natural gas near Perth or elsewhere. On the contrary, the matter is being watched with very great interest.

(2) Until the field has been fully tested in order to calculate quantity and quality of the gas recoverable and the whole basis of economical usage has been worked out, no immediate action can be taken to pipe the gas to Perth.

TRAFFIC

Road Signs: Tabling of Diagrams

3. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Police:

Will he lay on the Table of the House diagrams of—

(a) the European system of standard or international road traffic signs;

(b) the signs used in this State for equivalent purposes?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

(a) and (b) Yes. The diagrams are handed in to be tabled for an unspecified period, but I would like them to be returned to me as early as possible.

The diagrams were tabled.

FLUORIDATION OF WATER SUPPLIES

Effect on Milk Teeth

4. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

(1) Using the figures contained in page 35 of the British Ministry of Health's report (No. 105) for the purpose of calculating the percentage of decayed milk teeth after five years' fluoridation, is it a correct assumption that the sta-

tistics for ages three and four relate to the whole dentition of 20 milk teeth but the figures for ages five, six and seven relate to the canines and molars only?

(2) If the assumption is not correct, will he explain why and give the correct interpretation?

(3) If the assumption is correct, do not the figures permit the following calculations:—

Percentage of Decayed Milk Teeth After Five Years' Fluoridation				
Age 3	Age 4	Age 5	Age 6	Age 7
6.5%	11.6%	24.3%	40.1%	50.4%

(4) Is this not evidence of a rapid upward trend in decay with a doubling each year?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Not applicable.

(3) Yes.

(4) It indicates that dental decay increases with age, a fact which everyone is aware of. A proper examination of the tables will show that children drinking fluoridated water from birth had only half the dental decay of the control children.

SUPERANNUATION AND FAMILY BENEFITS FUND

Review of Pensions

5. Mr. HALL asked the Premier:

In view of the sound financial position of the Superannuation and Family Benefits Fund at the 30th June, 1966, will he agree to have a complete review made of pensions so that contributors and widows will receive benefits in keeping with increased cost of living?

Mr. BRAND replied:

It requires an actuarial investigation to determine the soundness or otherwise of the fund, and this is in progress.

Efforts are being made to speed up the investigation so as to enable the Government to come to a conclusion in the matter of improving benefits in time to introduce any required legislation this year.

POLICE

Confidence Men Posing as Land Salesmen

6. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Police:

(1) Has his department received any reports of confidence men posing as land agents or representatives of building societies in this State?

(2) If "No," would he undertake to have this matter thoroughly looked into so as to avoid activities

similar to those in New South Wales?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Yes; if and when such action appears necessary.

SUPERANNUATION AND FAMILY BENEFITS FUND

Contributions by Employers

7. Mr. HALL asked the Premier:

To question 6, part (3) on the 15th September his answer was "Nil". How does he reconcile this with the annual report of the Superannuation Board, the 30th June, 1965, which states the employers' contributions at £104,986 14s. 4d.?

Mr. BRAND replied:

These are payments made by bodies such as hospital boards, the employees of which have been permitted to join the superannuation fund under agreements that require the authorities concerned to relieve the Government of employer contributions.

FLUORIDATION OF WATER SUPPLIES

Commencement after Passing Legislation

8. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Works:

In the event of the fluoridation of public water supplies Bill becoming law, how long will it be before fluoride is introduced into the metropolitan scheme?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

It is likely to be 12 or 18 months, or perhaps even longer, after legal authority is given to the board to introduce fluoride into the metropolitan scheme water.

Mr. Graham: I suppose that will be done after the next election.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: It is difficult to know just what time it will take.

CARAVAN PARKS

Non-conforming Use of Land: Shire of Perth By-laws

9. Mr. GRAYDEN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

Bearing in mind that local authority by-laws cannot extinguish "non-conforming use" rights under its Town Planning and Development Act, which of the Shire of Perth by-laws relating to caravan parks and gazetted on the 8th January, 1964, are applicable to caravan parks within the shire which have "non-conforming use" rights?

Mr. NALDER replied:

The whole of the by-laws are applicable to caravan parks within the district of the Shire of Perth. Whether they are enforceable against the owner of a particular caravan park is a legal question which should be directed to the owner's legal advisers.

ARMADALE-KELMSCOTT HOSPITAL

Ground Development

10. Mr. RUSHTON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Which department is responsible for completion of ground development between Armadale-Kelmscott Memorial District Hospital and Albany Highway?
- (2) When is it expected these necessary works will be commenced?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) The Medical Department.
- (2) Work commenced yesterday, the 3rd October, 1966.

GOVERNMENT PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICERS AND GOVERNMENT PROMOTION OFFICERS

Appointments: Existing and Future

11. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Premier:

- (1) How many public relations officers are employed by the Government?
- (2) What are the names of the departments in which they are employed?
- (3) What are their respective—
 - (a) names;
 - (b) duties;
 - (c) qualifications;
 - (d) wages, salaries, and other remuneration;
 - (e) previous occupations;
 - (f) periods of appointment;
 - (g) dates of appointment?
- (4) How many additional public relations officers does the Government intend to employ in, say, the next six months, and what are the particulars?
- (5) Does the Government differentiate between public relations officers and Government or departmental promotion officers; if so, what is the difference?
- (6) In the case of the Government employing promotion officers as distinct from public relations officers, will he supply the same details regarding promotion officers as those previously requested concerning public relations officers?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) to (3) See schedule tabled.
- (4) So far as I am aware, no addi-

tional appointments are contemplated in the next six months.

- (5) Promotion officers in the Department of Industrial Development generally make direct approaches to particular individuals or sections of industry.

- (6) See schedule tabled.

The schedule was tabled.

ESPERANCE LAND AND DEVELOPMENT COMPANY

*Bedford Harbour Subdivision:
Development and Sale*

12. Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Lands:

With reference to the land known as the Bedford Harbour subdivision currently being advertised for sale by private treaty by the Esperance Land and Development Company—

- (a) what is the average acreage of the blocks now being offered for sale;
- (b) what was the price per acre paid by the company for the land comprised in this subdivision;
- (c) what was the cost (approximately) of survey and other ancillary expenses associated with the subdivision of the 23 blocks now being offered for sale;
- (d) what was the total approximate cost of effecting the clearing, burning, ploughing, and fire breaks on the Bedford Harbour subdivision;
- (e) if the 23 blocks comprised in the Bedford Harbour subdivision are sold, what would be the total return to the company therefrom?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (a) Approximately 2,300 acres.
- (b) In accordance with the conditions of the original deed of agreement dated the 19th November, 1956, and the Esperance Lands Agreement Act, 1960, the price per acre is 40c.
- (c) Approximately 10c per acre.
- (d) and (e) Under the terms of the agreement Act, a sum equivalent to at least \$2.40 per acre (including survey fee) must be expended in the prescribed development of the selected parcel before a Crown grant is issued. The sale of the 23 lots in this subdivision is in accordance with the terms and conditions of the original deed of agreement dated the 19th November, 1956, and the Esperance Lands Agreement Act, 1960. Financial returns to the

company are not required to be recorded departmentally by this Act.

DATES

Imports, and Growing in Wiluna District

13. Mr. BURT asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) How many tons of dates were imported into Australia in the year ended the 30th June, 1966?
- (2) Is he aware that the Wiluna district is considered by experts to be ideal for the growing of dates on a commercial basis?
- (3) If so, will he undertake to experiment with the growing of date palms at the Wiluna experimental plot with a view to establishing an industry which would materially assist in reducing the import figure, and would contribute to increasing the population in this remote area?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) 3,282 tons.
- (2) The Wiluna district will certainly be able to grow dates, but whether a grower could make an economic success of a commercial venture is a matter for conjecture at this stage.
- (3) Material is being collected from a number of sources for planting next month at the Wiluna Ground Water Research Station.
It will be some years before palms reach the production stage when it would be possible to assess yields and cost of production, handling, and marketing.

QUESTIONS (7): WITHOUT NOTICE

DARRYL BEAMISH CASE

Action by Government

1. Mr. TONKIN asked the Premier:

- (1) Has the Government received the report on Professor Brett's observations and implications on the Beamish case?
- (2) If "Yes," what action does the Government propose to take in the matter?
- (3) If "No," will he endeavour to expedite the report with a view to its very early consideration?

Mr. BRAND replied:

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition gave me some notice of his intention to ask this question, the answer to which is as follows:—

- (1) I have discussed the matter with the Minister for Justice, and he expects the report in the next day or two.
- (2) and (3) Answered by (1).

SEAWEED*Commercial Varieties*

2. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) Are there any known commercial varieties of seaweed in Western Australia; and, if so, in what areas are they to be found?
- (2) Are these in commercial quantities, and for what purpose are they used?
- (3) Has his department received any inquiries over the past two years in respect of establishing an industry in Western Australia based on the harvesting of seaweed; if so, how many inquiries have been received and from what countries?

Mr. COURT replied:

I thank the honourable member for notice of this question, the answer to which is as follows:—

- (1) Commercial varieties of seaweed have been found in various areas from the Abrolhos Islands to Albany.
- (2) Investigations have not substantiated that the varieties exist in commercial quantities or that quality is acceptable.
- (3) Discussions have taken place with two local firms in the last two years regarding the establishment of an industry in Western Australia as a result of interest shown by Japanese importers.

MAIL TO THE ARMED FORCES IN VIETNAM*Unsatisfactory Delivery*

3. Mr. TONKIN asked the Premier:

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?

The SPEAKER: I think this is a question which is hardly within the scope of the Premier.

Mr. TONKIN: Why not?

The SPEAKER: You are merely asking the Premier to make representations are you?

Mr. TONKIN: Yes, through the appropriate channel.

The SPEAKER: All right.

Mr. BRAND replied:

Again, the honourable member indicated his intention of asking this question. It seems to me that I would have to be given some

proof to justify my taking up this matter at any level. Nevertheless I will refer the question to the Minister for the Army and express the hope—and I am sure I express it for everyone—that there will not be a delay in any delivery, because the prompt delivery of mail to soldiers in the front line is indeed a great boost to their morale. However, I am sure the Minister for the Army himself is conscious of this and will be doing his best to resolve the problem.

MITCHELL FREEWAY: PROPOSED CUTTING*Provision for Capping*

4. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Premier:

- (1) Whilst I am quite conscious of the fact that Parliament recently rejected a motion which called for a tunnel in preference to the open cutting to allow the Mitchell Freeway to pass in front of Parliament House, will he confer with the Minister for Works, and other advisers if necessary, to ascertain whether it is economically practicable to construct the open cutting in a manner that will allow for capping, should this prove desirable at a later stage?
- (2) When he has had an opportunity to discuss the matter, will he advise the House of the outcome of same?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) and (2) When the freeway project was originally discussed by the Government, the question of the advisability of the covering in front of Parliament House came in for some discussion, and at that time it was suggested to the then Commissioner of Main Roads (Mr. Digby Leach) that although, because of costs and many other problems which have been indicated by the present Minister for Works, the covering could not be put over or some provision be made for a crossing—a pedestrian crossing—towards the spot where the archway is, provision should be made in the embankments to take such a cover. I am not sure whether anything has been done in this respect. I have discussed this matter with the Minister for Works, because clearly it is a matter which could be investigated, and I shall do so again. However, I think the Minister has pretty well explained the position to us in regard to what can be done in respect of the actual cutting itself.

FLUORIDATION OF WATER SUPPLIES

By-product of Alumina Refinery

5. Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON (Minister for Works): On Wednesday, the 21st September, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition asked six questions on fluoridation. Four of these—(3) to (6)—imputed that supplies of fluoride for the fluoridation of drinking water were derived from the aluminium industry. He was advised at that time that inquiries would be made and replies provided when the relevant information was obtained. The following letter was written to the Minister for Health by Mr. A. B. Kaltwasser, Aluminum Company of America, Pittsburgh:—

Dear Sir,

This is in reply to your letter of September 22, 1966. The necessary materials for fluoridation of drinking water are normally not obtained from aluminum factories. Sodium fluoride and fluosilicic acid are the usual materials, the former losing favour because of cost to the latter. Fluosilicic acid is a by-product of the phosphate fertilizer industry when they seek to eliminate the emanation of fluorine compounds to the atmosphere. The fluorine comes from its presence in small quantity in most phosphate ore which that industry uses.

Alcoa has not produced sodium fluoride during this decade and previously it was a virgin product not a by-product. Our basic products today, as in the past, are aluminum fluoride and sodium aluminum fluoride (cryolite) which are essential raw materials in addition to alumina in the smelting of aluminum and not amenable to water fluoridation.

Mr. Bonebrake's statement was correct in 1957, at which time we produced a few other fluorine containing products for chemical sales from our aluminum fluoride and cryolite operations. Shortages of fluorspar and depletion of our own reserves prompted our withdrawal from this activity rather than any change in the aluminum making process.

Today, in the U.S.A., these

materials are manufactured by chemical companies generally rather than aluminum producers who conserve their fluoride supplies for their own special internal requirements. Kaiser Aluminum & Chemical is an exception and participate in the chemical field producing a number of fluorocarbons.

From the above, you can see that there has been no revolutionary change in the basic process of the aluminum industry and that fluoride is not a by-product. In the area of conservation, however, we have approved over the years the retention of fluorides within the process in an effort to reduce our consumption.

Your Bill certainly will not be of any assistance to the aluminum industry either in Australia or the United States.

I interpolate here to say that perhaps there are a few further sentences which I might be forgiven for quoting. The letter concludes—

However, I wish you success in your endeavor as I am of the opinion that there are very great advantages to fluoridation of drinking water, and I have lived in several places where this has been, and is being done, successfully. From my two and one-half years' experience in Perth, I would think it would be very effective in controlling a serious existing dental problem.

MAIL TO THE ARMED FORCES IN VIETNAM

Unsatisfactory Delivery

6. Mr. BRADY asked the Premier:

Relative to mail to Vietnam, would the Premier have a look at page 2 of the home edition of the *Daily News* this evening where it is stated a resident of Midland Junction has been sending parcels to Vietnam regularly but these have not been received at the other end?

Mr. BRAND replied:

We are all vitally interested in this problem, but I can see no reason why the honourable member could not make this same inquiry. Although, perhaps, some weight would be added by virtue of it coming from the Premier, I think it would be up to the honourable

member—seeing this is a matter occurring in Midland Junction—to make the inquiry, and I would suggest that it would be as easy for him, as it would be for me, to do this.

Mr. Brady: I thought the Premier would be more interested.

Mr. BRAND: The Premier is very interested.

MITCHELL FREEWAY

Work near Parliament House: Effect on Buildings

7. Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON (Minister for Works): Mr. Speaker, I am sorry to be replying once again so soon to a question previously asked in the House—on this occasion a question asked by the member for South Perth regarding a machine which was being operated in the vicinity of Parliament House and which was causing vibrations that were felt in the building. I promised to find out something about this.

The Commissioner of Main Roads has ascertained for me that on Tuesday, the 20th September, the contractor for the Mitchell Freeway was operating a 4½-ton vibrating roller on a site adjacent to the intersection of Hay Street and George Street. Without having tests conducted, he cannot say for certain that it was this machine which caused the vibrations that were sensed in Parliament House on this date, although he feels that this is probably what happened.

The commissioner also states that the same vibrating roller had previously been used for compaction work on the extension of Harvest Terrace south of Hay Street, which in fact is closer to Parliament House than the site in George Street. Also, that other vibrating equipment was used in the construction of the Malcolm Street deviation a couple of months ago.

However, he has informed me that the next time this machine is used for compaction operations in the same locations, he will arrange for an engineer to visit Parliament House.

MARKETING OF POTATOES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Nalder (Minister for Agriculture), and read a first time.

BILLS (2): THIRD READING

1. Poisons Act Amendment Bill.

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Ross Hutchinson (Minister for Works), and passed.

2. Judges' Salaries and Pensions Act Amendment Bill.

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Court (Minister for Industrial Development), and transmitted to the Council.

EDUCATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Report

Report of Committee adopted.

METROPOLITAN REGION IMPROVEMENT TAX ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 22nd September.

MR. TONKIN (Melville—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [4.57 p.m.]: The sole purpose of this Bill is to increase the metropolitan region improvement tax, and the proposed increase is 60 per cent. That is a very substantial increase in any tax, however small the original tax might be. I do not think the Government has justified its proposal and I propose to show why it has not.

When this tax was first imposed in 1959, it was at the rate of ½d. in the pound or, to bring this to present day currency, ½d. in ten shillings, which is equivalent to our dollar.

Because it was believed that the initial tax was too high, it was subsequently reduced to ½d. in the pound. It is now proposed to increase the tax above what it was when originally imposed.

If members will take the trouble to work it out, this represents a 60 per cent. increase in the tax. In the intervening period, a substantial increase in money obtained from this tax has been received because of increases in valuations.

When I have spoken about this matter on former occasions, I have expressed the opinion, which I still hold, that present-day people should not be called upon to pay for something for which posterity will derive the greatest advantage. The sounder way to finance such schemes is to utilise loan funds by using revenue for the purpose of servicing those loans.

If a taxing authority uses all its revenue as it receives it for capital expenditure, it reduces its capacity to service loans, which is not a very good policy. Also there are two advantages to be derived from using loan funds for the purposes of this authority; firstly, more money can be obtained—and more money is certainly needed—and, secondly, one must contemplate, having regard to one's lifetime experience, that there will be a measure of gradual inflation over the years and so a

million pounds or a million dollars borrowed today and paid back in 50 years shows a profit on the capital involved, because the amount in 50 years' time will not represent as much money as a million pounds or a million dollars today. Therefore it pays to borrow money for the purposes of this authority so that more money can be obtained immediately, and then when the time comes to pay it back the many people deriving the most benefit from the expenditure will not have such a heavy burden as is imposed on people at present, who have to find the money immediately, when revenue is used for capital expenditure.

That is my objection to the policy which has been followed. I do not blame the authority wholly for the policy. Reference to its 1964-65 report shows that the authority appreciates it has substantial loan-raising capacity still available. Those are the words that appear on page 17 of the report, and I quote—

There is thus a substantial loan raising capacity still available covered by the difference between this figure—

That is, the figure for the servicing of loans—

—and the tax revenue.

So it is obvious that this body realises it ought to be using more of its revenue for the purpose of servicing loans, and it should be permitted to borrow more money in order to carry out the work it has to do.

Instead of seeking more revenue which it will expend immediately on purchasing properties, it would be better if the authority were to increase its loan-raising authorisation and use its revenue to service the loans. The Minister, in his speech when introducing the Bill, pointed out that on the present rate of financing, the borrowing would have to be substantially curtailed unless more revenue were obtained. That is looking at the problem from the wrong angle. That is because the authority keeps on spending its revenue on capital expenditure and is therefore not in a position to service loans. It can overcome that difficulty if it raises more money by way of loan and spreads it over the period.

There is another aspect of this matter upon which I would like some information. When the authority spends its money on acquiring properties, does it give those properties to various departments without charge? If it does not require the properties itself—and I can think of only a few instances where it would require the land it purchases—why should it have to hand such properties or land over to, say, the Main Roads Department, the Education Department, or the Health Department? If those departments want land they should buy it and recompense the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority for the

expenditure involved in acquiring that property in the first place.

I can see no justification for the Government expecting to be relieved of the obligation of buying such land as is required by the Main Roads Department, or some other department, simply because it has a method of raising taxation through the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority. From the report I notice there were substantial reimbursements to the Main Roads Department for money it advanced to the authority to enable it to carry out certain purchases. I quote from page 18 of the 1964-65 report by the authority—

Payment by Main Roads Department

As was referred to in earlier Annual Reports, the Main Roads Department undertook the acquisition of certain properties required for road works under the Region Scheme before the Metropolitan Improvement Fund was established and in anticipation of reimbursement by the Authority. These amount in cost to £95,118 15s. 5d. During the year the Commissioner of Main Roads made a contribution towards the cost of property acquisition for the Mitchell Freeway of £65,000. There is thus a total indebtedness to the Main Roads Department of £160,118 15s. 5d., giving an indicated adverse balance in the Fund of £44,957 18s. 9d. Apart from this amount of £160,118 15s. 5d. expended on property acquisition which must be regarded at least notionally as subject to reimbursement to the Main Roads Department, the Commissioner of Main Roads agreed to meet from his resources the component of the cost of properties acquired for the Mitchell Freeway which represents compensation and disturbance other than the payment for the real estate acquired. This amounted during the year to a payment into the Fund of £228,454 1s. 0d.

The point I am endeavouring to make is that when real estate is required and is actually acquired as the result of the expenditure of money by the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority, that real estate should not be made available by way of a gift to any department; but, instead, the authority itself should be reimbursed in order that it would have further funds to go on acquiring other property. I should like to have that situation explained to me so that I can make up my mind on whether the procedures being followed are fair in the circumstances.

I agree the authority is short of money, but the policy it has been obliged to follow is the cause of it, and we on this side of the House are not disposed to enable the authority to carry on with this policy by permitting it to raise more taxation. We say the method by which it should

extricate itself from the difficulty in which it is placed is to change its procedure and use loan funds to acquire properties and pay for disturbance, and use revenue to service those loans. If the authority does that it will overcome this difficulty and the taxpayer will be saved from this heavy additional impost.

It should be borne in mind that there are many people paying this tax—which is an additional land tax—who will derive little or no benefit from the works which will be carried out. I can think of persons who live south of the river who will be subject to the payment of this increased tax but whose properties will not enhance in value because of the land which is being acquired north of the river; and that is where the bulk of this money will be expended. I agree we have to spread the burden; and it is inevitable that when many taxes are being imposed, some people who will derive little benefit will have to carry their share. But I cannot overlook that aspect when I am considering a proposal to increase a tax substantially, and that is what this proposition does; it represents a 60 per cent. increase in the present tax. Because of that, I am strongly opposed to it, and I propose to vote against the Bill.

MR. JAMIESON (Beeloo) [5.12 p.m.]: I also consider that if there is another way to raise finance for the authority it should be followed rather than take the step of increasing the tax. We heard the very strong cry back in 1959 that taxes were at breaking point; but increases in taxation have gone well beyond that point and it is time a halt was called to these additional imposts.

Sooner or later the State and the people of the State have to get some return from the development of the State which will be a basis for lowering taxes or, if not, at least of not increasing them; and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition clearly indicated to the House that the full borrowing powers of this authority have not been used; and, indeed, the improvements it makes by its property acquisitions and its various other activities will be of untold advantage to posterity, and therefore it is its responsibility to share the burden of expenditure.

In sending children to school, it would be preposterous if the parents were called upon to pay the cost of building the school before the children could be educated. The attendance of children at school is only a passing phase for those children, following which other families and other generations use the school facilities, and therefore it is only right that they should contribute towards the cost.

A similar position will be created in regard to improvements proposed and carried out by this authority, and therefore it should be given greater borrowing powers in order that it may carry out its

operations. However, at this stage it does not appear that this is warranted, because as yet the authority is not using the facilities which it could use. Consequently there seems little reason for the tax to be increased at this juncture, and I would suggest that unless there are very good reasons advanced, other than those already given, it is the duty of the people who will be paying this metropolitan region tax to be very vocal about it and, indeed, to oppose it at every opportunity.

MR. BRADY (Swan) [5.15 p.m.]: I also want to voice my opposition to this increase which is proposed to the metropolitan region tax. I believe it is causing great concern to a number of people in the metropolitan area, because they are already paying a Commonwealth land tax. They are now being asked to pay this increased metropolitan region tax. Quite apart from that fact, there are some districts in my electorate which are already carrying out private town planning schemes, and the people concerned—both the shire councils and the ratepayers—will be up for a considerable amount of money. They are very worried about the proposed tax.

It was only on Friday evening last that I had to explain to a man what the local shire council was doing in connection with town planning in the Bassendean area, particularly near Walter Road. I take the same view as that expressed by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition: that a number of people will be asked to pay this tax but will derive no benefit from it at all; those who follow on will of course get all the benefit.

The people who will get most benefit from this tax are the big business people in the centre of Perth; whereas people in places like Bayswater, Bassendean, Midland and Guildford, will apparently not gain very much from it at all. It will certainly benefit both the private and business people who come into and leave Perth.

On a previous occasion I moved a motion in this House that the eastern districts, including Guildford, Midland, and Bassendean, should be excluded from this tax altogether, because they do not derive any benefit at all from the town planning scheme. I may appear to be a bit parochial, but when Professor Stephenson drew up his plan for Fremantle and Perth—and members can see this plan if they wish—the eastern districts were not considered at all.

I am voicing my protest, because I know that the electors of the shire councils in the eastern districts are most concerned, because not only are they being asked to pay this extra tax, but they are also undertaking town planning schemes of their own, which are costing them money. We also have the Government authorities placing a blanket over 2,000 acres of land in the Greenmount, Helena Valley and Swan View

areas, and saying that no building can be carried out in those areas because there is no sewerage scheme. It is not fair that the people concerned should have to pay this extra regional tax when they are being treated in this fashion; and I will not be party to supporting the imposition of such a tax.

MR. DUNN (Darling Range) [5.19 p.m.]: I am at a loss to understand why the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the member for Swan should be so opposed to this tax, because if they had any experience of the problems associated with town planning, and the implementation of town planning, they would know that the people who are being hit most heavily at the moment are, to a large extent, the small landholders.

The situation is simple. There is a town planning scheme, whether it be introduced by a council, or whether it be a metropolitan region plan, which has had the effect of a blanket cover in certain areas for a long time; and the people who are subject to the requirements of the interim development order have not been able to improve their land or sell it because of the legislation which was passed in 1963.

The only way that situation can be resolved is for somebody to pay the people concerned; and, if the money is not available to pay them out, they must suffer. They experience the doubtful pleasure of paying increased rates imposed by the shires, and they suffer the added disadvantage of having revaluations based on land sold in urban areas, whilst they are in either public open space, or, alternatively, in areas classed as rural land, on which very strict restrictions are placed.

Accordingly they are suffering, and paying for something that will be to the advantage of the people of Western Australia and Australia, and to posterity generally. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition pointed out that the amount of money which is being raised under this regional tax at the moment is very restricted and, in consequence, it curtails the borrowing capacity of the authority. If the tax were increased to a figure much higher than that proposed, could it be said with any certainty that the money required would be available on the loan market?

These problems are very real to people who have property; and, as I have said, to a large extent it is the small people who are affected. Many of these people are not able to subdivide their land. If they are in urban areas, the requirements of the Town Planning and Development Act are such that they must reticulate water into the areas; and if they are not in an urban development area then nobody wants to buy their land.

This is an attempt by the Government to move towards a more equitable approach to the solving of the problem of satisfying the requirements of town planning. It may be well for the House to remember that the

Town Planning and Development Act is not solely the baby of this side of the House. We all know that when the Opposition was in power it appointed Professor Stephenson to draw up the plan which is being followed today.

Mr. Jamieson: You are out of order here, because he was appointed by the McLarty-Watts Government.

Mr. Bovell: It was the Hawke Government which initiated the town planning scheme.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. DUNN: To proceed with the problems created by this plan which was envisaged and worked out by Professor Stephenson and his assistants at the time, it is clear that somebody must pay. We cannot develop this plan after putting it on paper, and make the people suffer. If the plan is for the benefit of the people of Western Australia, then surely they must be asked to pay for it—certainly those in the metropolitan area should be asked to pay for it, even if the people in the country are not.

I feel the approach by the Government to impose a rational and reasonable tax in an endeavour to alleviate the suffering and hardship which is being experienced is a sound one, and it has much to commend it. I do not know how the member for Swan comes to the conclusion that the local shires are paying for the development of these schemes.

Mr. Brady: They are running their own schemes.

Mr. DUNN: If they are running their own schemes, they do not pay for them. It is wrong and misleading to say they do. In the main I think the Government's attempt to produce a reasonable proposition is to be commended to the House, and I trust that if members opposite seek to oppose this tax, they will bear in mind that the people who are being worst hit are not the business people but, to a large extent, the small people.

If the members of the Opposition say they are there to protect the interests of the small people they will support this Bill so that everybody throughout the State will pay a fair share.

MR. TOMS (Bayswater) [5.26 p.m.]: I am particularly interested in the remarks of the member for Darling Range. In fact, at one stage I thought he was supporting our opposition to this measure. He appears to be concerned about the little fellow; he is not worried about the big businessman, who, he says, is not getting anything at all out of this legislation. Like other members on this side of the House, I, too, am very much concerned about the welfare of the little fellow.

When we see before the House a measure such as this, which proposes to

raise the metropolitan region tax some 60 per cent., we must consider the people whom the member for Darling Range is talking about: the people who are under a blanket cover; those who cannot subdivide or move because of the interim development order. Much has been said about these people being able to appeal on the ground of hardship, and that their properties will be resumed.

On many occasions I have brought to the notice of this House cases in my electorate—particularly in connection with properties on the Beechboro-Gosnells Highway—where real hardship is being experienced; where the properties will not be resumed for perhaps 20 to 25 years.

Mr. Dunn: There is no money.

Mr. TOMS: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has already told the member for Darling Range that the regional authority has the borrowing powers, and he has suggested a way in which the interest and repayments of loans could be met, and where a great deal more money could be obtained to alleviate the problems connected with the small holdings.

Mr. Dunn: In six years, the present income will only be paying back the existing loans.

Mr. TOMS: It will relieve the small landholders of the problems they are facing by making the money available now. The tax proposed in this legislation is something which will benefit posterity, so why should we be asked to pay an extra 60 per cent. tax?

There are people in the electorates of the member for Swan, the member for Beeloo, and, no doubt, in the electorate of the member for Darling Range, who are paying this tax on land, and who cannot subdivide.

Mr. Dunn: I agree with you.

Mr. TOMS: But the honourable member is seeking to impose an extra 60 per cent. tax on people who will get no benefit from it. The member for Darling Range appears to view this problem differently from me; because as I see it there are people who cannot touch their land for 20 or 25 years, and yet they are being asked to pay 60 per cent. more tax than they are already paying for land that is being resumed. That is not my idea of a fair and just proposition.

The suggestion of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is a good one. The borrowing powers of the board should be exercised to the full, and the revenue received from the present metropolitan region tax should be used in a way to pay the interest and principal on the loans. If this were done it would relieve the anxieties of the people concerned. I know families who wish to be bought out, but they cannot be bought out, because the money has been spent on the Mitchell Freeway.

I ask the Government to give consideration to not raising this tax, but to making the board do the work that was proposed to be done, by raising loan money so that the difficulties of the people to whom I have referred can be solved. It is all very well for us, who are not in a similar position, to pay this regional tax; but I am concerned about the people who have been told to sit on their land until it is wanted by the planning authority and who have to continue to pay rates, taxes, and the metropolitan region tax in the meantime. Under this measure these people will have to pay a further 60 per cent. in tax.

I oppose the measure and only hope the time will not be too far distant when the ordinary people who are now subject to a blanket cover through interim development orders will be relieved of their anxieties and be able to establish themselves without much further delay.

MR. RUSHTON (Dale) (5.31 p.m.): In speaking to this measure I do so with the thought that it will bring some relief to those in need. I would not claim that it is going to do as much as I feel needs to be done in the ultimate. Therefore, I would suggest, as other speakers have, that we need to have a much better look at this problem for the purpose of giving attention to other measures which will give greater relief.

The member for Swan and the member for Darling Range mentioned areas which need additional attention. I refer to areas that are outside the urban zoning of the metropolitan region plan and come under rural zoning. Some of these properties attract this tax, whereas others do not because the provisions of the Land Tax Act apply.

I also believe this question needs further attention because, at the present time, holders of land which is rural zoned are restricted in the way they can handle their land. Because the land is not truly rural in its use, it attracts the regional tax, whereas those who continue to carry on rural practices within the meaning of the Land Act attract a vermin tax, which is less in its loading on the individual property. Therefore I make the suggestion to the Minister that further thought be given to those areas where this tax is now applying and where, because of the metropolitan region plan, the people find themselves in the position of having to pay this extra loading.

There is an anomaly in my area, and this may be the position with other members. Part of my electorate was gazetted as a townsite amongst the earliest in the State; and I would think that Guildford-Midland could be in the same position. In my electorate there is a gazetted townsite which, because of the metropolitan region plan, is outside the urban zoning. Because of this, in my humble opinion,

the values appear to be quite high as applied to a rural application, and, because of this, the tax applicable to this type of land seems to be quite out of order when it is related to rural holdings.

It is my intention to bring this to the notice of the Minister in other ways, but I do commend to him a review of this type of anomaly whereby it might be possible in some way to give this type of property some relief.

Mr. Jamieson: Which type is that?

Mr. RUSHTON: The type of property that is rural-zoned land within the metropolitan region plan area and to which the vermin tax is not applicable. This is because the Act names the Land Act as the authority for designating the land to attract metropolitan region improvement tax.

This measure is one that will give some relief. Although I look forward to seeing some other way that will give total relief, I think this measure will go some way towards it.

MR. DAVIES (Victoria Park) [5.35 p.m.]: The extent to which a Government can indulge itself in regard to town planning is limited only by the amount of money it can get from the public. The public, of course, is not a milch cow, although the Government certainly seems to think it is. I know of no tax that has not been raised substantially since 1959, except the fee for the registration of orchards. Apart from that tax, this 60 per cent. increase in taxation just about completes a very long list of severe imposts which have been placed upon the public.

Other members have expressed concern for small landholders who have been advised that their land will be resumed within a period up to 25 years and have pointed out that these people, at the present time, have been left holding their land. They are unable to sell it and they are unable to use it in the way in which they would like.

I think we have all come across minor cases of this nature. For my part, when making representations to the Town Planning Board, I have always received sympathetic consideration; and, if the board has not been able to pay out immediately in a case of hardship, it has at least made a part payment and has contracted to pay the balance in the next financial year.

The member for Darling Range mentioned land within his electorate. I do not know whether he has taken the matter up with the Town Planning Board; and I do not know whether he is aware that the Act exempts quite considerable areas of land which are held for various industries and avocations. These exemptions include land for agricultural, pastoral, horticultural, apicultural, viticultural,

grazing, pig-raising, or poultry-farming purposes. I refer to section 41 of the Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act.

I think many of the people who are under notice of resumption and who come within these categories—poultry farming, horticultural, viticultural, and others, as I read out—would not be paying this tax at the present time.

I think there was a considerable lack of argument in the Minister's second reading speech on this matter. I have criticised the Ministers before for the brief manner in which they present Bills to the House. This measure took five minutes to introduce; and, in effect, the Minister said that more money was needed for town planning, so the Government was going to put the tax up 60 per cent. He did not say how this was going to be used. He did not say whether any priorities were going to be worked out as to who would be paid first. He did not say whether any serious attempt would be made to buy up all the land which is at present under notice for long distance resumption. All he said—and I repeat this—was that more money was required and therefore the public was going to provide it.

Mr. Lewis: I said it would expedite handling if the authority had the money.

Mr. DAVIES: As I said in my opening remarks, the extent to which a Government can indulge itself is limited only by the amount of finance it can get. Obviously the Town Planning Board is developing grandiose schemes, some of which have already fallen by the wayside.

I think the suggested new rate for this tax is the same as the tax was when it was originally introduced; but it was subsequently amended to the rate currently applying, and this has been in operation for something like seven years. I do not think we can just go ahead and plan with a complete disregard for finance, which appears to be the case. I think there has to be a very careful plan worked out; and the public must know under what conditions people are going to be paid. I repeat: The board is very sympathetic in connection with a genuine case where there is some hardship likely to be incurred. In those circumstances, everyone gets a good hearing from the board. Nevertheless, there are some people who cannot put up a case on compassionate or hardship grounds and they are left lamenting.

Even with this additional money being made available, I doubt if anybody in those categories will receive quicker payment for their land. Had the Minister been able to point this out to us, we may have been able to treat the measure a little more kindly, but at the present time, along with most of my colleagues, I cannot support it.

The whole position of land at present is in a frightful way. As members, we have all come across people with parcels of land which they would like to subdivide. I came across one case in particular which deserves some consideration. This land was not bought as an investment for subdivision, but as a genuine effort to develop it as a small holding in the Jandakot area. It is owned by a young married couple who would like to sell one block of the land in order to obtain sufficient finance to develop a farmlet and build a home. They are not allowed to do this; and yet, until just recently, speculators have, for a considerable time, been able to do as they liked; and I am led to believe that if one has the right contacts one can still subdivide. If there is going to be a rule it has to be a rule for everybody and not a rule for one. However, as I have said, the whole question of land is a very vexed one.

People are being increasingly burdened with taxes. They are entitled to some consideration; and, due to the lack of any reasonable argument, apart from the fact that more money is required, I cannot support this measure. I would like to know the way in which the money is going to be used, but once again I do not imagine we will be told. Because I believe that the burden of taxation is really becoming almost impossible, I oppose the Bill.

MR. DURACK (Perth) [5.44 p.m.]: I propose to support this measure, and, although one naturally does give a taxation measure support with a certain amount of reluctance, and certainly after some critical consideration, I do think this increased tax, and thereby the increased revenue available to the authority, will overcome a number of pressing problems which are being faced and which have been faced for some time and which have been highlighted in the debate that is taking place.

A number of these matters have been raised by the member for Darling Range and, indeed, by the member for Bayswater. I would like to add my own experience of cases of injustice which individual landowners are suffering at present by their inability to obtain compensation for property where the property is required for the purposes of the metropolitan region town planning scheme.

It seems fairly obvious that if the authority has more money available to it, it will be able to cope more readily with its problems. That seems to me to be the obvious purpose of this Bill and of the increase in the metropolitan improvement tax. I see no reason to believe that the increased revenue thereby obtained will not be used—or partly used—for the alleviation of cases of hardship.

One of the main reasons why I have risen to speak on this measure is the reference made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to the policy of paying for resump-

tions out of current revenue rather than out of loan raisings. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has suggested—and has been supported by the member for Bayswater in this proposal—that the authority could greatly increase its revenue by means other than this particular increase in taxation. He has referred to the report of the authority which has been laid on the Table of the House and in which it is stated there is a substantial loan-raising capacity still available to the authority. But that particular statement in the report refers to the fact that the income of the authority is such that it could service loans of a higher level than it has been allowed to raise.

Although that loan-raising capacity is, perhaps theoretically, available to the authority, it is nevertheless, limited—and the treasury is also limited—by the Loan Council's approval to the raising of loans for semi-government purposes. The authority itself appreciates this, and in its report reference is made to the fact that the Treasury has a perennial problem of allocating loan authorisations between competing public instrumentalities.

Therefore, although the authority may be able to service loans of a higher order than has been the case in the past, it has to participate with many other semi-government and local government authorities in sharing the loan allocations.

Mr. Jamieson: Were all those allocations taken up last financial year?

Mr. DURACK: The problem of how far they are taken up is one which has to be determined by the Treasury as a matter of overall policy. In answer to the interjection by the member for Beeloo, the report of the authority does not give any indication at all that there are other sources of loan raising available which have not been taken up. The report simply states that the authority has the capacity to fund and service loans of a higher order.

Obviously, the Treasury has been forced to limit the total level of borrowing by this authority to the figure stated in the report; and that figure has proved, in the past, to be quite inadequate to meet the demands which are being made on the financial resources of the authority. In particular, that applies to the urgent cases of hardship within the experience, I suppose, of almost every member of this House who represents an electorate in the metropolitan region.

I believe it is sound finance and sound policy to provide the source of finance by a mixture of loan raising and revenue. That is the policy which has been followed by the authority, and which will be followed in the future. When all is said and done, if we accept the argument that all the financing should be done by loans, and follow it to its logical conclusion, then the cost of servicing the total level of

loan money—even if there was no practical limit to it—could require a level of taxation just as high as it is now; but under this proposal, the requirements of the authority will be financed by a mixture of loan raisings and revenue.

That is a method which has been adopted by the Commonwealth for many years in financing various developments throughout the Commonwealth of Australia. It seems to me to be a sound policy, and one which we should support and approve in the case of the metropolitan region improvement tax.

In order to cope with the increased financial demand upon the authority, I feel that a case has been clearly made out for an increase in its revenue and an increase in the present level of the taxation. Therefore, I propose to support this measure.

MR. LEWIS (Moore—Minister for Education) [5.52 p.m.]: I want to thank the members of the House for their contributions to this debate, and particularly the members on this side who have supported the Bill. I would add a special word of commendation to the member for Perth for his very helpful contribution.

Members on the other side of the House have referred to this tax as a 60 per cent. increase. Mathematically, that is correct; and, stated in those terms, it sounds very formidable. The figure sounds more formidable than it would if we reduced it to the old currency of pounds, shillings, and pence.

As I stated in my second reading speech, the present tax is equivalent to three-eighths of a penny in the pound. Still referring to the tax in terms of the old currency, that would mean 37½d. in every £100. If we relate that tax to a block of land worth £1,000, the figure would be 31s. 3d. It is true that the 60 per cent. increase in the tax will raise the tax on a block of land worth £1,000 to 50s. That is an increase of 18s. 9d. per year on the unimproved value of £1,000. When we look at the matter in that light it does not sound nearly as formidable as "an increase of 60 per cent."

Mr. W. Hegney: It is a different story for the man on the basic wage with a family to rear.

Mr. LEWIS: It is not a great deal more money when one bears in mind that this tax is for a special purpose. That special purpose is the very thing that members opposite have been complaining about: The hardship to the individual person who has an interim development order over his property and whom the authority desires sooner or later—and it desires sooner than later—to compensate. This is a question of finance; and we come to the very purpose of the Bill: To give

authority to increase the tax from 0.15625c in the dollar to the proposed 0.25c in the dollar.

The argument has been advanced that the authority should borrow its money and spend loan funds for this purpose. I want to remind the House that in 1961-62 the authority borrowed \$400,000. That figure was increased to \$500,000 in 1962-63; to \$600,000 in 1963-64; to \$800,000 in 1964-65; and in 1965-66 the figure was \$990,000, almost \$1,000,000.

So, the authority has been quite mindful of the need to spend as much as possible out of loan funds. However, loan funds are limited from two directions. Firstly, the availability of loan funds—and the member for Perth has had something to say about this—and, secondly, the amount of money available to service the loans. Let us bear in mind that we can borrow money this year, and we can borrow a similar amount next year. This year, we would have to service this year's loan but next year we would have to service this year's loan and next year's loan. And so it could go on.

A table has been drawn up to show that under the present tax, and the borrowing of \$1,000,000 per year, the income available to service the loan would be more than absorbed in 1971. In other words, the fund could no longer service the loans; it would be bankrupt. If the loan raising is increased, as has been suggested, to \$1,500,000 then the fund would be in the red in 1970. If the figure was \$2,000,000, the fund would be in the red in 1969.

Mr. Tonkin: What is the cost per year to borrow \$1,000,000?

Mr. LEWIS: I could not tell the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, offhand, what it would cost. However, from a table I have here I can tell him that the repayment of the loan in 1966 would amount to \$194,000. On the basis of \$1,000,000 a year, in 1967 the repayment would be \$261,000; in 1968 the repayment would be \$328,000; in 1969, \$395,000; in 1970, \$462,000; in 1971, \$529,000; and in 1972, \$596,000 out of an estimated net income of \$593,000. That is the point where, as I said, the fund would be in the red on the present rate of taxation and by borrowing \$1,000,000 per year.

If the rate is increased as proposed in the Bill then we find that \$1,000,000 can be borrowed up until 1979. If the amount is increased to \$1,500,000, it could be borrowed up until 1978.

Mr. Tonkin: What rate of interest is used in making those calculations?

Mr. LEWIS: I regret I am unable to advise the Deputy Leader of the Opposition of the rate of interest, but I presume it would be the rate at which money is available to local authorities.

Mr. Tonkin: That is important, of course.

Mr. LEWIS: I am subject to correction, because I have not made a specific inquiry on this point. However, since this would come under the same category as semi-government borrowing, I would assume that the same rate would be applicable.

That is the justification for the Bill. It is to enable the authority to go ahead with the plans already agreed to by Parliament to develop and improve, and to compensate property owners as quickly as possible. I hope that compensation in the future will be paid more quickly than it has been in the past. For these purposes we have to provide the necessary tools for the authority. If the authority were to continue, as I have said, borrowing, it would, at the present rate of tax, be limited to \$1,000,000 for only a few years. If we are to give strength to the authority to carry out the work for which it has been appointed, it is imperative that we should provide it with the necessary funds.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition wished to know whether the authority, in acquiring property, handed it over to other departments free of charge; because, in his opinion, the other departments should purchase the land from the authority. I cannot find any ready reference, in the information made available to me, to what adjustments have been made by the authority with other departments, but I understand negotiations are proceeding with other departments for the making of adjustments in respect of the liability of the departments concerned.

The figures I have quoted to the House in support of the tax increase are based on a favourable adjustment; and, so far as I can see at present, there are optimistic assessments of the adjustments that can be made. Therefore no relief can be expected from lowering tax rates. In short, the proposed tax rates are necessary to give the authority the right to continue to borrow money. An amount of \$1,000,000 would be expended in a few years, when a further increase in the tax rate would be necessary.

Mr. Davies: Is there any estimate of how long this increase will enable the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority to operate without further borrowings?

Mr. LEWIS: I cannot give any assurance as to that. It is a question I can only ask myself. Further borrowings would be dependent on a number of factors, such as the degree of adjustment made between the authority and other departments concerned; developmental work, such as on roads, and so on, that must be done; and the amount that can be borrowed from time to time. It is also dependent on how quickly the authority can meet its liabilities, which, at present, amount to many millions of dollars. This

tax is most necessary and I therefore commend the Bill to the House.

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

Ayes—23

Mr. Boyell	Mr. Lewis
Mr. Brand	Mr. W. A. Manning
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Court	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Craig	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Crommelin	Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Durack	Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Elliott	Mr. Runciman
Mr. Gayfer	Mr. Rushton
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Williams
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. I. W. Manning
Mr. Hutchinson	(Teller)

Noes—18

Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Kelly
Mr. Brady	Mr. Molr
Mr. Davies	Mr. Norton
Mr. Evans	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Graham	Mr. Sewell
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Toms
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Jamieson	Mr. May
	(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr. Hart	Mr. Curran
Dr. Heno	Mr. Fletcher
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Hawke
Mr. Dunn	Mr. Rowberry
Mr. Burt	Mr. Hall

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair; Mr. Lewis (Minister for Education) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2 put and passed.

Clause 3: Section 4 added—

Mr. TONKIN: I was not at all impressed by the Minister's argument concerning the financial position of this authority. If he had the information at the time, the Minister deliberately withheld it from the Chamber when he was stating the amount of loan raisings for this year.

The Minister should have realised that Parliament was not given an up-to-date report. During his second reading speech, when referring to the amount allocated for this year, the Minister said that currently the authority is allocated about \$800,000 a year. A few minutes ago he mentioned a figure of \$990,000.

Mr. Lewis: I received the information since then.

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister should have been given up-to-date information before the Bill was brought here. His speech did not include any revenue figures, so that we might know the revenue of the authority. The member for Perth expressed his satisfaction with the position; but does he know what revenue the authority derived in the last financial year? I certainly do not. According to the report, the total raisings of the authority to September 1964 were \$2,100,000. On my calculation it will not cost the authority more than \$55,000 per \$1,000,000 it raises per year.

Mr. Lewis: That would be accumulating, of course.

Mr. TONKIN: To service a loan the authority will be liable to find \$55,000 from its income for each \$1,000,000 it raises. If it raised \$1,000,000 in one year it must find \$55,000; and if it raised \$1,000,000 in the next year—that is \$2,000,000 of loan—it must find an additional \$55,000. That would not exhaust its income by 1970, because I guess its income to be \$600,000. So it is poppycock to say that by 1970 it will have no money.

Mr. Brand: The authority does not expend all its money on servicing loans. It purchases straightout.

Mr. TONKIN: That is my complaint. The more economical way is to raise loan money and use the revenue to service the loans, as other departments do.

Mr. Lewis: I gave you a theoretical figure.

Mr. TONKIN: It might be a theoretical figure, but it is a lot of nonsense in practice, because the income of the authority is at least \$600,000 a year on the present rate of tax.

Mr. Lewis: I told you what it cost the authority to service the loans.

Mr. TONKIN: Can the Minister tell me the authority's income for the last financial year?

Mr. Lewis: It was \$489,428 from the tax in 1965-66.

Mr. TONKIN: That appears to compare with the figure for 1964-65. The figure for 1964-65 is shown as £237,140, or approximately \$474,280. That is an increase of \$15,000 in one year, which I find hard to believe.

Mr. Lewis: These are the figures supplied to me, and I do not question them.

Mr. TONKIN: I should think the increase in valuations, on the present rate of tax, would account for more than \$15,000. However, I accept that figure.

Let us take the figure of \$489,000. On the figures shown here it costs about \$55,000 for each \$1,000,000 of loan money raised per year. If less of this money were spent on capital expenditure and more used to service loans, there would be a lot more money to do the things the member for Darling Range wants done, and the people of the present would not have to pay for it. It would be stretched over a period, and the people would get the benefit of these loans being repaid when money had less value than it has now.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. TONKIN: I think Ministers take too much for granted. I suppose their attitude is conditioned by the fact that this Government has a substantial majority, and has been in office for a considerable time. In a measure of this kind the Minister should have indicated what will be the revenue of this authority on the

present rate of tax and what is the anticipated amount that will be raised by an increase in the tax. I hope the Minister will supply those figures. He has already given me the income for the year, but no mention has yet been made of the amount which it is anticipated will be raised by the authority.

Mr. Lewis: Do you mean in total?

Mr. TONKIN: Yes; the anticipated amount which will accrue as a result of this 60 per cent. increase in tax. According to the report the tax received for 1964-65 was \$474,280. That represented an increase of \$84,632 over the figure for 1963-64. The report states it was due in the main to a revaluation of properties in a certain locality. According to the Minister, the revenue for 1965-66 was \$489,420. That represents an increase of some \$15,140 on the present rate of tax, and this is sufficient to finance an annual borrowing of \$250,000 without any increase in the tax at all. It will take a lot to convince me that one can have more money at one's disposal by spending revenue, rather than by raising loan moneys and using the revenue to service the loan.

Mr. Lewis: That is, if you can get a loan.

Mr. TONKIN: I agree there is that limitation, but the Government did not hesitate to clothe a number of authorities with borrowing powers. I complained that it created a situation which would make it difficult for those authorities to raise money in that way, but that did not deter the Government. So it is a bit late to use that argument now.

Mr. Lewis: Which authority would you deny borrowing powers?

Mr. TONKIN: I would deny it to the Fremantle Port Authority; and I would not have changed the metropolitan water supply from a departmental authority to a board and clothed it with borrowing powers. It is no wonder that the last two S.E.C. loans were not fully subscribed. I predicted that was what would happen under the circumstances.

On the natural increase alone, without any increase in the tax, the additional revenue accruing to this authority will enable it to borrow \$250,000 a year; so, having regard to that situation, the figures which the Minister brought forward relating to the borrowing power of the authority being extinguished by 1970-71 do not go down with me. I would ask the Minister to indicate what information has been supplied to him as to the probable amount which will be raised as a result of this 60 per cent. increase in the tax.

Mr. LEWIS: I do not know that I am in a position to supply the figures year by year. My notes only give the figures up to 1965-66.

Mr. Tonkin: Surely some estimate has been made of the increased amount to be derived.

Mr. LEWIS: An estimate has been made. In 1968 the increase from the amount of tax revenue is expected to be \$781,099.

Mr. Tonkin: Is that supposed to be the total?

Mr. LEWIS: It is the total tax under the proposed increase to .25c in the dollar.

Mr. Tonkin: It will bring an increase of \$294,000 in the coming financial year.

Mr. LEWIS: This increase will not take effect until the 1st July of next year.

Mr. Tonkin: That is for the first year it will operate.

Mr. LEWIS: The figure I am quoting is, I take it, for the year ending the 30th June, 1968, and the amount is estimated at \$781,099. Then the increases are given year by year, but I do not know whether they will be subject to the same fluctuations as have applied to the tax up to date. They seem to have varied considerably. Sometimes the total has decreased, and I think that was when the tax was reduced. At any rate, there have been variations, so there is no consistent pattern. The anticipated tax income for 1968 is \$781,099.

Mr. Toms: Will that allow for increases in valuations?

Mr. LEWIS: I think that due allowance has been made for increases in valuations, and this is generally considered to be on the average 5 per cent. per year.

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister has admitted that the proposed tax is a 60 per cent. increase, so we are entitled to take 60 per cent. of the amount raised for the current year, disregarding for the time being any increases in valuations which might take place in the interim. If we do that we will get \$783,420.

Mr. Lewis: For what period?

Mr. TONKIN: For the first year during which the increased tax operates.

Mr. Lewis: That is in 1968?

Mr. TONKIN: Yes.

Mr. Lewis: The figure I gave was \$781,099.

Mr. TONKIN: I am saying it is too low.

Mr. Lewis: You have calculated it on a different basis.

Mr. TONKIN: The tax has gone up 60 per cent., so whichever way one looks at it that must mean an increase of 60 per cent. in income.

Mr. Lewis: I would say this represents not only 60 per cent. increase in tax, but due allowance for the increase in valuations, because this is an estimate of the income.

Mr. TONKIN: I say it is all one, if we take the amount the Minister mentioned as the income of the fund for the last

financial year. The Minister gave me a figure of \$489,420. Is that correct, or not?

Mr. Lewis: The information I gave you was correct.

Mr. TONKIN: If that is the figure, one is entitled to add 60 per cent. to it, because the tax is increased by 60 per cent. If one adds 60 per cent. to that figure, one gets \$783,420, without taking into consideration that in the two years which will transpire in the interim there will be an increase in valuation in some places and there will be additional taxpayers. The pattern shown by the report up to date is that at least \$10,000 per year increase is anticipated. One year it was \$80,000; but that is explained by the fact that there were some special revaluations in one district. However, the figures indicate that as a minimum there will be an increase of \$10,000 in the amount raised.

So I am suggesting to the Minister the figures he just quoted are too low and do not give a true estimate of the income which this authority will receive as a result of this additional tax. I do not think the increase is justified. The better method of financing work of this type is to borrow as much as can be borrowed and to service the loan with income, and if that is done one cannot then use the argument that the borrowing capacity will be exhausted by 1970 or 1971.

That was the argument raised to justify the increase in this taxation. We are strongly opposed to it. We have tested the House in connection with the matter, and have been defeated, and we have to accept the situation; but that does not mean our opposition has been removed.

Mr. LEWIS: I think we can accept the fact that the authority is quite alive to the need to borrow as much as it can in order to meet its commitments as soon as possible. I would say the limitation on the authority in this regard is the availability of loan funds. If it cannot borrow because of the non-availability of loan funds, it must spend a greater proportion of its income. However, as it can borrow more money, it will spend a greater proportion of its income in servicing loans. I think we can agree that the authority accepts the principle of borrowing to the limit of the availability of funds and that it is limited by the money available to service the loan.

Mr. TONKIN: I assume that is an indication some notice will be taken of what we have said about this and that the authority will attempt to borrow, and the Government will permit it to borrow as much money as is available.

I do not want to delay the Committee, but there is another matter I wish to raise. What happens to real estate when purchased by this authority? I notice in this report that land was purchased for open space for two local authorities. Money is raised from the taxpayers who

own land, in order to provide funds for this authority to operate, and the authority uses that money to purchase real estate. Does it give that real estate to local authorities for open space, or do they have to pay for it? Open space given to one local authority does not benefit people all over the metropolitan area; it benefits residents in the particular locality. Under existing conditions, if local authorities want open space, they have to buy it, and do so.

I want to know if the metropolitan region authority is using revenue derived from this tax for the purpose of purchasing real estate and then making a gift of that real estate to departments and local authorities; or is it being recompensed for such expenditure? I think that is information we are entitled to have.

Mr. LEWIS: I am sorry that at this point I am unable to give the information; and I do not want to give information on a guess.

Mr. Tonkin: I commend the Minister for that.

Mr. LEWIS: I will endeavour to find out what the position is and give the information to the honourable member during the third reading.

Clause put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

FLUORIDATION OF PUBLIC WATER SUPPLIES BILL

Second Reading

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe—Minister for Water Supplies) [7.50 p.m.] : I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

(Interjection from the Gallery.)

Mr. Nimmo: Have him taken out!

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. Crommelin): I ask that the interjector be removed.

(The interjector was removed.)

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: That is a rather unusual beginning to an introductory speech.

Mr. Graham: It looks as though the member for Karrinyup has taken charge of the House!

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: However, it has a familiar ring about it. I can remember speaking from the back of a lorry in Forrest Place, prior to the last election, when the same gentleman waved his upper and lower dentures at me and said, "What good will fluoridation do me?"

Mr. Graham: What was your reply?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: My reply was of a kind I cannot repeat here at the

moment, but I should have said that had he had the benefits of fluoridation when he was younger, he probably would not be able to wave his dentures at me.

Mr. Court: Fair enough!

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: The object of this Bill is to improve the dental health of the children of Western Australia. It is, of course, but a part of what needs to be done—but an essential part of a broad plan designed to curtail the alarming extent of dental decay throughout the State. This Bill seeks authority to adjust the fluoride content of drinking water, or of scheme water.

The Bill authorises the setting up of a committee, to be known as the fluoridation of public water supplies advisory committee. Details of personnel to fill committee positions are laid down in clause 5. It shall be the duty of the committee to consider, advise, and make written recommendations to the Minister on matters appertaining to, or conducive to, the achievement of the objects and effectual administration of the Act.

It will be noted in clause 9 that this Bill seeks authority for the Minister to be empowered to ensure that the necessary actions can be taken so that the fluoride level in the water supplies will, in fact, be adjusted. Provision is made for the Minister to ensure that such instructions are carried out; and the necessary provisions are included to ensure that the committee can effectively carry out these functions under the Act. No specific compound of fluoride has been laid down, this being a matter of choice which will be made, of course, on the basis of availability, purity, price, and suitability.

Members will notice that in clause 13 the committee may at any time rescind, revoke, or vary any recommendation, or attach new conditions for the purposes of carrying out the Act. Provisions have also been included for constant checks to be made on the level of fluoride in the water supplies, and power has been given for the making of regulations in accordance with the Act. It will be seen, therefore, that the Bill provides for the adjustment of the fluoride content of water supplies and for the setting up of an advisory committee of experts, and includes the administrative machinery that will be necessary to implement this measure in complete safety.

At the outset of my remarks, I stated that the fluoridation of water supplies was an essential part of a broad plan. The two cardinal objectives of any adequate dental health plan in this State in particular must be—

- (1) to minimise the occurrence of dental disease; and
- (2) to improve the facilities for dental treatment.

For these objectives to be achieved, solutions must proceed together as a unified

plan. We must, therefore, have—

- (a) the adjustment of the fluoride level of drinking water supplies;
- (b) an intensive dental health education programme;
- (c) increased provisions for the training of dentists;
- (d) the introduction of dental therapists to supplement the work of dentists; and
- (e) the extension of basic dental services as widely as possible throughout the State in one form or another.

Fluoridation becomes the very keystone of such a plan to improve the dental health of our children. World-wide tests have proved conclusively that when the water supplies of the community are adjusted to one part per million, dental decay in that area decreases by at least 60 per cent. The adoption of this measure would, therefore, expedite the development of the other measures, so that within a very few years the present position of frustration could be changed to one of satisfaction as far as the dental health of our children is concerned. In connection with a dental health scheme to accomplish this end, a great deal of preliminary work has been done by the department working in close harmony and association with committees of the Australian Dental Association and the Perth Dental Hospital.

The Government has done a great deal in this State in its endeavours to tackle the problem of dental health. There are currently nine mobile dental clinics in caravans which visit schools in the southern part of the State. From these, with the parents' consent, treatment is given to school children in country areas. There are also five static clinics situated at Carnarvon, Port Hedland, Broome, Derby, and Wyndham. From these centres regular visits are made to outstations and missions. The services of the dental officers are also available to the entire population of the north-west. It will be seen that these services are aimed at catering for country school children and for the northern section of the State. School children in the metropolitan area are catered for through private dentists, the Dental Hospital, or its clinics. At the present time, lack of manpower, because of the immense amount of dental decay, is one of the factors which severely limits the scope of this work.

More important still is the well-known fact that, because of the poor dental health inherent in the Australian community as a whole, the amount of work required to be done is completely beyond the scope of any efforts that might be made to secure the necessary work force, and I think most members know this basically. The only completely satisfactory method of bringing this within scope is, of course, the fluoridation of water supplies.

Then, of course, there is the Perth Dental Hospital, which was set up by notice in the *Government Gazette* of the 14th March, 1941, and this provides a considerable range of treatment for metropolitan school children through to the aged and infirm. Facilities for training all dental students are provided by the Faculty of Dental Science and the training of dental nurses is carried out within the hospital.

Over the years the services of the Dental Hospital have been extended and now include—

Three aerodental clinics supplying outback areas in association with the Flying Doctor Service and charter aircraft. This is an excellent development which has taken place in comparatively recent times, and it has proved to be a complete boon and benefit to outback people.

Three road dental clinics in outback areas.

Permanent clinics at Albany, Bunbury, and the Eastern Goldfields.

Metropolitan clinics at Fremantle, North Perth, and Victoria Park.

Outstation units have been set up at a variety of hospitals in order to give service to those persons unable to attend at their normal dentist.

The Nurses' Training School has been established and is now operating very successfully. It has been accepted by private practitioners.

A Dental Technician Training Centre and a variety of other services have been established and have proved of inestimable value to the community as a whole.

No less important, and worthy of special mention, is the dental health programme which has been undertaken by the Dental Hospital, and, of course, by the Health Education Council.

Over the last few years considerable success has been achieved in the placing of private dentists in country areas. This has been accomplished in co-operation with the local authorities and the Dental School, and in this connection the Superintendent of the Perth Dental Hospital has done a great deal.

Mr. Bickerton: One would think that no dental decay could exist with all those services.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: The remark of the honourable member is well made, but the state of the dental health of the people in this State is very poor indeed. With all the things which are being done there is still insufficient manpower to combat the amount of dental decay which exists.

The Government is not resting on the fluoridation of water supplies alone, but will continue to try to cover all aspects leading to good dental health, irrespective

of whether this Bill is passed by Parliament or not. However, no particular plan can be really implemented properly without fluoridation of water supplies.

All this, of course, indicates the concern of the Government with regard to dental health. But the simple fact remains that with the situation as it is now we are just not making the headway which it is necessary to make. Dental decay is a public health problem and in order to bring the problem within the scope of possible solution, the adjustment of the fluoride level of our water supplies is essential.

Recently—within the last two or three weeks—I visited the Federal capital, the City of Canberra. After speaking with the Minister for the Interior, in company with the medical officer for health and other officers from Mr. Anthony's department, I saw the fluoridation of water supply working in that city.

I suppose it is common knowledge that the water supplies in Canberra have been fluoridated for two years now. In company with the officers I have mentioned, I saw the machines which feed the fluoride into the water supplies. I also saw the public health laboratories where daily checks are made of the fluoride level of the water. The daily checks are made at various check points around the city.

Mr. Jamieson: It would be a better system than the chlorine adjusters we have in this State.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: There is more about this anon. The method I witnessed was an efficient method of feeding the fluoride into the water system. So I say to the members of this Chamber, the children living in our Federal capital—Canberra—are receiving the benefit of fluoridated water.

It was an assurance in itself to witness the working of the scheme at Canberra. It was working simply, effectively, and without complaint. No-one had suffered any trouble. There were the normal complaints before the action was taken to feed fluoride into the water supply, but now there are very few complaints indeed.

The people in Canberra, through responsible committees, requested the Government to take that action in the interests of their children, and with the full knowledge that the benefits conferred on the children would continue through to the children's adulthood.

Mr. May: Did you examine the teeth of any of the children?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: No, but the dentists and medical officers at Canberra had done so, and had made a close analysis of the state of the children's teeth prior to the introduction of fluoride. They have just about completed a two-year check to see whether there is any improvement. There is a small improvement but the time is far too short as yet.

Mr. Bickerton: Then should we not wait a while?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: As yet, the time is far too short to assess properly the value conferred on the children in this particular instance.

There are many instances all over the world of conducted analyses, or campaigns, or studies, which have indicated that communities benefit by a 60 per cent. improvement in dental health when the water supplies are fluoridated.

I also made a point of going to Sydney and I spoke with the Minister for Health and his under-secretary. I learned something of what was intended in that city in regard to fluoridation. In Sydney, which is the largest city in Australia, action is being taken very shortly to lay on the Table of the House papers regarding the fluoridation of water supplies. Those papers may be challenged, or a motion may be moved by any member in the House to question whether or not the fluoridation of water supplies should take place. Those papers should be laid on the Table of the House within a week or two.

The Minister for Health told me he expected the New South Wales House to deny any motion for the dismissal of the scheme, and that he expected to be able to begin the machinery of implementation before very long.

I have not seen the fluoridation of water supplies working in Hobart, but the people of that city have been drinking fluoridated water for some years. In other parts of Australia there are a number of smaller country towns which have already begun to fluoridate their water supplies. There are many other towns, particularly in New South Wales, which are in the process of implementing the fluoridation of their water supplies.

So it will be seen that we in Western Australia are not really pioneering the way as we might have done some few years ago when Parliament—not this Chamber—rejected legislation which was introduced.

There are certain basic hallmarks by which the solution of any public health measure must be judged. They are: Is it necessary; is it efficient; and, is it safe?

Dealing with the first-mentioned, "Is it necessary?", Western Australians have very bad teeth. Diseased teeth and insufficient teeth can impair general health. Existing preventive measures are inadequate and there are not enough dentists available to cope with existing commitments. Indeed, there are not enough dentists available, even if we advertised around the world, to cope with existing needs. Unless something is done about the dental health of our people the situation will get progressively worse. We have been advised by those best qualified to express an

opinion on this matter that among the measures that should be taken—and there are several measures we intend to take, as I have indicated—the fluoridation of drinking water is the most important. At present it is the only measure that requires the specific approval of Parliament.

Dealing with the second matter, “Is it efficient?”, very few public health problems have been studied so extensively or exhaustively as the effect of water fluoridation on dental decay. Thousands of scientific papers have been published about it. The consensus of all these studies has been that the adjustment of the fluoride level of drinking water to a level of one part per million will reduce the incidence of dental decay in children by some 60 to 65 per cent., approximately. If anything approaching this degree of protection can be achieved in our State, the combined benefits will be enormous.

I do not think I need to enlarge on that point. All members of Parliament should realise the extent of dental decay and the benefit that would be conferred if we could wipe out 60 per cent. of dental decay.

This would indicate a major health reform and one of the very few health reforms which can be achieved so easily, so simply, so efficiently, and so inexpensively.

The next heading is, “Is it safe?” Accumulated reports of research conducted in areas of naturally fluoridated drinking water, together with those from areas where the water has been fluoridated to the extent of one part per million, over many years, show that the procedure is safe. This concentration of fluoride has no harmful effect on either human beings or flora and fauna.

Another question is why, perhaps, should it be placed in water. A wide variety of methods of ensuring that people have adequate fluoride has been tried. People have recommended that it be put into salt and milk, or distributed in tablet form. None of these has been found to be as efficient as its inclusion in water. I ask members to think on the fact that dental decay is a disease of great magnitude and that fluoridation of water supplies is a public health measure designed to cut dental decay.

In this regard it is interesting to note that even those who are opposed to the fluoridation of water supplies are, in the main, quite happy that fluoride should be ingested by other means. It would appear, therefore, that there is very little argument as to the efficacy of fluoride itself.

When any Government is interested in measures aimed at improving public health, there are certain professional persons or bodies from whom it seeks advice. So far as the Government of Western Australia is concerned, in such matters it looks

to the Commissioner of Public Health and his officers, the State Health Council, the National Health and Medical Research Council, the Australian Medical Association, and the Australian Dental Association. All of these have advocated fluoridation and have made public statements confirming this.

In addition, the Government's proposal is supported by every relevant and reputable body in the English-speaking world. These include a long list of organisations.

Mr. Tonkin: Surely the Minister knows that is not true.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: The honourable member will be given an opportunity, as he knows, to speak at length on whatever I have to say. In this very long list of organisations from all over the English-speaking world, I will only name one and that is the World Health Organisation expert committee, and mention the public health departments of many different countries including, of course, our own in Australia.

I would just like to read to the House the first five findings of the report of the expert committee on water fluoridation. This expert committee was appointed by the World Health Organisation of the United Nations. Before I quote the first five findings, I would like to repeat what I have said once before in this House; that is, the report of the committee is a valuable, scientifically assessed document unburdened by emotion or bias of any kind. To continue, the first five findings are as follows:—

1. Dental caries—or dental decay—is one of the most prevalent and widespread diseases.
2. By present methods alone there is no hope of controlling the disease (which represents an economic drain upon both health services and individuals).
3. Among the numerous preventive methods—such as correct diet, brushing teeth, tablets, local fluoride application—the fluoridation of drinking water supplies is the most promising.
4. The effectiveness, safety and practicability of fluoridation as a caries-preventive measure has been established.
5. One p.p.m. fluoride has been shown to give maximum benefits; first by epidemiological studies where fluoride occurs naturally in water, and secondly, where fluoride has been added at optimum concentrations through mechanical means.

There are many other findings of this expert committee but they are all subject to those first five. As I say, the report is a document which is very important in the

whole library of literature appertaining to fluoridation of water supplies.

The proper concentration for the fluoride ion in the water supply has been established after many years of investigation both in areas where fluoride is present in the water at the required level, and where it has been adjusted to the required level. As a result of these investigations, varying factors such as climate, amount of water drunk, etc., have been considered and the optimum level consistent with dental and medical health established.

Large communities—some that have drunk naturally-occurring fluoridated water all their lives and some that have had artificially fluoridated water for more than 20 years—have been thoroughly medically examined, both to check the effectiveness and to ensure there are no side effects. Actually, the report of the expert committee makes a point of just this: There is no proof that the safety of any individual is prejudiced.

In 1963 Mr. Justice Kenny of the Supreme Court of Ireland, after a most exhaustive hearing—it was a tremendous hearing—at which evidence was given by the world experts, concluded—

Mr. J. Hegney: What part of Ireland?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Dublin.

Mr. Bovell: That should please the member for Belmont.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: This is how he concluded—

Let me say then that I am satisfied beyond the slightest doubt that the fluoridation of the public water supplies in this country at a concentration of one part per million will not cause any damage or injury to the health of anybody—young, old, healthy or sick—who is living in this country and that there is no risk or prospect whatever that it will. The evidence on which I base this view consists of a number of separate items each of which is conclusive: When taken together, they are overwhelming.

This is just the conclusion of Mr. Justice Kenny's statement. This hearing at which Mr. Justice Kenny presided was a hearing, the result of which was looked forward to by anti-fluoridationists all over the world. Anti-fluoridationists pinned great faith on the hope that no other result could come out of it but that the plaintiff's cause would be upheld. Of course, there is a many-paged document with very many hundreds of pages of evidence, and Mr. Justice Kenny concluded in the manner I have just described to the House.

It has been suggested by some that fluoridation is mass medication, and thus an infringement of our personal liberties. This is untrue, as fluoride of the concentration intended by this measure is utilised as a foodstuff by the active tissues of the

tooth buds while they are forming the enamel of the teeth.

In 1957 the New Zealand Royal Commission on the Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies concluded that fluoride is not a drug or a medicine but a nutrient, and, accordingly, fluoridation is not a form of medication. How much better it is to prevent holes occurring in teeth than it is to plug them by the use of dental methods after the holes do occur!

The Minister for Health, who is in another place, has asked me to refer to two booklets, copies of which I understand he has forwarded to each member of both Houses. The titles of these booklets are, *A Symposium on the Role of Fluoride in Preventive Dentistry*, and, *Fluoridation of Community Water Supplies*, the last-named being issued by the Department of Public Health in New South Wales. Although both these booklets contain some interesting information they do not, of course, contain all the information that is available on the fluoridation of public water supplies. To read all the information that is available on the subject would indeed take a long time.

As I intimated earlier, this Bill reintroduces a proposal which was introduced into Parliament by me in 1963 and defeated in that year.

Mr. Graham: Is this measure an exact copy of the previous Bill?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: No, it is not an exact copy.

Mr. Graham: Has this Bill any major departures in principle?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: No. I am very conscious of the fact that the previous Bill was defeated by Parliament. However, in the ensuing period more and more abundant assurance has been collected to indicate that this is a measure which is safe, and on this score we have the reassurances of the most reputable authorities in the English-speaking world. If we are to accomplish anything worth while in the field of dental health services, the fluoridation of water supplies is an absolutely essential prerequisite. Indeed, it is the foundation on which we can build a solid and lasting dental health service. It would be a disservice to the future citizens of Western Australia if we evaded our responsibility in this connection and failed to give substantial material health aid to our children. I trust this Parliament will not, on this occasion, allow this legislation to fail.

Debate adjourned for one week, on motion by Mr. Tonkin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition).

FLUORIDATION OF PUBLIC WATER SUPPLIES BILL

Message: Appropriations

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriations for the purposes of the Bill.

BILLS (4): RETURNED

1. Eastern Goldfields Transport Board Act Amendment Bill.
2. Stock Diseases Act Amendment Bill.
3. Bread Act Amendment Bill.
4. State Electricity Commission Act Amendment Bill.

Bills returned from the Council without amendment.

BILLS OF SALE ACT AMENDMENT BILL*Council's Message*

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had agreed to the amendment made by the Assembly.

House adjourned at 8.26 p.m.

Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 5th October, 1966

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The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (10): ON NOTICE**CANNINGTON HIGH SCHOOL***Additions: Completion*

1. The Hon. C. E. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Mines:
 - (1) Will the Minister advise whether the proposed additions to the Cannington High School will be completed in time for the com-

mencement of the 1967 school year?

- (2) If not, when is it anticipated that the additions will be completed?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) The proposed additions to the Cannington High School will be completed for the commencement of the 1967 school year.
- (2) Answered by (1).

POULTRY FEED*Inclusion of Sorghum*

2. The Hon. J. DOLAN asked the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Is poultry food cheaper in Queensland than in Western Australia?
- (2) If so, is it because of the extensive use of sorghum grain as a constituent in Queensland poultry foods?
- (3) Will the Department of Agriculture investigate the cost factor indicated in (1) and (2) above, and advise if sorghum can be grown extensively in Western Australia for use in poultry foods, with consequent financial benefit to our poultry farmers?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Sorghum is being investigated as a supplementary crop at the Ord River and some promising experimental yields have been obtained. This work is being continued. It is considered that there are no possibilities for sorghum as a grain crop in the southern parts of Western Australia.

SUPERPHOSPHATE*Trace Elements: Analyses*

3. The Hon. J. HEITMAN asked the Minister for Local Government:

With reference to my question on Thursday, the 22nd September, 1966, relating to superphosphate mixtures, will the Minister advise—

- (1) How often are analyses of superphosphate trace element mixtures taken?
- (2) How many men are employed in this work?
- (3) What compensation is allowed to farmers when the permissible limit of variation from the registered analyses occurs?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN replied:

- (1) Fertilisers are sampled regularly, particularly during the period of seasonal demand. Twenty-six samples of trace element mixtures were taken over the last seven months.