

may be false. Equally it could be claimed that false statements made under the other clauses in the Bill could constitute an offence. Action can be taken under other Acts against anyone deliberately making a false statement. I have been told that this is the position and, if a person deliberately tries to take advantage of the situation referred to by the member for Beeloo, he can be prosecuted through other forms of law which exist on our Statute book.

If the honourable member feels this should be specifically stated in this measure, here again I will have the matter looked at. However, I pass this information on in all good faith as the advice I have received from the Crown Law Department.

Mr. JAMIESON: I would be very happy if the Minister had this matter looked at again, and reported on it further at a later stage. I feel there must have been a reason why this was included in the Victorian Act. This Victorian Act was supposed to be the prototype, and the one virtually agreed upon by all agricultural organisations throughout the Commonwealth as the pilot legislation. If we were to follow it, there would be some degree of uniformity. If the Act is altered too much we will not get uniformity. The operators must have a clear knowledge of the situation in each State. They deserve some protection. There may not be a great number of cases where this will occur, but there could be. This legislation would discourage a person from making an allegation against an operator when he was not sure of his ground. It is unfair that he should have an escape in our own Act which says that he may have acted in good faith when he did not.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 15 to 19 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Bill reported with amendments.

House adjourned at 11.3 p.m.

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 3rd November, 1966

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The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION ON NOTICE DIESEL OIL

Price at Esperance and Freight

The Hon. J. J. GARRIGAN asked the Minister for Mines:

- (1) What is the approximate price per ton of diesel oil landed at Esperance?
- (2) What is the rail freight charge per ton on diesel oil transported from Esperance to Kalgoorlie?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) This information is not available departmentally and would more properly be obtained from the oil companies and/or their customers.
- (2) (a) In departmental tank cars the freight rate on diesel fuel from Esperance to Kalgoorlie is \$15.45 per ton with a minimum of eight tons per four-wheeled wagon.
- (b) In private tank cars the freight rate on diesel fuel from Esperance to Kalgoorlie is \$13.91 per ton with a minimum of eight tons per four-wheeled wagon.

For goldmining purposes—

- (a) As above \$14.68 per ton.
- (b) As above \$13.13 per ton.

CLOSING DAYS OF SESSION *Standing Orders Suspension*

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [2.38 p.m.]: I move—

That during the remainder of the session so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable Bills to be passed through all stages in any one sitting, and all messages from the Legislative Assembly to be taken into consideration forthwith.

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North-East Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [2.39 p.m.]: It is customary for a motion of this kind to be submitted at this time of each session, and I would, on behalf of the Opposition, like to assure the Minister in charge of the House that we will co-operate fully in an endeavour to expedite business. He must realise, of course, that while it will be possible to deal with legislation fairly quickly to the second reading stage, in some instances a delay will be necessary before the remaining stages can be completed.

However, I have no doubt that as these emergencies arise they will be dealt with. As we are drawing near to the closing date of the session, I am wondering whether the Minister could give us at least some tentative advice as to what possible closing date he has in mind?

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [2.41 p.m.]: I thank Mr. Willesee for his remarks and his kind offer of co-operation. As he said, this is the customary motion at this time of the year and perhaps I should have made an explanation along those lines to the House. If you will permit me, Mr. President, I will make this explanation in my answer. It will not be the Ministers' desire unduly to hasten legislation through all stages, but instead it is their wish that as much opportunity as is possible should be given for matters to be considered. Consequently, time for consideration will be given. I think we are in as good a position as, if not in a better one than, we were in at this time last year. I understand we have passed more Bills this year than we had passed at this time last year.

The target date—if I could refer to it as that—for the end of the session so far as this Government is concerned has usually been the end of November. This has been set purposely, because of the experience we have had in past times when sometimes we were sitting in the House until a day or two before Christmas Eve. If the sitting is extended until nearly Christmas, members do not have the opportunity of fulfilling their obligations in their electorates with respect to the Christmas activities which always take place. Therefore, this Government has tried to finish the session by the end of November and this has been in the interests of members of Parliament generally, and their obligations.

To the best of my knowledge, at this point of time there are some 20-odd Bills to come forward which are not yet on the notice paper of either House. I would like to be cautious in making that comment, because there may be some notices of the introduction of other legislation now being given in another place. However, I think the number of Bills still to come is something in the order of 20 or

25. Some of these will be groups of Bills. Notice was given of the taxing measures yesterday and I think they are due for second reading today; these comprise a group of Bills.

Bearing in mind that the 30th November is a Wednesday, the tentative target date which has been set would be one parliamentary week before; that is, the 25th November. If it is possible to finish then, I feel sure the Premier—the Leader of the Government—would like that to be the finishing date. If it is not possible to finish then, naturally the session will go over into the following week. This is the target, and I was very pleased to hear Mr. Willesee's remarks in respect of co-operation.

I should like to take advantage of the opportunity to speak a little further before the vote is taken on this motion. I have in front of me four Bills which deal with Statute law revision. Statute law revision has been quite a big task this year; in fact it is a big task every year. When motions Nos. 1 and 2 have been dealt with, I would like to take the opportunity, if the House will permit me, of introducing these Bills, of reading them a first time, and asking that the second reading be taken at a later stage in the sitting. We are waiting for one of the Bills to come back from the Government Printing Office. If these Bills were put before the House today and explained, this would mean virtually that another week would be saved from the time point of view for the purpose of considering them.

Before we proceed to Orders of the Day, I hope you will permit me to do this, Mr. President. I do not think this is infringing the Standing Orders in any way. Of course, if it is, I am sure, Sir, you will inform me.

I do not think there is anything else to be said. I ask that the motion be agreed to, as is customary. I would like to repeat the undertaking I have given that Ministers will give every opportunity possible for legislation which will come before the House to be considered properly in time and extent.

Question put and passed.

NEW BUSINESS: TIME LIMIT

Suspension of Standing Order No. 62

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [2.46 p.m.]: I move—

That Standing Order No. 62 (limit of time for commencing new business) be suspended during the remainder of the session.

May I say, in this connection, that this is the customary motion which is moved at this time of the year to permit the time limit for the commencement of new business to be extended. Standing Orders

provide that no new business can be introduced after 11 p.m. On behalf of my colleagues and myself I would like to say it is not our desire to stay here until late at night, or into the early hours of the morning. Up to date this session we have not done so and unless it is necessitated some way or another, personally, I cannot see the need for it. If it is a matter of getting business through the House, I would suggest that, perhaps, we might sit earlier on a Wednesday afternoon, for instance, rather than late at night. I hope this suggestion meets with the approbation of members and, in that spirit, I ask that the motion be agreed to.

Question put and passed.

BILLS (4): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Statute Law Revision Bill.
2. Statute Law Revision Bill (No. 2).
3. Statute Law Revision (Short Titles) Bill.
4. Amendments Incorporation Act Amendment Bill.

Bills introduced, on motions by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Justice), and read a first time.

BILLS (2): THIRD READING

1. Perth Medical Centre Bill.
Bill read a third time, on motion by The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Minister for Health), and returned to the Assembly with amendments.
2. Rural and Industries Bank Act Amendment Bill.

Bill read a third time, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), and returned to the Assembly with amendments.

INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [2.53 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill proposes a number of amendments to the Industrial Arbitration Act. The most significant of these is related to the basic wage. I shall deal with this matter initially but, before doing so, I have some brief references to make upon the general situation which obtains in the Commonwealth and in the other States in respect of the methods of basic wage determination.

We usually refer to the investigations which culminate in the determination of the Commonwealth basic wage as the "National Wages Case." Quarterly adjustments were made to the Commonwealth basic wage prior to August, 1953,

since when seven variations, brought about by inquiries at intervals of a year or more, have been made. However, in the most recent review of the Commonwealth basic wage, which resulted in a \$2 increase, an indication was given that reviews would be conducted more frequently in the future than in the past.

The New South Wales legislation, enacted in 1964, tied the basic wage in that State to the wage determined from time to time by the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission.

In Victoria, the Labour and Industry Act provides that wages boards shall take into consideration the relevant awards of, or agreements certified by, the Commonwealth commission and, in practice, these boards adopt automatically the Commonwealth basic wage.

In South Australia, the State Industrial Code provides for the Board of Industry to determine a living wage. However, the proclamation of the board's determination may not be made unless the Minister is satisfied that the proclamation is desirable to avoid unjustifiable differences between rates of wages fixed under Commonwealth and under State law respectively and, in practice, the Commonwealth basic wage is adopted in that State.

Wages boards fix the wage in Tasmania and generally they provide for automatic adjustments to the State basic wage to conform with any changes in the Commonwealth basic wage.

From time to time, in Queensland, the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission declares a basic wage. This occurs more frequently than annually in practice, but not necessarily quarterly.

In this State, the Industrial Arbitration Act empowers the State Industrial Commission to consider adjustments to the State basic wage when the quarterly report of the Government Statistician indicates a variation in excess of 10c per week in the cost of living. I emphasise that, while the commission is obliged to consider making adjustments in these circumstances, there is no mandatory obligation upon it to do so. Nevertheless, as a general rule, the basic wage has been adjusted quarterly. These adjustments have been a direct reflection in monetary terms of variations in the consumer price index.

From the foregoing, it will be apparent that in the matter of a State basic wage, this State is the only State which still has a wage-fixing authority required, in certain circumstances, to give consideration to making a quarterly adjustment to the basic wage component of the total wage.

Having outlined the methods adopted in each State, it is a point of interest to ascertain what effect these different methods of wage fixation have had upon the differential between Commonwealth

and State basic wages in each of the States. However, before doing so, it is only right to point out that all States, with the exception of South Australia, now prescribe a state-wide basic wage—Western Australia having quite recently adopted this principle. Furthermore, whilst the Commonwealth basic wage varies from State to State, there are further variations of this wage within the individual States.

I mention this because it is my intention to quote the figures covering the basic wages prescribed for workers under both Commonwealth and State awards in each of the capital cities as at the 30th June, 1966; that is, before the most recent increases in the Federal and State basic wages. These are as follows:—

	Cwth. \$	State \$
Perth	30.80	32.65
Brisbane	29.00	32.70
Sydney	31.50	31.50
Melbourne	30.70	30.70
Adelaide	30.30	30.30
Hobart	31.40	31.40

Queensland was therefore the highest State wage with Western Australia running a close second 5c behind, but exceeding the Federal basic wage for Perth by \$1.85. Incidentally, the Western Australian State basic wage exceeded the average of the State basic wages in New South Wales and Victoria by \$1.55.

As a result of the recent increase of \$2 in the Federal basic wage for Western Australia, by way of a general review, and of a 61c State wage increase by way of quarterly adjustment, the State basic wage in this State is now 46c above the Federal basic wage for Perth.

Substantial disparities between the Federal wage and the State wage have far-reaching effects on both the Government's financial position and the economy generally.

There may be some disagreement amongst those close to this problem as to whether the general economic effect of more frequent small increases in wages is any more disadvantageous than less frequent and larger increases. That question is not, however, the one at issue. While we have the situation of the Western Australian basic wage being adjusted quarterly, and the Federal wage—and through it the basic wages in the other States—being adjusted less frequently, a differential is created and this difference can build up to a substantial figure as it has on this recent occasion.

The basic problem is the harm that is caused when the State wage moves in advance of the Federal wage. It is important, when considering this matter, not to overlook the fact that all workers in this State are not under State awards and receiving quarterly adjustments. There are more than 40,000 workers in Western Aus-

tralia under Federal awards or under award conditions which are such that they receive basic wage increases only when the Federal basic wage increases.

As a consequence of the substantial differentials which have arisen from time to time, the Government has had to increase taxes and charges in order to meet the cost of quarterly adjustments to the State basic wage received by such employees as bus drivers, nurses, and school teachers. The Government has had no alternative but to do this as its main sources of income arise from taxes and charges. Indeed, the private employer is in no different a position. He can absorb to some extent these regular increases through higher productivity, but in the end, must increase his prices or go out of business.

We should be mindful also of those on fixed incomes who have to pay the price but do not receive the benefit of quarterly adjustments. Actually, these higher charges and taxes are paid by every member of the community—workers on Federal awards, pensioners, people on superannuation, and others in fixed income categories.

It is submitted that from whichever point of view one looks at it, there is no equity in this. There is no justification for two systems of wage adjustment, one of which favours one section of the community at the expense of the other. We, in Australia, are one community and it is right that the one system of wage adjustment should apply to all workers and also to all employers.

The pattern of movement of the State basic wage and the Federal wage for Perth over the past seven years discloses that in June, 1959, the State basic wage had risen by quarterly adjustments to a point \$1.41 above the corresponding Federal wage. An increase of \$1.50 in the Federal wage in that month brought them closely into line again. By June, 1961, the differential had moved out again to \$2.32. An increase of \$1.20 in the Federal wage that month only partly closed the gap and in October of that year, the State wage fell by 17c and remained constant for over a year, \$1.08 above the Federal wage. However, by June, 1964, the differential had opened out to \$1.62 when an increase of \$2 to the Federal wage put that wage 38c ahead. Then a decision of the State court brought the wages into line in September, 1964, a coincidence which was short lived as a month later, the State basic wage went 32c ahead. Again, the differential continued to widen until it reached \$1.85 in July this year, when the \$2 increase in the Federal wage put our wage 15c behind. At the present time we are ahead again by 46c with all the signs indicating that a substantial differential will be built up again before the Federal wage is reviewed, probably not until next year.

It is interesting to note that on three occasions in seven years our wage levels have been the same as in other States,

while at other times we have been briefly lower but for the most part higher and, indeed, on four occasions more than \$1.50 higher. Hence the difficulties in the development of the State and the provision of stable and rising employment for its workers.

A local employer, for instance, producing goods for sale in the Eastern States or on the local market against competition from the east, is faced with a continually changing cost differential between himself and his competitors. Given the same wage costs, or even a constant differential, the local manufacturer could plan his product, investigate his market and go ahead with greater confidence. His only certainty under the present system is that in six months' time his calculations will no longer come out the same and what began as a sound business venture may no longer be a feasible proposition. There is no doubt this sawtooth movement of relative wage costs is a positive discouragement to growth; and for a State battling to get ahead in a common market, where the industrial strength lies in other States, this differential between the Federal and State wages is a luxury we cannot afford.

If we are to achieve our aim to create additional jobs, both by expansion of existing activities and by encouragement of new enterprises, we must seriously ask ourselves whether it is feasible under a system of payment of a basic wage which is periodically higher than elsewhere.

In Government enterprise also, a State basic wage higher than the Federal wage for Perth poses serious financial problems to the Treasurer. I have here in mind that there is no provision in the arrangements for Commonwealth grants to the State, neither in the financial assistance grant nor the special grant, whereby we automatically receive increased grants to offset the burden of paying a State basic wage higher than the wage in the other States.

In the absence of such a provision, a financial burden for this Government is a financial burden for the people of the State. What the Government must pay it must raise, as I have mentioned previously, from the public one way or another, and there is no escaping this fact.

Admittedly, the problem of finding money to pay for rises in the basic wage is one which other States share in common with us but, unlike the other States, excepting Queensland, we have an additional and an even more serious problem. We are obliged to find the money to pay for the additional outlay from Consolidated Revenue due to quarterly adjustments of the State basic wage in advance of movements in the Federal wage.

As an illustration, I shall relate what has occurred since September, 1964, when the State and Federal basic wages were in

line. At that time our situation was the same as other States which were adhering to the Federal wage in that revenue and expenditure had to be adjusted to that wage. From that date until June, 1966, quarterly adjustments aggregated \$1.85 per week, which added considerably to our payroll. Other States on the Federal wage did not incur this additional expenditure.

In June, 1966, the Federal basic wage was increased by \$2 and the states of New South Wales and Victoria are experiencing great difficulty in finding the money to pay for this rise. Because our cost levels had increased by \$1.85 before June, 1966, our situation at that time was comparable with that in the States mentioned. However, a further increase in the State basic wage of 61c as from the 2nd August, 1966, has meant a total increase since September, 1964, of \$2.46.

It should therefore be readily appreciated by members that we are now in a position much worse than that existing in New South Wales and Victoria where the situation has been described as critical. The quarterly adjustments to the State basic wage since September, 1964, have imposed a burden on the State's Budget for 1965-66 amounting to \$2,000,000 which will not be recovered in the special grant and which will have to be funded by diversion of a corresponding amount of next year's loan funds from the capital works programme. These adjustments have created a problem for the State's finances this year by requiring us to find the money for a basic wage 46c in excess of the Federal wage in addition to the problem shared equally with other States of financing a \$2 rise in that wage.

Unless something is done to stem the tide, our problem will increase as the year progresses and more quarterly adjustments are added. Notwithstanding the increases in charges for Government services in two successive years, which were necessary to offset the increase since September, 1964, of \$2.46 in the State basic wage, we could still face a heavy final deficit at the end of this year. As a consequence, all loan funds would be siphoned away from capital works to meet current wage costs and the possibility of further increases in charges will have to be faced. This is the effect of this vicious circle; and the existence of the Grants Commission, and the special grant paid by the Commonwealth on its recommendation, does not alter the general situation I have described. Although there are circumstances when an increase in the Federal basic wage can be absorbed or partly absorbed by an increase in the special grant, circumstances which depend entirely on the budgetary position in the standard States, the quarterly adjustments of the State basic wage, which result in that wage exceeding the Federal wage, do not lead to an increase in the special grant to the extent that they are

reflected in social service costs or the results of business undertakings.

The Grants Commission has for some years disallowed, in the special grant, the cost to the finances of State business undertakings of the differential between the State and Federal basic wages. The more important of these undertakings are the railways and the Metropolitan Transport Trust. The adjustment is calculated as the actual cost to these undertakings of paying a basic wage higher than the basic wage which would be paid by comparable authorities in the standard States. The Grants Commission has yet to make its calculations for 1965-66, but its known method of calculation indicates that the expenditure disallowed will amount to \$870,000 for that year.

The adjustment for wage policy is not the only way in which a basic wage differential affects the State's final Budget result after taking the whole of the special grant into account. The Grants Commission endeavours to measure the standard of social services provided in Western Australia compared with the standard States. The object of this is to determine how much we should be allowed in the special grant to enable us to provide services about equal to those provided in those States. Its measurement is inevitably in terms of expenditure, and expenditure incurred by Western Australia above that necessary to provide a comparable service is disallowed in the assessment of the special grant.

A high proportion of social services expenditure is on account of wages, and the payment of a State basic wage higher than in the standard States to teachers, nurses, and policemen, for instance, means that we incur relatively higher expenditure in providing the same services.

In 1965-66 the average differential between the State and Federal basic wages added \$1,185,000 to our costs of social services.

It is apparent, therefore, that the total adverse effect on the Government's finances of the basic wage differential during 1965-66 was \$2,055,000, of which \$1,185,000 was the additional cost of social services, and \$870,000 the specific adjustment for the effect of wage policy on Government business undertakings. Had it not been for the higher basic wage, we would have balanced the Budget for 1965-66, but, instead, it is expected by the Grants Commission that \$2,000,000 of next year's loan funds will have to be used to clear the final deficit for 1965-66.

As long as Western Australia retains the quarterly adjustment system, thereby keeping ahead of the Federal wage, there is no escape from the present position whereby substantial sums from our annual expenditure are not allowed in the special grant. The inevitable result is a diversion of loan funds away from capital works;

or higher than standard taxation and other charges.

No State finds it easy making ends meet under the present Commonwealth-State financial arrangements. So if the financially stronger States are at a loss to find resources to meet basic wage increases, we, as a claimant State, are in no position to pay a higher wage than they do for longer periods. In view of the explanation which I have given, I think there would be no doubt in members' minds as to the reasons for the introduction of this measure. Nevertheless, I should emphasise that this Bill does not seek to fix the basic wage and deny increases in that wage to workers in this State. It simply seeks to align increases in the State basic wage with increases in the Federal wage so that we do not get out in front. The system of quarterly reviews will be replaced by the wider reviews of the Federal court and these reviews take into account not only increases in the cost of living since the previous review but also the underlying strength of the economy and changes in productivity.

I commend these amendments to members, who, in view of the outline of the difficult financial problems constantly besetting Western Australia, will, I trust, realise why it is no longer feasible nor reasonable for Western Australia to remain out of step with the other States in the continuance of quarterly adjustments.

Upon the passing of this Bill into an Act, and when the Act comes into operation, the State basic wage will, in effect, remain unaltered until the amount of the wage is exceeded by the Commonwealth basic wage. From that time onwards, the State basic wage will conform with and be equal to such Federal basic wage whether it rises or falls.

I shall now deal as briefly as possible with the remaining amendments in the Bill. Subsection (1) of section 23 of the Act provides *inter alia* that any amendment or recession of the rules of any union must be authorised by resolution of the majority of members of that union present at a general meeting especially called for the purpose. Some union rules now provide, and had provided prior to the coming into operation of the Act in 1963, that the rules may be altered by other than a special general meeting. It is proposed to ratify action already taken to alter rules where recommended in these circumstances, and to provide for future alterations where power to alter rules is already vested in a body other than members in a general meeting.

The power to order rectification of the register of union members is vested currently in the Industrial Court of Appeal. It is considered that the more appropriate authority to handle such matters would be the Industrial Commission.

Contrary to a widely held belief, the Industrial Registrar has no discretion in ordering a court-conducted ballot when an application for such a ballot is duly made. However, there is no appeal against his determination that such an application was out of order. The Bill proposes to grant the right of appeal against the registrar's determination, to the Commission in Court Session. A request for a court-conducted ballot may be made by either the committee of management of an industrial union or a number of members as prescribed in the regulations made under the Act.

In the event of a court-conducted ballot being proceeded with, it is proposed that such a ballot be arranged by the Chief Electoral Officer.

There is no provision to allow the commission to strike out or otherwise deal with matters which have been filed and forgotten by the parties or which, for any other reason, have not been dealt with. It is proposed to empower the commission to list for hearing, without having regard for the date of lodgement, any matter or dispute which has been filed in excess of 12 months.

Section 71 gives the commission power to dismiss a dispute or part thereof under certain conditions. However, the wording of item (iv) of paragraph (a) of this section inhibits the exercise of this power. A minor amendment removes this difficulty. At the same time, it is proposed that any part of a dispute may be referred to the Commission in Court Session.

Whilst these latter amendments are designed to facilitate the function of the commission, it is felt that the same flexibility in procedures should be extended to the court of appeal. The Bill provides for such an extension.

Section 79 provides that before an award or an amendment to an award or order is issued or made by the commission, it shall be drawn up in the form of minutes to be handed down to the parties concerned. Prior to 1963, it was not customary to issue minutes of an order and it is proposed to delete any reference to an order in this section.

Some difficulty is being experienced in regard to the enforcement of complete procedures of judgments and orders by industrial magistrates. Amendments to sections 103 and 179 of the Act are designed to overcome these difficulties.

Section 170 of the Act refers to the powers of the commission or the court of its own motion to direct investigations or institute proceedings which, in the view of the president of the court, are functions most inappropriate to a court of law, and more particularly an appellate court. It is proposed therefore to delete any reference to the court in this section.

There are some other amendments which are of a somewhat minor nature

and I feel that, at this stage, an explanation of these minor points is not warranted. Suffice to say that the Minister for Labour, in response to representations by the Trades and Labour Council, amended the original Bill in two respects and these were both passed in another place.

The first amendment was in clause 4 to enable persons who had subscribed to benefit or superannuation funds, whilst operative members of a union, to be regarded in certain circumstances as still members to the extent that they can obtain financial benefits from the contributions which they have made.

The second amendment moved by the Minister for Labour affected clause 5 and it caters for a situation that could occur with the formation of a new union. The additional provisions made in response to T.L.C. representations are contained in new subsections (8) and (9) as they appear in the reprinted Bill.

It is my intention to move an amendment to clause 13, which is at the request of the Trades and Labour Council, having a bearing on rates of pay to apprentices. I will put this amendment on the notice paper in due course. I mention these for the interest of members.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. W. F. Willesee (Leader of the Opposition).

FIREARMS AND GUNS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Assembly's Message

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

ORD RIVER SCHEME

Condemnation of Federal Government for Refusing Financial Help: Motion

Debate resumed, from the 2nd November, on the following motion by The Hon. H. C. Strickland:—

That in the opinion of this House the Federal Government deserves to be condemned strongly for its recent refusal to grant financial help to the State of Western Australia to enable the vitally important Ord River irrigation scheme to be completed.

To which The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines) had moved the following amendment:—

Delete all words after the word "That" in line 1 with a view to substituting the following words:—

this House expresses its concern at the decision of the Commonwealth Government to defer further a determination on financial assistance to the Ord River irrigation project, which is of great

national significance and a key project in the northern development programme of Australia.

The reasons for the concern of this House are:—

- (1) Research and farming experience has proceeded to a point where there is adequate proof of the economic viability of the project.
- (2) The conservation and economic use of water in the north is an important and urgent national responsibility in view of the overall need to anticipate the time—which time is not far distant—when the known potential water supplies of the more southerly parts of the continent and particularly in the south-east of the continent, will need to be carefully conserved and controlled to keep up with population and industrial growth and at the same time enable Australia to continue to make an increasing contribution to the world's need for food and fibre.
- (3) The project is economically viable on cotton but at no stage has it been the intention to base the project only on a monoculture. Other cash crops are practicable to give diversity and in any case the original concept—which is still valid—included benefits to the cattle industry as well as production of cash crops.
- (4) In the interests of the State, the farmers and their families and all others associated with the project, it is not desirable to allow the present uncertainty to exist. A firm decision should have been made to proceed even if the Commonwealth made it a condition to delay commencement of the work for a year because of other commitments.
- (5) The advance made in the Western Australian economy and finances through increased royalties and other revenue is such that the reduced demand on the Commonwealth through the special grant would in effect only mean a transfer of funds to the Ord project rather than an additional demand on Commonwealth resources.

And further,

This House requests the Commonwealth Government to supply the Western Australian Government with full reasons for deferring further a determination on financial assistance.

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North-East Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [3.25 p.m.]: I think the two key words in the motion moved by Mr. Strickland are "condemned strongly," as against the key words of the proposed amendment, which are "expresses its concern." That would be the only difference in the two proposals, perhaps with the exception that the proposed amendment gives in full the reasons for the House expressing its concern; whereas Mr. Strickland's motion was an utter castigation of the action of the Commonwealth Government with regard to the Ord River project in general and, in particular, the constant delay and evasion of Commonwealth responsibility for this very important project.

A good deal of the proposed amendment is taken up with details of the negotiations that have taken place between the State and Commonwealth Governments, and the reasons given would appear to me to be a summary of the negotiations that have taken place between the State and Commonwealth representatives over a considerable period of time. For instance, in reason (1) the words "adequate proof" are mentioned in dealing with research and farming experience, and they refer to the economic viability of the project. Apparently therein lies a distinct difference between what we in Western Australia consider to be a successful situation and the view of the Commonwealth that further proof is needed.

In reason (2) the conservation and economic use of water in the north is made an important feature and this is linked with an urgent national responsibility in regard to the water supply position in Australia in the future. Apparently the efforts of State representatives to make this question a responsibility of the Commonwealth have not been as successful as we would like them to have been.

Reason (3) refers to monoculture. This has never been raised before except by those who decry the project. It is true that cotton growing has been successful, but there has never been a suggestion that cattle production will not be an integral part of the scheme and will not be one of the benefits which will be derived from it as time goes on. However, it is only natural, in the initial stages with a project such as this, that the most economic product is the one which should be concentrated upon first.

The fourth reason refers to the interests of the State of Western Australia, the farmers and their families, and everyone else associated with the project, but more particularly the interests of the farmers and their families who went to Kununurra having the utmost faith in their capacity to prove that this project could be made a success, and who have, up to now, done so. Yet at this point, when they have played their part in the programme so

well and so capably, we again find there is hesitation among the people who should be most interested in the project at a national level.

In the fifth reason advanced there is almost a proposition to the Commonwealth, whereby finance could be provided for the development of the Ord without any embarrassment to that Government whatever. Finally we have these words—

This House requests the Commonwealth Government to supply the Western Australian Government with full reasons for deferring further a determination of financial assistance.

Does it not seem incredible that after all the negotiations that have taken place at the highest level with the State Government; at the highest level with State officials with the Commonwealth at many conferences, that at this stage of development it is necessary for the State to request the Commonwealth for a detailed reason for its attitude of negation to our efforts?

Every farmer who went into the Ord River scheme took a calculated risk in which failure must mean bankruptcy. Some farmers with a lifetime of savings were prepared to invest for the future, because they felt that their children would have a future on the Ord. They took this calculated risk sincere in the belief that the Governments of the day, having started the Ord River project, would see it through to fulfilment, if they did their part in the initial stages.

I wonder whether any one of them could have guessed that this great issue would be sidetracked at a point of time when the project is producing figures which would compare favourably with world production figures; whether any one of them would have imagined there would be this procrastination, delay, and deferment of the scheme by the Commonwealth after the case had been proven?

I believe the Commonwealth had a moral obligation—when it made available the first moneys—to pursue this scheme to the point where it may even have been proved a failure; because if the scheme does not go forward at this time then opportunity for progress in the north-west part of the State will be deferred for an interminable time—not just for a year, or 10 years.

Every investor in the Ord—the baker, the butcher, the hotelkeeper, the taxi operator, and the stock firms—has invested money on the basis that if the pilot scheme were a success he would be in business today, and in an era of great prosperity that would follow during the construction of the dam, and the further development of the additional acres of land that will be made available to incoming farmers.

These people took very heavy capital risks alongside the farmer; these were based in the main on the Commonwealth

Government's word; based, in the main, on the fact that there had been an acknowledgment of the scheme in general as a result of research over many years, and because an initial payment had been made. Everyone felt that where initial success was established the rest would follow just as day follows night; they did not dream anything to the contrary would happen.

Every big contractor who went into the area—many of them losing money in the initial stages of this development scheme—went there with a view to obtaining continuity of work, and making a continuation of expenditure in the area. It costs a tremendous amount of money to move heavy plant into isolated areas such as these. This has all been lost as a result of stagnation through the indecision of the Commonwealth Government. The plants will have to be moved out of the area, and further construction will be lost as will the opportunity to do something of benefit for the State on a national basis.

Accordingly I have much pleasure in supporting the amendment that has been moved. I had great faith in the motion as originally moved; but let us hope that between the two we will achieve something that will stir the conscience of a very reluctant Commonwealth Government.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. H. C. Strickland.

STATE FORESTS

Revocation of Dedication: Assembly's Resolution

Message from the Assembly received and read requesting the Council's concurrence in the following resolution:—

That the proposal for the partial revocation of the State Forests Nos. 2, 7, 14, 18, 20, 37, 38, 58 and 64 laid on the Table of the Legislative Assembly by command of His Excellency the Governor on the 25th October, 1966, be carried out.

STATUTE LAW REVISION BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Justice) [3.39 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

I hope that you, Mr. President, and members generally will not take exception to the fact that I asked the House for permission to bring the second reading of this Bill forward so that it can be explained.

My purpose in taking the second reading of this Bill at this stage is to give members as much time as possible to check through the explanatory memorandum which goes

with the introduction of measures of this nature. It is becoming commonplace as each session comes along for me to introduce a Bill of this description, and on this occasion there is the Bill now before us and three others to follow.

This Bill substantially completes the first phase of the revision programme; namely, the repeal of all those local enactments suitable for total repeal. At the time of the introduction of the first Statute Law Revision Bill in 1964, over 5,200 enactments had been passed by the local Legislature of which some 1,200 had been repealed, leaving about 4,000 enactments on the Statute book. As a result of the revision programme this number will, with the passing of the present Bills, be reduced by the total repeal of over 1,200 enactments to about 2,800.

There are still about 130 enactments which have been tentatively classified as suitable for total repeal, but which for various reasons are still under consideration. There are also approximately 135 Reserves Acts being examined in conjunction with the Lands and Surveys Department, some of which may ultimately be totally repealed.

The present plan is to complete research on these remaining enactments in order that such of them as are suitable for total repeal can be dealt with in the next session when the first Bill dealing with partial repeals will also be introduced.

The form and procedure in regard to the drafting and introduction into Parliament of the present Bill are substantially the same as those adopted in connection with earlier Bills.

Firstly, this Bill is based on recommendations contained in a further progress report on Statute law revision dated the 31st January, 1966. Secondly, there has been circulated with this Bill an explanatory memorandum giving some particulars of each enactment and the reason why it is thought to be no longer effective. It is hoped that study of the Bill will be assisted by this memorandum.

Thirdly, the practice of first referring enactments proposed for repeal to the particular department, organisation, or authority thought to be or to have once been affected by, or charged with, the administration of the same before any recommendation for repeal is made, has been continued where such reference has been thought necessary or desirable, even if only as a matter of courtesy. Where such a reference has been made the fact is referred to in the memorandum.

The form of the Bill and the memorandum differs from those of previous years. There are in this Bill only two schedules; the first comprises the 121 enactments sought to be repealed, whilst the second comprises three enactments which were repealed in error by the Statute Law Revision Act, 1965, and which by this Bill it is intended should be revived.

The provisions of the Interpretation Act, 1918-1962, in particular sections 12 and 16 relating to repeals, should be borne in mind when considering the effect of the Bill. These provisions are referred to in the memorandum.

Part I of the first schedule comprised miscellaneous money Acts and part II is made up of general enactments, all of which are no longer effective for the reasons given in the memorandum.

The second schedule comprises the three Acts dealing with wheat marketing which are dealt with by section 3 of the Bill. Although these three Acts are not at present in use, because of the operation of the Commonwealth wheat marketing system until 1968, they should not have been included amongst those Acts repealed by the Statute Law Revision Act, 1965. Unfortunately, the error was not discovered and reported by the Statute Law Revision Committee until shortly after Parliament rose last year, but as the State legislation will not be required before 1968, it was decided to correct the error by inserting an appropriate provision in the present Bill.

I would like to make some comment on the Acts which are to be repealed. The memoranda attached to Bills such as this often proved to be of great interest. I think it can be said quite truthfully that the repeal of these Acts could reveal the history of the early days of the State. I have looked through a number of such Bills and the attached memoranda, and I found them all to be of great interest.

On page 11 of the memorandum attached to the Bill before us one Act to be repealed is No. 4 of 1903, the Trans-Australian Railway Enabling Act. The explanatory note reads as follows:—

This Act authorised the Commonwealth Parliament to make laws for the construction and maintenance of a railway from Kalgoorlie to the eastern boundary of Western Australia, and of a railway from Eucla to a point intersecting the route of the first mentioned railway contemporaneously with the construction of a railway from Kalgoorlie to Fremantle by the State. The Act and the authority thereby given to the Commonwealth Parliament were to cease and be void unless such Parliament agreed to and commenced actual construction of the said railways within five years of the passing of this Act i.e. 29th September, 1903. The actual construction was not authorised by the Commonwealth Parliament until December, 1911 when it passed the Kalgoorlie to Port Augusta Railway Act, 1911 and did not commence in Western Australia until February, 1913 (see *Commonwealth Year Book* No. 11 (1918) p. 662). Western Australia consented to the construction by the Commonwealth of the

Western Australian portion of the Kalgoorlie to Port Augusta Railway and to the making of laws by the Commonwealth Parliament in regard thereto by passing the Trans-continental Railway Act, 1911 (No. 6 of 1912) and this Act remains unrepealed. No. 4 of 1903 therefore expired in September, 1908 and the Commonwealth Attorney General's Department, Canberra agrees that it may safely be repealed.

I think it is quite relevant to refer to that Act, because at the present time we are in the process of constructing a broad-gauge line from here to Kalgoorlie, to replace the existing narrow-gauge line.

Sitting suspended from 3.49 to 4.9 p.m.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Another one of these pieces of legislation to which I would like to refer briefly because it is of interest, is Act 44 Vict. No. 12 of 1880. This was the Perth Working Men's Association Mortgage Act, and authorised three people—Randell, Parker, and Chipper—to be trustees of the association to raise a mortgage to erect a building. This building was, in fact, erected and the particular land was described as Perth Building Lot W No. 1. This land was resumed for railway purposes in 1893 and now forms part of Beaufort Street bridge and adjacent railway property on the eastern side of the bridge.

There are many of these, of course. One of interest to the Fremantle members is No. 22 of 1907 which was the Fremantle Dock Act. This authorised the construction of a graving dock of fairly exact description, as a public work within the meaning of the Public Works Act. The Act is no longer effective and the Fremantle Port Authority agrees it may safely be repealed.

In 1911 there was a private Act in respect of the York Mechanics' Institute. This dealt with a quarter-acre of land on an Avon location in Avon Terrace, York. It was transferred to the trustees of the York Mechanics' Institute by John Henry Monger the elder in August 1862. The institute was erected on it. The York Town Council and the York Shire Council were amalgamated in March 1965 under the name of the York Shire Council, and the shire clerk has confirmed that so far as is known all debts and liabilities of the institute were discharged by the municipality on the taking over of the institute in 1911, and therefore no claims have ever been made and the Act now becomes unnecessary.

Another one of interest is No. 2 of 1920, entitled the Time of Registration Extension Act. This was to do with the public service on one of those rare occasions when some industrial difficulty arose. In 1934 there was the Secession Act, and Mr. Watson would be interested in that.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: You had better keep a copy of that because we may need it before the turn of the century.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I charge the honourable member with the responsibility of doing that task for himself. It is of interest just to relate that as a consequence of the vote in favour of secession at the referendum authorised by Act No. 47 of 1932, this Act authorised the printing and publication of the case for secession. Act No. 26 of 1935 was the Adelphi Hotel Act.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I remember that one. John Tonkin introduced that.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes, he did. In 1935, the maximum period for which a provisional certificate could be granted under the Licensing Act was 12 months. This meant that if the building was not completed in 12 months, an extension of time had to be granted.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: It is going to be pulled down now.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: There is an interesting note at the end, which reads, "The hotel is now licensed." The other legislation dealt with includes Nos. 50 and 51 of 1941, and Nos. 18 and 19 of 1942.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: That was about the time Darwin was being bombed.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That was not the purpose, though. The purpose concerned the extension of time for the duration of Parliament.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Because we could not have an election.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It was during the war, anyway. I could go on quoting these Acts, but it would take a great deal of time. It occurs to me that the Minister for Health might be interested in No. 13 of 1949 which was the Tuberculosis (Commonwealth and State Arrangement) Act. This was the Act which authorised the State to enter into, execute, and carry out an arrangement with the Commonwealth in respect of a campaign to reduce the incidence of tuberculosis.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I had the Federal officers in my office this morning. They were talking about this and praising the Western Australian standard.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I remember my first introduction to the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia, when I was an interested and aspiring candidate for Parliament. I went into that House and heard one particular member most volubly opposing the introduction of legislation for compulsory examination for tuberculosis.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Some members did that in this Chamber, too.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I mentioned my experience down there.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I remember that you were a very pert young man, then.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I do not know about that, and it is not in this Bill anyway.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Fortunately!

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I relate some of these points, merely because I remember that the first time I introduced a Bill of this nature, Mr. Wise, himself, went very carefully through the memorandum and picked out some interesting pieces of legislation which were being repealed.

Because I think that now is perhaps the right time to mention it, I want to say finally, and in connection with this particular Bill, that I express my extreme gratitude to Mr. Gresley Clarkson, Q.C., who, I am very sorry to say, is leaving Western Australia. I would like to pay a personal tribute to him for the work he has done whilst he was retained by the Government on law revision. He was very well assisted by Miss Shirley Offer. Law revision is most painstaking work and has to be so carefully prepared. Despite his qualifications, and Miss Offer's qualifications, and the care they have taken, because of the nature of the work sometimes a mistake will occur, and this happened last year. Mr. Clarkson, personally, was very upset about this. I told him I felt sure that Parliament would accept the situation in the manner it should be accepted. This legislation will reinstate the repealed legislation.

However, in saying I am sorry to see Mr. Clarkson go, I must congratulate him, because he has been appointed to the bench and shortly is to be a judge of the Supreme Court in Papua and New Guinea. In this respect, I congratulate him most heartily. We will miss him in this work; however, I am quite determined that we should go on with this task, because members of Parliament on both sides of the House have accepted this practice. I look forward very much to the time when we will have a complete revision of the Statutes. At that time, the Statutes will be of general use, not only to members of Parliament but also to members of the public who have occasion to use them. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. E. M. Heenan.

STATUTE LAW REVISION BILL (NO. 2)

Second Reading

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Justice) [4.20 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The nine enactments proposed for repeal in this Bill have been made the subject of a separate measure, because such repeal might be said to effect an alteration in the substance of the law and therefore to go beyond the main purpose of a Statute law revision measure; that is, to remove dead wood.

As stated in the explanatory memorandum accompanying the Bill, although these nine enactments are apparently ineffective, they may still have some life in them, although the necessary executive action has not been taken to implement them and it is now not intended that such action will be taken.

The schedule to the Bill is divided into two parts. The first contains eight enactments which authorised the construction of railways. For various reasons the railways so authorised were never constructed and it is not now intended that any of them should be. The authorising legislation is therefore no longer required.

It will be remembered that in the case of those railway construction Acts which were repealed by the Statute Law Revision Acts of 1964 and 1965, the original limits of deviation authorised by the enactments so repealed were expressly reserved. So far as concerns the eight enactments now proposed for repeal, it is unnecessary to include a similar provision since the power given by each of these enactments has not and will not be exercised.

The Act named in the second part of the schedule, namely, the Vaccination Act, 1878, is no longer effective for the reasons given in the memorandum. This Act aimed at lessening the incidence of infectious diseases, in particular smallpox, by making the practice of vaccination compulsory. It was passed at a time when smallpox was a scourge and people generally were far less sophisticated than they now are. However, happily the community as a whole now has a far more enlightened attitude on these matters and the Public Health Department considers that today these compulsory provisions are not necessary. In any event, the department considers it has now adequate powers to deal with infected persons and contacts. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. E. M. Heenan.

STATUTE LAW REVISION (SHORT TITLES) BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Justice) [4.23 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to confer short titles on certain Acts of the Western Australian Parliament which do not at present have them and which Acts will be retained on the Statute book as principal Acts although most if not all will almost certainly be further amended as part of the Statute law revision process. However, it is not considered that the conferring of short titles on these Acts is either premature or unnecessary, as

such short titles will facilitate the citing of such Acts in any subsequent legislation.

The first Western Australian Acts which contained short titles as part of their original provisions were the Private Slaughter House Ordinance, 1852 (16 Vict. No. 7) and the Public Slaughter House Ordinance, 1852 (16 Vict. No. 10)—both since repealed. However, it was not until 1871 that the practice of conferring short titles at the time of original enactment became at all regular.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: What year was that?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It was the year 1871. Even after this time many Acts were passed which did not have short titles as reference to the schedule to the Bill will show.

As well as being an aid to the citation of a Statute the short title might be said to be a precis of the long title and in the schedule to the Bill the long titles have been set out in order to show the relevance and appropriateness of the short titles which have been selected. In some cases usage over many years of a certain short title, although not formalised by any express enactment, has resulted in the particular Statute becoming commonly known by that short title, and indeed such short title may have been incorporated in subsequent amending or other legislation. As one example of this practice, reference can be made to the Ordinance 17 Vict. No. 10 of 1854, the long title of which is "An Ordinance to Consolidate and amend the Law relating to the Conveyance and Transfer of Real and Personal Property vested in Trustees and Mortgages," but which is commonly known as the "Trustee Ordinance, 1854." This Ordinance was amended by an Act passed in 1895 (59 Vict. No. 28) the short title of which is "The Trustee Ordinance, 1854, Amendment Act, 1895." Members will see that the long title was very considerably reduced by the introduction of such a short title.

Under modern drafting procedures the short title of an Act is invariably contained in the first section. In the past the practice has varied, and in many older Acts the short title will be found in the final section. When these Acts come to be reprinted it is not proposed that, merely for the sake of consistency with modern procedures, such Acts should be amended so as to insert a section at the beginning of the Act which cites the short title. For this reason, in the case of all the Acts being amended by this Bill, the appropriate section citing the short title is an addition to the Act.

It may appear from a perusal of the schedule to the Bill that in the case of four Acts there is an inconsistency or error in numbering the additional section. These four Acts are the Real Property

Transfer Act, 1832 (p. 2 of the Bill); the Registration of Deeds Ordinance, 1856 (p. 3); the Parliamentary Papers Act, 1891 and the Parliamentary Privileges Act, 1891 (both on p. 5). In each case the reason why the new section bears a number two removed from the present last section instead of being numbered consecutively is that the original final section of the Act has previously been repealed. For example, the Real Property Transfer Act, 1832, as originally enacted contained seven sections. However, section 7 was later repealed by section 4 of 19 Vict. No. 3 of 1856, and section 6 is now the final section of the Act. In the eventual reprint of this Act, section 7 will be shown as a repealed section in accordance with modern reprinting procedures.

It is perhaps unnecessary to add that the conferring of short titles on the Acts so amended by this Bill does not make any alteration in the substance of the law.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. E. M. Heenan.

AMENDMENTS INCORPORATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Justice) [4.30 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill arises from a recommendation contained in the fourth progress report on Statute law revision. The Amendments Incorporation Act, 1938-1962, authorises the making of certain formal amendments to Statutes before they are reprinted, and it is therefore unnecessary to increase the bulk of a Statute Law Revision Bill by including amendments authorised by that Act.

There is, however, one further process which might usefully be authorised by the Amendments Incorporation Act and this is concerned with the formal words of enactment. The formula at present in use takes up over five lines of print and it is thought that when Statutes are reprinted the omission of these words would result in a significant saving of space over the whole Statute book without in any way affecting the proper construction of the actual Statutes.

There is one further point to which reference should be made. It will be noted that the Bill authorises either the omission of words of enactment or alternatively, the substitution of a shorter form; namely, "Be it enacted." The desirability of having these alternatives arises from the fact that some enactments contain preambles.

Except in rare instances, such as private Acts or the occasional public Act, it is not consistent with modern drafting and legislative procedures to include preambles in

Acts of Parliament. In former times, however, it was the usual practice to include a preamble which, of course, forms part of the Statute and which it is proper to use as an aid to construction if the language of the Statute is not clear.

In England it became the practice in 1890 to repeal or omit many preambles as part of the process of Statute law revision in order to save bulk in the Statute book. This practice has, however, been much criticised and in the sixth edition of *Craies on Statute Law* at page 206, reference is made to the view of a famous lawyer, Sir Frederick Pollock, that "the repeal or omission of preambles, unless used with consummate discretion, is likely to obscure the history and meaning of legislation out of proportion to any saving of extent and bulk."

The better view now seems to be that preambles should be dealt with in this way—i.e. repealed—"only when the sections to which the repealed part clearly refers are also repealed, or where the courts have definitely decided on the relation of the preamble to the enacting part" (*Craies*, page 359).

In Western Australia some Statutes containing preambles remain and will remain on the Statute book, and it is proposed that this more cautious modern view concerning the repeal or omission of preambles should in due course be applied to them for the purpose of Statute law revision.

However, in those cases where the preamble is retained either wholly or in part, the retention of a shortened enacting formula readily indicates where the preamble ends and the enacting sections of the Statute begins and also preserves the proper grammatical construction of the enactment. Therefore in these cases it is proposed to substitute for the full enacting formula the words, "Be it enacted" and this process is authorised by the present Bill.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Before the Minister resumes his seat, why is it that the preamble of this Bill is in the long form?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I would expect Mr. Wise to be the first to ask such a question, but I cannot answer it at the moment. When I said I would expect Mr. Wise to be the first to ask such a question, I did not mean to be disrespectful; I was merely suggesting that he was the sort of member who would catch on quickly to such a point. I will ask the draftsman what he had in mind in putting the preamble in the long form.

This is the fourth of the Bills I have already referred to and I am grateful to members for the patient hearing they have given me on introducing these measures, because I admit that the process of introducing them is pretty dry. However, the work that has been done by this committee

is extremely useful and, as I said before, I hope the work will continue in the same way as it has continued since it was commenced in 1964.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. E. M. Heenan.

FLUORIDATION OF PUBLIC WATER SUPPLIES BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 2nd November.

THE HON. J. M. THOMSON (South) [4.36 p.m.]: As we all know, this is a very controversial subject and it has aroused a tremendous degree of interest and comment throughout, I think, the length and breadth of the State. I cannot recall a Bill of such a nature that has aroused so many diverse opinions as those which have been expressed both inside and outside of Parliament, not only by members of Parliament, but also by citizens generally. There are various measures that could have been introduced for the benefit of the health of the people of the State which, in the minds of many people, would have priority over the one before us.

One aspect of the Bill on which I wish to speak was referred to by Mr. Wise yesterday evening. It is astounding to think that we in this day and age have not seen fit to introduce measures that would have some curb on the ill-effects of the consumption of alcoholic beverages and the smoking of tobacco. I will not say much more about that aspect, because it would only be reiterating what Mr. Wise has already said, and I do not think that is necessary or desirable at this stage of the debate. On glancing at the figures covering the excise duty collected in 1963-64 on the sales of beer, spirits, and tobacco throughout the Commonwealth, it is significant to find that the total excise duty for that year was £215,192,000. Commonwealth expenditure for the same year was in the vicinity of £500,000,000. In my opinion we would have made a greater contribution to the better health of the people if steps had been taken to discourage the consumption of alcoholic beverages and smoking of tobacco instead of proposing the introduction of this measure for the fluoridation of public water supplies of Western Australia.

My attitude to the Bill is well known to members of this House and, thanks to the Press and radio, it is also well known to the people of this State. I take my stand in opposing the Bill, because of a real and deep conviction that, in principle, it is entirely wrong and completely unnecessary. If we are genuine in our belief of the freedom of choice by the individual, and freedom of the individual generally, the legislation contained in the Bill is not readily acceptable by many of us in the State of Western Australia.

I can assure the House there are many people who are gravely concerned over the passage of this Bill. While the Minister will maintain there is a decided majority of people in favour of it, judging from the opinions expressed by people who have approached me whilst travelling through country districts recently, they are definitely against it. For the Government to say to the people of Western Australia, in essence, "You will accept this Bill, and ultimately this Statute in the way we have designed it, and we will compel you to accept fluorine whether you like it, or whether you don't" is entirely wrong.

The attitude of the Government is that the people will have their water supplies throughout the State fluoridated whether the people like it or not. This attitude is causing deep concern and great disappointment to many people—that the Government has refused to give the people of the State the opportunity to express their approval or disapproval of its action in this Bill. The opportunity to test electors' reaction to the fluoridation of water supplies conveniently presents itself to the State at present, because we will be called upon, as electors, to go to the poll on the 26th November next to elect the next Commonwealth Parliament. That would be an appropriate time to test the reaction and the feeling of the public, if the Government submitted this question to the people by way of a referendum.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Would that be constitutionally possible; that is, to have a referendum held in conjunction with the Commonwealth election?

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: If it is not constitutionally possible, my suggestion is out of order and therefore, of course, having submitted it in all good faith, thanks to Mr. Wise—

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: It is knocked for six.

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: —what I would like to see done—that is, the holding of a referendum—at the most convenient time, cannot be achieved. There is not much point now, of course, pursuing my suggestion any further. I was not aware that a referendum would not be constitutionally possible on the same date as a Commonwealth election.

Fluoridation of water supplies is a matter which disturbs many people in the country districts, and the city, but apparently the Government is prepared to disregard, or under-rate, the reaction of the public to this Bill.

Of course, the Government could say this, as did Lothario, one of the ancient Greek gods on taking leave of one of his enamourates, "I will be faithful unto you according to my fashion." The Government could satisfy its conscience with similar thoughts.

Turning to the Bill, certain questions have to be asked about a measure such

as this. I think the Minister when introducing this measure in another place and, indeed, the Minister when introducing it here, referred to the points I now wish to discuss. I would ask, "Is fluoridation of public water supplies necessary? Is it efficient? Is it safe?" Those are the questions which are of paramount importance and on which each and every one of us should be absolutely satisfied; and there should be no shadow of doubt in our minds when we determine whether the process is really necessary, efficient, or safe.

In my humble opinion an evaluation of all aspects of such an important measure is an essential requisite. Therefore I have made it my business to look at what numerous highly qualified and scientific men have had to say on the fluoridation of public water supplies. What I have read, seen, and heard in regard to this question has caused me to pause and consider the matter very deeply.

When this measure was first mooted in 1963, I considered it might have great merit in its application. However, I decided it was my responsibility to look at the other side of this question; and that is exactly what I have done. That is the angle from which I have approached this subject. I am strongly of the opinion that fluoridation of our public water supplies is not necessary because there are available other known and acknowledged methods of ensuring dental health treatment for our children.

I cannot accept or acknowledge that fluoridation of the public water supplies is necessary because of the apathy and indifference of some parents, even though there may be many of that kind within our community. I do not consider the fluoridation of public water supplies should come within the province of any Government, enabling it to assume the responsibility of parental obligations in this regard.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: What alternatives do you suggest as treatment?

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: I will come to that if the honourable member will be patient with me. I am glad he is anxious to know what I have in mind in that regard. In order to maintain dental health we have the known and acknowledged methods of correct diet, the consumption of milk, baby foods, salts, and fluoride tablets which, of course, should be taken regularly. I would add to that list the continued use of fluoridated tooth paste which is acknowledged to be a very important contributing factor in arresting tooth decay. If all these things were administered to children, the result would be beneficial to their dental health.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You are not opposed to the use of fluoride?

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: I am not opposed to the use of fluoride at all. I have never expressed that opinion, although

that may be the opinion some people have tried to engender. I consider fluoride taken by other means, as I pointed out in my introductory remarks, is quite in order, but I am opposed to the fluoridation of public water supplies.

The method for dental health which I have previously outlined places an obligation and responsibility on parents as it would require their constant supervision. Of course, the proponents of mass fluoridation say that that is where inconsistencies of dosage would occur. Surely this is something which is a parental obligation and responsibility! Why should we fluoridate the public water supplies because there are some parents who might say, "The provision of fluoride tablets is inconvenient"? I think there are many parents who are most anxious to accept responsibility for the dental health of their children and carry this out to the best of their ability in the way I have stated. There could be no guarantee of 100 per cent. consistency of fluorine flow through a water pipe and tap.

I now come to the question, "Is it efficient?" This is a very important aspect in regard to the application of fluoride in our public water supply system. Very few public health problems have been studied so extensively and exhaustively as has mass fluoridation—the method envisaged in the Bill—and it is equally true to say that in numerous places where fluorine has been administered through the public water supplies—whether by trial or error or not—it has been found necessary abruptly to discontinue the addition of fluorine in those public water supplies in the public interest.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: In what way in the public interest?

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: Because of its detrimental effect and its inconsistency.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I remember you were forcibly corrected on that at Tambellup.

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: If ever a conference was brainwashed it was the conference at Tambellup, which was attended by the Minister.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: What do you mean by brainwashed?

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: One side of the question was put, and there was not much opportunity for the other side to be put. So those people were ill-informed about the subject.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You had ample opportunity to speak.

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: Yes, I did, but at a very late hour.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: You could not have been very convincing.

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: That is in the past; and if the Minister will allow me to proceed with my speech we will

get to the stage which he is anxious to reach—the Committee stage of the Bill.

Much play has been made of a comparison between the towns of Cue and Meekatharra. I have before me a cutting from *The West Australian* dated the 5th July, 1963. I do not propose to weary the House by reading this article at length because I think members will get the story from the heading, which I propose to quote—

Cue Survey Shows Fluoride Beneficial

A survey based on Cue's naturally fluoridated water supply has provided the first West Australian example of a relationship between fluoride and the prevention of dental decay.

Attention is drawn to the beneficial results at Cue as compared with those at Meekatharra. The Public Health Report of 1951 regarding Cue says the source of water is from a bore with a part per million fluoride content of 1.25, while at Meekatharra it was 0.25. The interesting point is this: The percentage of sound mouths at Cue was 8.9, while at Meekatharra it was 12.7. There was a greater number of sound mouths at Meekatharra than there was at Cue, the town which has been quoted so much as having such a beneficial water supply.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You realise this only proves there was a dentist at Meekatharra a couple of months beforehand. A sound mouth has no remnants of caries in it.

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: I was drawing attention to the fact that the part per million fluoride content of water at Cue was 1.25 with a percentage of 8.9 sound mouths, while the fluoride content at Meekatharra was 0.25 with a percentage of 12.7 sound mouths.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Do you know whether sheep in that district keep their teeth longer, and that they fall out at the right age?

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: I think they do fall out.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Are you sure of that?

The Hon. J. Heitman: They would go to 14 or 15 years of age before the teeth fell out.

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: I do not know anything about stock in the Cue area, so I will not discuss that subject any further.

The Hon. J. Dolan: Sheep would not use the town water supply.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: In dealing with the question of efficiency it would be pertinent for me to quote to the House the copy of a letter written to the townspeople of Wilmington, a city in one of the States of the United States of America. The letter is over the signature of the

Superintendent of the Wilmington Water Supply Scheme, and refers to consistency, which has a great bearing on efficiency. The letter reads as follows:—

As Superintendent of Wilmington's water system, it has been my responsibility to add sodium fluoride to our water since 1955. Having had close contact with this toxic material and feeling a deep concern for the people of Wilmington, I am compelled to report to you on this situation before you vote next Saturday on whether or not to continue fluoridating our water supply.

Since the installation of the fluoridator at the pumping station, there has been a series of breakdowns of that equipment due to corrosion of the metal parts. I have been asked how much longer it will be before the same thing happens to pipes, meters, hot water tanks and household plumbing, even though the concentration in the fluoridator is much stronger than in the system. It is my duty to report that I have already observed an increase in corrosion throughout the town since we started adding fluoride to our water.

I must also notify the townspeople that it has been impossible to maintain the recommended 1 part per million. This is the concentration which we add to the water at the pumping station; but tests of fluoride in the lines have fluctuated from .4 to 1.4 parts per million, dangerously close to 1.5 parts per million which according to the U.S. Public Health Service makes the water unsafe for drinking purposes.

In view of these facts, I would urge the voters of Wilmington to consider carefully whether or not they wish to continue adding sodium fluoride to the public water supply. Personally, it is my conviction that the water system should be used for the sole purpose of supplying pure, potable water, and the furnishing of sodium fluoride and other drugs which have been suggested for mass medication through the water mains be left to other more appropriate agencies.

The Hon. H. R. Robinson: Who supplied that information?

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: I was just about to state where it came from. For the edification of the House generally, a copy of this letter is to be found on page 72 of a report and address entitled "Once More Fluoridation." It is written by D. G. Steyn, B.Sc., D.M.V., D.V.Sc., Chief Research Officer, Division of Life Sciences, Atomic Energy Board, Pretoria. That person is numbered amongst the people who have been referred to as opponents of the scheme, and he is a person of whom we should take notice.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: He takes the same stand as you do; he is in favour of fluoridation but not through the water supply.

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: I am glad to be associated with him in that regard. The case I have quoted is not an isolated one. Evidence is available concerning 80 areas where the water has been fluoridated in West Virginia which reveal a variation from 0.2 parts per millions to 1.6 parts per million. In Milwaukee the variation was recorded between 0.25 parts per million and 1.56 parts per million. Variations were also recorded at 11 separate points within the Milwaukee distribution centre.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: In what year did this occur?

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: I shall make a note of that query and advise Dr. Hislop, possibly during the Committee stage. The report I have quoted was published in 1963 and it was delivered at a conference in Germany.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Did you use the word "corrosion"?

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: Yes.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: To what was it referring?

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: It referred to corrosion within the water pipes. The corrosion is set up from the reaction of the fluoride on the pipes. The effect of the fluoride on the pipes would tend to reduce the amount of fluoride in the water when it came out of the tap.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: Or was it the iron that was corroding?

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: I shall proceed with my speech so that other members who are desirous of speaking will have an opportunity to make their speeches.

The variation of the flow of fluoride from a small percentage to a high percentage is a matter which I think is most important when dealing with the efficiency of the scheme. In the City of Baltimore, there was a variation from 0.3 parts per million to 1.40 parts per million. It has been clearly indicated to us that beyond the point of 1 part per million, fluoride is not safe. Therefore, if we are to have this variation of flow through the water pipes which is detailed in the reports available—which have been submitted by competent people who have studied this problem where fluoridated water supplies are in existence—we could go beyond the safety margin.

In the City of Rochester there is a variation from 0.7 parts per million to 1.15 parts per million. In Denver the variation was from 0.7 parts per million to 1.4 parts per million. There are other variations listed to which I can refer if necessary.

Coming nearer to home—to Australia—we have been led to believe that this method of fluoridation is operating effi-

ently in the Eastern States. I will refer to the water supply at Yass, New South Wales, where the variation in fluoride was recorded as being between 0.95 parts per million and 4.75 parts per million.

The Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs: Who is the authority for that 4.75 parts per million?

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: That is a fair enough question. The report is by William Hector Black, and is dated the 15th July, 1958, and reads as follows:—

Analyst's Certificate

I, William Hector Black, an analyst, hereby certify that on the seventh day of July, 1958, I received three samples of water labelled nos. 1, 3, and 6 respectively from Mr. Julius Dietzius, lot 18B, Glimatta Road, Mona Vale, N.S.W.

I further certify that I have analysed the said samples and that the results of such analyses are as follows:—

Sample No. 1 contains 0.95 part per million fluorine

Sample No. 3 contains 4.75 part per million fluorine

Sample No. 6 contains 1.8 part per million fluorine

Samples were analysed by methods 37.22 to 37.26 of A.O.A.C., using sixth edition of their "Methods of Analysis."

Signed the fifteenth day of July, 1958,

W. H. Black.

Mr. Black is a registered biochemist and bacteriologist. Dr. Waldbott's book, *Struggle With Titans*, further comments on the question of corrosion and particularly refers to copper water pipes. It will be recalled that I inquired of Mr. Stubbs by interjection the other evening about copper poisoning. He replied that copper was a poison. It was also stated by an honourable member that corrosion in copper pipes is so great that a bowl of water, taken from a copper pipe, would have a green tinge from the reaction of the copper. When the fluoridation of the particular water supply referred to was discontinued, the discolouration ceased. Mr. Stubbs said that copper is a poison.

The Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs: I was using it in the sense of vegetables.

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: I am using it in my argument. We know that a lot of copper pipe is used in houses and public buildings today.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: This problem does not occur.

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: Copper piping is supposed to last a lifetime, but it corrodes after the introduction of fluoridation. Dealing with efficiency I will make brief reference to what appears in a report of fluoridation discussions. The report is based on the proceedings of the third medical-dental conference on evaluation of fluoridation and is dated 1960.

On page 10 there is a reference to the City of New York as follows:—

Fourteen years of fluoridation have failed to substantiate its sole proclaimed purpose of "65% reduction in dental decay." Indeed, there is yet to be undertaken one single experiment designed to scientifically determine the dental benefits of fluoridation. There is no uncertainty however about its dental harmfulness: with unfailing certainty fluoridated water will produce a crop of permanently mottled teeth in every new generation of drinkers.

Reference has been made to the supply of tablets not being effective, but it is very interesting to point out that Mr. Dolan mentioned the case where Mr. Bonney carried out a check on children from the Alfred Cove area. Whilst the Minister has said that the benefit from tablets is a 50 per cent. improvement, Mr. Bonney reported that there was a 70 per cent. improvement in the case of the children from Alfred Cove. Those children had been taking the tablets. That must surely indicate that the tablets are an efficient and effective method of treatment.

The next question is, "Is it safe?" That question can no doubt be answered in true parliamentary fashion — "Question (3) answered by (1) and (2)." Surely we cannot disregard the opinions of professional men and scientists who have made a lifetime study of fluoride and its effects. Those men are of high standing and have carried out research into many aspects of this and similar matters. They have warned us that we should treat this matter of fluoridation of public water supplies with the utmost caution.

As long as there is a doubt—and there are very strong doubts in this connection—that the method proposed in the Bill is an efficient and safe one to adopt, and until we can satisfy ourselves that there are no harmful effects that can come from the fluoridation of public water supplies—

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: Have you read any of the findings of any of the scientists who approve of this?

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: Yes. In reply to that interjection I would say that I have attempted to approach this question with an open mind, and I have conceded the fact that there are two points of view. I have considered those two points, but I take the view that as there are still strong doubts in the minds of many people, and this includes doctors and dentists, I do not believe we should adopt the fluoridation of public water supplies. Not every doctor in the A.M.A. and not every dentist in Australia, or anywhere else, is 100 per cent. behind the idea of mass fluoridation of public water supplies. So do not let us delude ourselves into thinking that they are. It is most essential that we take every side of the question into consideration. I have

endeavoured to do this because there is a very grave doubt in my own mind as to the efficacy of the proposal, and I think there is much yet to be learned in regard to the question.

If the fluoridation of public water supplies is as safe and as efficient as the promoters of the proposal would have us believe that it is, why are they hesitant to accept—in fact they decline to accept—the responsibility or liability for any injurious effects sustained as a result of fluoridation?

The Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs: Who are "they"?

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: The honourable member can put his own interpretation upon whom "they" refers to. It ought to be clear enough to whom the word "they" would refer.

The same responsibility in regard to injurious effects is not accepted by the authorities in any of the countries where the fluoridation of water supplies has been tried. Apparently this is because the method is not considered sufficiently efficient or safe and, in many places, the fluoridation of water supplies has been discontinued because of the apparent uncertainty in the minds of those who were responsible for it. There is the same degree of uncertainty in the minds of many in Western Australia and it is because of this uncertainty, and the possibility of injurious effects upon a certain group of people, apparently, that responsibility will not be accepted.

I repeat: Do not let us delude ourselves into thinking that every member of the A.M.A. or every dentist or dental surgeon is 100 per cent. in favour of the scheme. They are not. However, for reasons best known to themselves they are not prepared to be vocal on this point. Be that as it may, I believe it is on occasions such as this that we should present our opinions to the House and speak for those who are of an age group for which the fluoridation of public water supplies will be of no benefit, but could be detrimental.

I have presented views on behalf of that section of the community and I am convinced, from what I have read and studied, that I would be wrong if I were to do other than what I intend to do in regard to this matter.

Now I should like to refer briefly to a case which is known personally to me. This occurred in Canberra where the public water supplies are fluoridated. Apparently this person suffered, or was known to be suffering from a kidney complaint and, on the advice of his doctor, he ceased to consume further supplies of fluoridated water. The reason was that it was considered this water could have ill-effects on that person's kidneys, and on his health generally.

Notwithstanding all that we have studied, should we be expected to take a chance on this proposal? We should not even contemplate gambling on what could eventu-

ate from the proposals contained in this measure. If and when this measure becomes operative the public will never be allowed to know the ill-effects which could eventuate from it. I say that because I believe that as this proposal proceeds, if and when it does, the public will not be informed of the probable ill-effects it could have because officialdom would have to be silent on this matter. After all, if we cannot express our opinions here, where can we express them? I make the statement I have just made realising the seriousness of it but I think time will prove that maybe there is some semblance of truth in it.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Haven't most of the officials been pretty responsible and reliable men?

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: Very well.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I think that sort of statement is a bit unfair.

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: That is a matter of opinion. It is the Minister's opinion and he is entitled to express it just as much as I am entitled to express my own opinion. Because at times our opinions might be at variance is no reason why we should not express them, as I have expressed my opinion. I strongly oppose the Bill before the House.

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West) [5.24 p.m.]: If I was bewildered before I am certainly far more so now after hearing that quite remarkable speech from Mr. Jack Thomson, remarkable particularly in view of his closing remarks. I heard by way of interjection that it was unfair and that the honourable member was casting a rather grave reflection on certain people and, in particular, I would say on those who are charged with the protection of the health of the community.

I accept, as Mr. Jack Thomson said, that he has a right to his opinion and, furthermore, he has a right to express it in this place. This I do not dispute; but are we to accept a charge such as this: that in the possible, or the probable eventuality of some ill-effects from the use of fluoride in the water scheme, officialdom will take such steps to see that reports of it never see the light of day. Are we to accept this after all these years of public health administration, not only here but also in so many other places upon which our schemes are modelled? Are we to accept that that might be the position on a matter such as this? I do not for one minute believe we are.

Mr. Jack Thomson also indicated that we should not gamble. I am not aware that we are gambling. The very fact that this measure has undergone such penetrating examination, and such detailed examination for many years, and that the information that has been obtained has been made available for the consumption of the general public proves beyond doubt that we are not gambling. When I say

"we" I should perhaps more correctly say that the Government is not gambling. What has been decided by the Government in introducing this measure is nothing more nor less than the outcome of years and years of investigations following the initial discovery of the use of fluoride, and the fact that absence of fluoride in water was responsible for certain effects upon the enamel of teeth. This discovery was made by James Crichton Browne in 1892.

From that point we have progressed to the stage where countless millions throughout the world—and I say that advisedly—are prepared to accept, and drink without the slightest doubts, water that has been fluoridated under strictly controlled conditions. This proposal is in operation in something in excess of 41 countries throughout the world, including Australia and other associated countries in Oceania. Therefore, is this proposal a gamble? I do not believe it is.

However, I started off by saying I was bewildered. It has been stated on a number of occasions that this is a most controversial matter. As a result I tried to work out the nature of the controversy, if such is the correct term. Has there been an endeavour on the part of numbers of people to ascertain the truth, and to find out whether in fact what is proposed is acceptable to their consciences as well as to their health; in other words, to try to make up their own minds and obtain sufficient information to enable them to do this? Perhaps the controversy has been caused as a result of a lack of information; or maybe it was contributed to by the great deal of information which has been disseminated in this State.

As we know from reports from every country throughout the world where there has been a dissemination of such literature—which I do not think is necessarily incorrect but it certainly has caused a great deal of doubt in many people's minds—a reflection has been cast upon those who, for the public good, are in charge of measures dealing with public health.

Last night Mr. Wise said something to this effect: One's teeth are a very personal matter, and the care of those teeth is also a personal matter. With that statement I entirely agree; and it was on that basis that I endeavoured to devote some time to this whole question. I happen to be another of those mortals who is a parent, and I like to be in the position of being able to look after my own health as well as the health of my family, and the health of the families who are to come. So I looked at this question in a very personal way and the decision I have arrived at in regard to it is a personal decision.

Do I, as a person, accept this? Do I believe that this will be of benefit, not necessarily to me but to my children and to those of my kin; to those of my neigh-

bours and friends and their children in the generations to come? That is the important thing. I believe this is one of those thoughts that motivates a great many of us, irrespective of our party political beliefs. I have considered this matter, and my conscience is completely satisfied.

I accept that this will be of benefit, despite what Mr. Jack Thomson says. It has been clearly said in so many terms, in such clear terms; and in all my reading I do not believe that I can recall any of these people who throw doubt on the safety, or otherwise, of fluoride denying that fluoride is of benefit in the care of teeth, and in the prevention and control of dental caries. Whatever else they may have said I am not aware that they have said this.

So let me use that in my own fashion to refute the statements of Mr. Jack Thomson, because I believe that statement in itself would contribute to the doubts and fears of the great many people who have not had the opportunity to obtain the information that they might otherwise have had.

To continue with this personal study; and I do not say I have done more study than anyone else. I simply place myself in the position of all other members in this Chamber who, I believe, have given this matter objective study. Most of those who have spoken have indicated this, and this I accept. In my view, and in my experience, this is no different at all from the objective study that members of this House have been prepared to give to any other piece of legislation, or matter that comes before the House.

This is something that should be well appreciated by the electorate in general; but frequently I come to note that not always is it accepted by the electorate as such. My experience of fluoride started about 20 years ago at the University. The Dean of my Faculty at that time was a prominent Western Australian scientist, who created a name for himself in those years, internationally, for his work on stock diseases; and in particular for his discovery of the effect of trace elements. He made a name for himself not only in this country but also overseas.

It was in that atmosphere I learned the value of fluoride in dental care and in the correction and prevention of dental caries. In that year—it was about 1946—it was advocated, and the question was asked: Since this was accepted beyond doubt at that stage why could not fluoride be included in our water supply, or in some appropriate form for the correction of this ailment among the young?

That was 20 years ago. The very people whose books I studied in those days provided some of the texts that have been quoted. They are, in fact, the people whose names are being thrown around by

those who, within their rights, are opposed to fluoridation. I would like to mention, in particular, Professor Eijkman.

I pass from there much closer to our time—to 1963—when the Federal Government brought the matter of fluoridating Canberra's water supply before the House. As a result of a motion moved by the member for Moreton (Mr. Killen), the matter was discussed in the House. As he has received some mention in this Chamber, I will devote a few words to that point a little later.

As I have said, at about that time the matter was also being discussed in this place, so up till then there were three occasions on which I came into contact with fluoridation. The first was as a student; as a person studying nutrition—I do accept that it was stock nutrition—and then on two occasions in the political sense. So by 1963 there were three occasions on which I could have studied, and on which I did study, the question of fluoridation. Once again we have the question before us. As a result of this, I say quite simply I do not entertain a single doubt in the matter. It has been suggested in certain circles that those people opposed to fluoridation—the antifluoridationists and so on—might be described as cranks, or fools. I do not say this; and I am not aware that this has been said or even suggested in this House.

I would think that this House would be the last place in which such statements would be made. This is the place in which opinions, however incorrect we feel they may be, are entitled to be expressed by everyone. These people have sought their authorities, and I certainly do not question their right to accept those authorities as being correct.

It has been suggested, however, that although there is this doubt, because the Government has made a decision, fluoride is being forced on to the people; that we are forcing them to drink fluoridated water; that it is being poked down their throats. I would like to ask whether it is really being forced on us?

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Of course it is.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I appreciate the interjection by Mrs. Hutchison because she will be aware, as I find politicians are generally very well aware, of the methods one uses in Parliament in an effort to determine the feelings of one's electorate.

I suggest that members of this House will agree that politicians are fairly adept and competent at being able to determine the feelings within their own electorate, and they can give a fairly reliable interpretation of those feelings.

This being so, let us not forget the type of Government that we have in Australia and in Western Australia. This is possibly something about which the

public at large should remind itself. We have a Parliament based on the Mother of Parliaments; we have a Premier and an Executive. It is the Government; and this Government decides to do certain things, as any Government operating on this system might decide. It is established custom in our democracy that these things, having once been established as a mandate, as a result of a policy statement prior to an election—and this is the mandate on which the Government was elected—should be proceeded with; and if at one stage or another it transgresses the wishes of the people the Government is removed from office at the next general election.

So let us use these expressions in determining whether this matter is in fact being forced on the people; or whether, in fact, the Government has a mandate to do it. The present Government endeavoured to introduce similar legislation in 1963. It failed to do so because of the vote of this House; and, without being pompous, I might say that this is democracy at work.

Prior to the next election, in 1965, the Premier gave notice in his policy speech that the Government would continue to pursue its work in dental care and dental education, including fluoridation. The Government was elected on that basis; it has a mandate to do this. Nobody can dispute that. This principle has been so long established, and so well established, that if the people say now, "We did not know," we cannot accept this, because I am fairly certain adequate publicity was given to the policy statement made by the Premier at the time. Let us go a little further. As members we all find it terribly difficult at times—and we have our own means of finding out—to determine how people think in our own electorates; and whenever possible we are entitled to use the organisation and institutions available, because these are generally a collective opinion, and they are very useful.

Apart from this we are representatives of certain political parties. The Liberal Party has never made any secret about this matter. At its State conferences and in its policy making it has favoured fluoridation. The Country Party has had some resolutions on the matter, and it also at its conferences favoured fluoridation. Do not all these things add up to a mandate? Can anyone interpret this action as being forced on the people? Once again, I do not believe so.

The Hon. J. Dolan: At the last election the Country Party was opposed to fluoridation. This has happened since. So how can it be part of its policy?

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I accept that interjection.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: They all voted for it with the exception of two men.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: As I said a few moments ago, it was in the policy speech of the Premier, and since that time it has formed part of resolutions at the State conference of the Liberal Party. Since that time the Country Party has also moved along the same lines.

The Hon. R. Thompson: With some provisos in the case of the Country Party.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I am not prepared to enter into a discussion on this matter. It is obvious that this was very well considered at the time. In view of the interjections I would point out that the Labor Party has certain policies and a certain platform; and even if it did not include a specific resolution prior to the election, and it was subsequently elected and decided to pursue a policy of socialisation, we would not dispute it. It would be part of its platform, and we would accept it.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: You would dispute it all right.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: We certainly might dispute it, but we would not dispute the Labor Party's right to include it. It would have a mandate from the people to do so.

Let me pass now to the question of opposition to the Bill. This is, after all, a debate, and the question before this House and another place has given an opportunity for practically everything to be said that can be said on this subject. Accordingly at this stage we are reduced to indulging in debating.

I am reminded of what Mr. Wise said last night when he referred to a negative cause. One of the tragedies of this whole business is the fact that so much effort, so much enthusiasm, so much time, and so much money have been devoted to a negative cause.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: You are a bit pompous, are you not?

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I do not say that those who are against fluoridation are wrong. I do not want to be misunderstood in this matter. But there is no doubt that their efforts have been devoted to a negative cause. How much more benefit could have been derived all round, if these people had applied those same efforts to which I have referred in a more positive fashion; to something which could have been of real good to the community; to health generally, to social services, and so on. I do sincerely believe that to be so.

What a pity all this effort cannot be harnessed to something which is of real and direct benefit. I have referred briefly to the fact that I had some interest in fluoride a number of years ago, and some members in this House are aware of my agricultural background. I claim to have been a professional agriculturalist, and now to be a farmer—but perhaps not as professional a farmer as I would like to be. At least I have had some experience in this field.

In a debate of this kind, which is concerned with matters of a chemical and a scientific nature, farmers might be a little more at home than certain other people. In saying this I do not mean to be disrespectful at all. Most people are aware that farmers, particularly since the 1939-1945 war, have become quite conditioned to the use of what were, and still are, considered to be highly complicated drugs, chemicals, herbicides, weedicides, and the like. Today these substances are accepted by, and they hold no great fear for, the people handling them. For example, strychnine, which is a highly dangerous alkaloid, presents no fears to the thousands of people throughout the country who use it. One of the most dangerous poisons, 1080, has some connection with the subject of this debate. There is a very great awareness of the danger of this poison, but people are using it all over the countryside.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: You can not use it yourself.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: People are using it. It is spread over thousands of acres, by contact with vegetables and grains; and is used on thousands of properties throughout Australia. We accept this. Under these circumstances the use of an element, such as fluorine, presents no great fears to the farming community.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Is it not compulsory for farmers to use 1080 where there is rabbit infestation?

The Hon. N. McNEILL: That is a separate subject which I would be glad to explore with the honourable member at a more appropriate time. The use of this poison and of trace elements holds no fears for the farmers. They accept this, and it is also a fact that they recognise the enormous benefits which are derived from the use of these substances.

Would anyone deny the benefits from the use of trace elements? And fluorine in the water supply is nothing more than a trace element, as Dr. Hislop pointed out. Many people are not aware of the trace elements which are used in agricultural production in Western Australia and in the rest of the world. Do the people know where the foodstuffs which they eat are grown? Do they know the extent of the trace elements which are used—the copper, zinc, molybdenum, manganese, selenium, and sulphur—quite apart from the general fertilisers, such as nitrogen, potash, and phosphates? Of course they do not. Are they not aware that all of the elements I have mentioned are finding their way into the crops and produce which are sold on the market?

It has been said that these trace elements present a danger, but it is not compulsory for people to use them. Certainly their use is not obligatory, but the point is these things are used. Who is to protect the public from any danger or damage which might result? The same public

health administration which is to be charged with the introduction of fluorine into our water supplies. In all other matters we are prepared to put our faith in the public health administrators who are the officials concerned, but on the question of fluoridation some people contend that they have blundered and have gone beyond the pale! I do not believe they have.

Let me complete the picture. Copper is a poison, but do people know; and are they terribly concerned with the use of copper as a trace element in fertilisers used in the market gardens and farms where produce and grains are grown? Copper is poisonous, even in very minute quantities, but it is used as a trace element and this is essential for the adequate growth of plants.

Some parallel has been drawn to the use of fluoride. Some members have said that no harm will be done if the people do not use fluoride; that after all dental caries can continue to plague our teeth, and that we should not worry about it. I try to run my farm efficiently, and if I do not use copper, zinc, or molybdenum I would contribute to the neglect of the farm; this will become known in my community, and the people will say that I am not a good farmer.

Within the last two or three months I had the misfortune to lose a couple of head of stock, and this disturbed me greatly. Repeatedly I had veterinary advice, and the assistance of the Department of Agriculture and the Government Animal Health Laboratories. An acute shortage of copper was detected, so I applied the copper that was deficient. If I had not applied it I could have lost more of my stock, and further, my stock would have remained unthrifty. Would I not be neglecting my responsibility if I did not apply the copper to overcome the deficiency? To make sure, I also put copper into the drinking water of the cattle, but the animals did not like it. The point is the cattle were compelled to drink this water. I would be failing in my duty and in my responsibility as a farmer if I did not use copper to remedy the deficiency.

The Hon. J. Dolan: There is a great difference between treatment of animals and treatment of human beings.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: Let me emphasise the point I am making: I am referring to the acceptance of responsibility for the care of the health of one's charges, irrespective of whether the charges are sheep, cattle, or pigs. I recall at one time we used sodium fluoride as a pig drench, and it was considered highly dangerous. One has a responsibility in these matters.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: I would not like to be held responsible for compelling the people to drink fluoridated water.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I endeavoured to make the point that I regard this as a

personal decision. If I arrive at the decision that the addition of fluoride to the water supplies is beneficial, then I do so personally; and it is only incidental that I happen to be a member of this House, and therefore can cast a vote in the appropriate direction to assist the Government to pass this legislation.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: You are forcing this on the people.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I am not forcing this on people. Let me refer briefly to what I considered to be a fine address by Mr. Wise last evening. He drew attention to, and some parallel with, certain other things to which Mr. Jack Thomson also referred this afternoon. Mr. Wise did not accept the parallel which has been drawn between the fluoridation of water supplies, and vaccination or compulsory chest X-rays. I do not think I do an injustice in inferring that this is what he said.

Mr. Wise then drew a parallel between fluoridation and alcohol and tobacco. On this occasion I exercise my right to reject this one, because alcohol and tobacco are not part of a Government service like a public water supply, and people do not have to use these substances. People can decide for themselves whether they drink alcohol or smoke tobacco. I agree with Mr. Wise completely that something more could be done to combat the excessive consumption of alcohol and the smoking of tobacco, but to use this as an argument against the introduction of fluoridation is not, in my opinion, acceptable.

Let me refer to what Mrs. Hutchison had to say in her contribution to this debate. Among other things she said—

I spent all my childhood in Cue . . . The children there have as many decayed teeth as they do anywhere else. The water in Cue, which is supposed to be fluoridated, did not do any public good that I could see; and nobody has proved that it did.

Two points arise from that statement. Firstly, I do not accept her contention. She said that her teeth had since fallen out, and therefore by inference suggested there was no fluoride in the water in Cue, and if it was present it did not do any good. Secondly, I should point out that my grandmother, and my mother in her school days, lived in the same area. Today I have my own teeth; I have no false ones and no artificial dental device. I pose this question: Has this not resulted from the fact that my grandmother and her daughter lived in Cue in those days? This is just as acceptable a conclusion as the inference of Mrs. Hutchison.

We have been told that it was only about 1931 when real investigation and research were started into the use of fluoride to prevent tooth decay, because it was discovered that fluoride had some effect on the teeth. I think I am correct in assum-

ing that the time Mrs. Hutchison was referring to is considerably earlier than the time when fluoride came into prominence as a control measure for dental caries. Yet when speaking on this subject she said that she spent her childhood in Cue, and that the children there had as many decayed teeth as children elsewhere.

Those comments are a reflection on the official survey which was conducted in Cue. This survey was outlined by Mr. George Brand when he spoke in this debate. It was conducted by the Faculty of Dental Science under Mr. D. G. Kailis. That survey did not arrive at findings along the lines suggested by Mrs. Hutchison.

The general conclusions arrived at by the official survey to which I have just referred were—

- (1) The pre-school children in Meekatharra had three times the dental decay that the pre-school children in Cue had experienced.
- (2) The school age children in Meekatharra had twice the dental decay that the school children in Cue had experienced.

Earlier I referred to Mr. Killen, the member for Moreton in the Federal House of Representatives. Firstly I ask Mr. Dolan why he selected the comments made by this gentleman and by Dr. Gibbs, the member for Bowman, during the debate on a similar measure in the Federal Parliament. They were not the only speakers; there were many others, and I would remind members who were some of the others. The speakers in that debate included Dr Gibbs, the member for Bowman, Mr. Gray, the Labor member for Capricornia, and Mr. L. R. Johnson, the Labor member for Hughes.

I do not know Dr. Gibbs personally, but I do know the others personally. I might add that not only did those gentlemen speak, but also the Prime Minister, at that time Sir Robert Menzies, spoke. Why did Mr. Dolan quote Mr. Killen and Dr. Gibbs?

The Hon. J. Dolan: And Mr. Gray. I quoted him, too.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I accept that, Mr. Dolan, and apologise. However, if Mr. Dolan wished to quote the Government members—those who are good Liberals—to convince those in this House, he would have been better off had he referred to such a person as the Prime Minister.

The Hon. J. Dolan: I did, too.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I suggest that his remarks would carry more weight than those of Mr. Killen. To give the whole story, let me go back to the 10th October, 1963—I was in the House at the time—when Mr. Killen moved a motion to the effect that the proposed introduction of the fluoridation of the water supplies in Canberra be not proceeded with. An amendment was moved by the member for Fremantle, Mr. Beazley, who wanted a Select Committee appointed.

Mr. Killen once again raised the matter in 1964, and some of the comments made at the time are extremely illuminating. I therefore seek the indulgence of members while I read portion of the speeches made at that time. Mr. Killen has been mentioned here. He was a colleague of mine and therefore I consider that I am indulging in fair parliamentary practice by referring to the Commonwealth *Hansard* to quote some of the things said by Mr. Johnson, the Labor member for Hughes. He throws some doubt on this matter and says, on page 1152 of Federal *Hansard*, 1964—

So far as the honourable member for Bowman (Dr. Gibbs) and the honourable member for Moreton (Mr. Killen) are concerned, it seems to me that they had little regard for the particular matter that is the subject of this debate. They were classical in indulging in name-dropping, in surreptitiously sneaking upon all the expert advice and information that is available on this topic and disregarding the very merit and objective of the debate—that a select committee should inquire into this matter. The honourable members proceeded by their devious means to intrude into the debate a case against fluoridation. The honourable and learned member for Bowman, who is a skilled and qualified medical man, exploited his professional capacity in a most unfortunate way.

However, that is not all that Mr. Johnson said.

The Hon. J. Dolan: He ought to have been ashamed of himself.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I do not necessarily dispute that one. However, I am quoting this for the record, in view of the fact that Mr. Killen has been used as an authority on this subject. Mr. Johnson also said—

There are many points I could make if I had the time to do so, but I make this final point: It is a matter for concern that the honourable member for Moreton seems to be in company with some of the ultra right-wing reactionaries who seem to be intent on inhibiting progress in this and other matters at any price. Has his brief been prepared by his contemporary, his mentor, the notorious Eric Butler, of Melbourne, whose views are so extreme that he equates the danger of fluoridation with that of nuclear fallout? What sinister ulterior motives now inspire these two traditional reactionaries?

The Hon. J. Dolan: Political propaganda! Nothing else!

The Hon. N. McNEILL: To continue—

They have linked hands previously in other dubious causes. The honourable member can hardly deny that he has been linked with Eric Butler not only in the anti-fluoridation cam-

paign but also in the controversy on the European Common Market, when he was assisted in respect of a visit to the United Kingdom, in the Suez crisis issue when he espoused the Nassar cause and, of course, at the social credit seminar in Melbourne.

However, the debate on that particular subject was brought to a close some short time afterwards—on the 13th May—when Mr. Killen himself moved that the order of the day be discharged from the notice paper.

I conclude with a few more comments. I support this Bill and am prepared to support it because of the benefits which I believe can accrue to the people in Western Australia—

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: And you have the power in this House to do it.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. N. McNEILL: —as a result of the introduction of fluoride to the water supply. I do not entertain any doubts about this, and I sincerely and honestly regret that fears have been developed amongst people who have no opportunity to learn otherwise. I hope these fears can be allayed by any means available to the Government to do so.

As has been said to me before in other circumstances, we have a responsibility in this House, but it is not to ourselves. Although we can make decisions affecting ourselves, those in both Houses are expected also to make decisions affecting generations of people who are unable to make decisions for themselves. I refer to the unborn generations of Australians. The absence of adequate fluoride determines their dental history long before they are ever given an opportunity to decide it for themselves. This is a responsibility I believe we must accept, and I therefore support the Bill.

Sitting suspended from 6.7 to 7.30 p.m.

THE HON. E. M. HEENAN (Lower North) [7.31 p.m.]: My constituents have been very silent on this question, although I have discussed it with quite a number of them. My discussions have extended from Kalgoorlie to the Murchison and the Gascoyne. The consensus of opinion among those people is that something should be done to attempt to alleviate the great problem of teeth decay which everyone agrees exists in the community. Therefore, on this occasion, I find my position is that I have to exercise my individual judgment and responsibility as best I can.

The Bill now before us has not only been debated very fully and very capably so far, but also we have been supplied with an abundance of literature which deals comprehensively with the merits and demerits of its proposals. In addition, of course, for weeks past there has been an interesting flow of letters in the Press, both

for and against fluoridation. To the best of my ability, I have endeavoured to make an intelligent study of, and draw the correct deductions from, all of this information.

One stark fact has emerged and on this there seems to be no divergence of opinion; that is, the standard of our dental health is very poor indeed, so much so that it is causing our Public Health Department, the medical and dental professions, and many others the gravest concern.

Over the years, of course, this state of affairs has been made known to us on many occasions. The problem of dental decay and its consequences are by no means confined to Western Australia. Apparently it is a worldwide problem and one which has engaged the attention of doctors, scientists, and others who are continually using their brains and skill, and the advances of scientific discoveries to alleviate the ills of poor suffering humanity.

Fortunately, many States and countries have carried out experiments over the years and we now have the benefit of their experiences. For my part, therefore, although I voted against a similar Bill on a former occasion, I now feel convinced that the application of a minute quantity of fluoride to the water which we drink, especially in our early years, is beneficial to teeth and strengthens them in a way which enables them to resist the onslaught caused by germs and disease.

I have come to this conclusion on the evidence which has been submitted and also on the advice of professional friends with whom I have discussed the topic and in whose wisdom and judgment I have every confidence. Believing, therefore, as I do, that a real problem exists; that the problem is nationwide and serious, particularly to the future generations of young people; and that the problem can be remedied to some extent, I find myself in support of the proposals contained in this Bill. I believe the need fully justifies the means. I would go further and say that I would feel remiss in my duty and responsibility to the people I represent, if I did not back up the efforts of the Public Health Department in the advice and guidance which it has submitted to us.

There is, of course, the view held by many people that the application of fluoride to our drinking water could have harmful effects, and that the cure could be worse than the complaint. However, here again, I am convinced beyond reasonable doubt that this is not so. Without quoting the many eminent authorities which have been mentioned, I am fortified in this view by the speeches made by Dr. Hislop, Mr. Claude Stubbs, and finally Mr. McNeill. On this particular point, I was greatly impressed by the views of each

of these three gentlemen, and I am quite willing to go along with what they have said. If I had any doubts left about this important aspect, I would not be in favour of fluoride. I feel firmly convinced that there is no element of risk.

The only other argument which causes me a little concern is that relating to compulsion. I am quite satisfied that there is a worth-while section of the community which, honestly and conscientiously, is opposed to the proposals in the Bill. In a democracy, the views of all sections of the community must be given every consideration. On the other hand, however, I feel that the good of the great majority must be the overriding consideration, particularly in matters pertaining to health and the everlasting fight against disease, and the ravages of disease. In my view, in this particular case, the scheme would be utterly unworkable unless it was applied to everyone. Therefore, I feel that if our water is to be fluoridated in the manner proposed, Parliament must make the decision. However, I am concerned about this aspect, because at the last State election I was a party to an undertaking given to the electors that the matter would be submitted to a referendum. In the circumstances, therefore, if the Bill passes the second reading, I will be constrained to support an amendment which I notice my leader, Mr. Willesee, has on the notice paper.

Finally, may I express the view that my colleague, Mr. Frank Wise, may have unwittingly given support to the proposals in the Bill when he mentioned that a census taken by him had revealed the rather startling fact that 80 per cent. of the people he could see in this Chamber had dentures of some type or other. In other words, only 20 per cent. of members in this House are entire so far as teeth are concerned. The deduction I draw is that a rosier picture might have been painted if fluoride had been applied some 50 or 60 years ago. I have worked it out that 20 per cent. represents only six members in this Chamber. Who the fortunate ones are, I do not know, but I envy them. I would go further and hazard a guess that if we had more teeth in this Chamber, it would be a good thing.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: More bite!

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: What could we use them for?

The Hon. E. M. HEENAN: We could then get our teeth into the multifarious questions which are presented to us here. The other night when Mrs. Hutchison asked for leave to introduce a Bill, members were prevented from getting their teeth into it. The majority of members simply used their boots. What a census would reveal in another Chamber would prove to be an interesting study. The result might be another argument in favour of fluoride. However, I think the percentage of members with teeth might be

higher in the other Chamber, because I have occasionally seen them bare their teeth at each other. It might be a blessing in disguise that presumably only six members of this Chamber could do that to one another.

I have no intention of recapitulating, or dealing with, other various interesting arguments that have been given for and against fluoridation. In my view, the debate has been of a very high standard and I am sure it has been helpful to everyone who has listened to it. I congratulate all the members who have contributed to the debate so far.

THE HON. R. THOMPSON (South Metropolitan) [7.45 p.m.]: From the outset I wish to say I am completely opposed to the fluoridation of public water supplies until such time as members of the public have the right to exercise, in a democratic way, a vote so that they can be the judges of whether fluoride shall be added to their water supplies. If we take the estimate made by Mr. Wise as being correct, I am about the 22nd or 23rd member to speak on this Bill. Although much has been said, at least this point has not been mentioned; namely, that in most countries of the world where fluoride has been added to water supplies it has been done under the direction of a local authority, shire, or county, and the people under their jurisdiction have had the right to accept fluoride if they so desired it, and later the right to reject it.

There must be some reason for the adoption of this method of deciding the question in America. Even in the United States a dictatorial attitude has not been adopted to decide the question. People in the counties and the various States have had the opportunity, by means of a referendum, to reject fluoride and many have done just that.

In speaking to the Bill before us, is it right that I, as a member of Parliament, representing, say, 60,000 people who are eligible to vote, and possibly a greater number who are not eligible to vote, should decide that those people have to have fluoride placed in their water supplies? It is not just that I, as a member of Parliament, should have to make that decision. Therefore I support wholeheartedly the holding of a referendum on this question.

Some four years ago when I first heard of fluoride, I was much in favour of it. From the literature I had read up to that time I thought there was much to be said for it, and possibly I was imbued with the same spirit of enthusiasm that has been shown by many speakers who are supporting this Bill.

On a further study of the subject I ascertained that fluoride, when taken over a period, becomes a cumulative poison be-

cause all traces of it are not completely discharged from the body. I then began to have some doubts as to the benefits of fluoride to people in the community. Without quoting records and statistics, which I do not think members would appreciate at this stage, I have found that there is much difference of opinion as to the benefits of fluoride, even from the proponents of it, who state, that, on the one hand it reduces dental caries by 65 per cent., and then it is found that, on the other hand, statistics show that it reduces dental caries by only 45 per cent., or even lower. In none of these statistical reports is it stated that fluoride, if taken by any person over the age of 12, will guarantee that person partial immunity from dental caries, or that people within this 45 per cent. to 65 per cent. range will be free of dental caries. Those are points we have to consider.

I give full marks to the Health Education Council of Western Australia because it is a body which is doing a wonderful job, and I hope it continues to make parents conscious of dental hygiene so that they will pass their knowledge on to the children. Most parents, because of our improved standard of living—that is, a standard of living which has improved since I was a boy—accept such information most readily. Today it is a very careless parent who does not make a child brush his teeth after each meal. I have noticed when I have visited the homes of friends that this is the general practice. If this fact was made known to the public more forcibly it would do much to improve the children's teeth.

The Hon. E. C. House: But you have so many doctors and dentists against that, that you would have one half of the people believing it, and the other half would not.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The honourable member has made his bad speech, so let him permit me to make my good one.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Statements have been made in this Chamber that we have the worst teeth in the world. That statement was made by three or four members in the Chamber. That is not true! It is rot!

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: You mean the teeth are?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: No, it is utter rot for members to say that we, in Australia, have the worst teeth in the world, because one of the documents I have states otherwise.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: No-one has quoted any authority as to that.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The only statement I heard was that Tasmanians have the worst teeth in Australia.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I have heard three members during the course of this debate say that we in Australia have the

worst teeth in the world. On that point, I will read the following statement—

There is a belief in Australia that our teeth are the worst in the world. This is just not so. The state of dental health in Australia is certainly not good, but repeated examinations in Western Australia show that healthy teeth are being seen more often.

Parents today are showing more interest in their children's teeth. They are more willing to spend time in teaching them how to care for their teeth.

They are more aware of the need to keep our teeth, and more interested in finding out how this can be done. And so the article continues. I do not think any member would disagree with that article.

The Hon. C. R. Abbey: Who is the authority?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The honourable member made that statement, but of course he would doubt it because I am reading it.

The Hon. C. R. Abbey: I was merely seeking information on who the authority was.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: It was issued by the Health Education Council of Western Australia.

The Hon. C. R. Abbey: That was all I wanted to know.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: On page 9, this article continues—

Unfortunately many foods in this wide range are very bad for the teeth—biscuits, lollies, cakes and pastries. All of these have very little food value, so they don't help our general health or our dental health. But we give almost all of them to our children at an early age. If we don't give them, somebody else does when the children are away from home with friends or relatives. It's very difficult to decide what to do about this.

We can see the necessity for this document and although throughout the book it continues to recommend fluoride it is not done in the strong terms used by those persons in favour of fluoride. This document merely points out the benefits of fluoride.

I agree that certain people in certain age groups must obtain some benefit, but all people would not benefit from it for the rest of their lives, because in no part of the world has the fluoridation of water supplies been tested over a period of 25 years, and therefore there is no proof that it has beneficial effects over the whole of one's life.

The other evening Mr. House also said that fluoride was first introduced in 1894. From memory, I think that is what he said.

The Hon. E. C. House: No; what I said was that the mottling of teeth was first noticed about that period.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: If the honourable member said that, no doubt it was correct. This article, in outlining the history of fluoridation, also points out that in the early 1900s an American dentist, Dr. Frederick McKay went to live in Colorado Springs in the State of Colorado, and it was there that he noticed that in some small towns he visited many of his patients had a brown stain on their teeth. The article then continues to point out that after about 30 years of research he discovered, in 1945, that fluoride had some beneficial effects.

When Mr. Stubbs made his contribution to the debate he quoted statements made by Professor Martin of the Sydney University. We then pass to Sir Arthur Amies, Professor and Dean of the Faculty of Dental Science at the University of Melbourne. In a letter dated the 9th March, 1966, the last paragraph contains the following statement:—

I am still opposed to the artificial fluoridation of community water supplies for a number of reasons, and I continue to hold the opinion that such a procedure should not be implemented until a great deal more knowledge is obtained concerning the possibilities of long range toxic effects on individuals.

Most members who have spoken in opposition to the Bill have been queried by the Minister on several occasions. What is his authority? On Australian standards, the authority of Professor Amies, with his standing and reputation, would be as high as any in the world.

Further references were made to all sorts of diseases which are not comparable with teeth decay. Mr. Ferry referred to the wonderful work of Dr. Salk, but it is found that the Polar Water Company of America provides unfluoridated water to many people on a doctor's recommendation, and the second name listed in a letter from that company is Dr. J. Salk.

People of standing, including those concerned with dental care—and they are the ones who should know about these things—and those who are in favour of fluoridation, should be able to weigh up what is good and what is bad. From my reading of the book by Dr. Waldbott I found it was possibly the most sincere and the fairest book compiled on the subject of fluoridation, because it is not onesided. It deals with all aspects, with the rebuttals of statements, and with the reasons why rebuttals have been made by various proponents of fluoridation. He deals also with the World Health Organisation, the U.S.A. Dental Services, and the Public Health Services; and with the methods used to determine the effect of fluoride. In many cases when the people of the

U.S.A. found out the toxic effects, fluoridation was later rejected.

Last evening I was not in my seat when Dr. Hislop made his contribution to the debate. He named a place in the United States, I think it was Bartlett, where natural fluoride was present in the water at 7 to 8 parts per million. Is that correct?

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: Yes.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The honourable member said no ill-effects have been discovered. He made that statement quite sincerely and I accepted it. In the *Annals of Internal Medicine*, which is the Government and professional authority in America, we find a report of a post mortem examination which had been conducted on a dead person. This person had been sick for a number of years, and many doctors and specialists had treated him but they could not find the exact cause of his death. This report is very lengthy. It starts off at page 1070 by mentioning the authors of the case report: Bertram J. L. Sauerbrunn, M.D., Charles M. Ryan, M.D., F.A.C.P., and James F. Shaw, M.D., McKinney and Dallas, Texas. The first paragraph reads—

All cases of chronic fluoride intoxication with radiculomyelopathy have been previously reported from India. This paper describes a patient with clinical, necropsy, and toxicologic findings of this disorder, whose problem is of special interest because he lived in an area where cases of fluorosis would not be expected.

Dr. Hislop said in the course of his speech that the large quantity of fluoride found in the water supply of Bartlett had not produced any condition. Further on the report states—

In our postmortem inquiry, we tried to relate the patient's past history to his advanced fluorosis and found no evidence to suggest self-medication, industrial exposure, or dietary idiosyncrasy. Drinking water seems to have been his only source of fluoride intake. He appears to have been drinking, for 43 years, water with concentrations of fluoride from 2.4 ppm to 3.5 ppm.

In the United States, these levels of fluoride have not been thought to result in clinically detectable fluorosis except for mottled teeth.

I am sure the Minister will agree this is an authoritative document. When we see a report of this nature some doubt must arise in our minds as to what fluoride will do to the health of the people. We would be well advised to adopt a wait-and-see policy in respect of fluoridation.

Fluoride was first introduced into the water supplies of the major States of the U.S.A. in 1950. Since then it has grown in use, but it has been accepted in some States and then rejected. We should observe the

effects of fluoridation for at least 10 years before fluoride is added to the water supplies compulsorily.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I have a letter from America dealing with the case of the person you have just mentioned.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Never at any stage have the top scientists—those for and those against fluoridation—debated this subject together and come up with answers. They have been kept miles apart for obvious reasons. The people who have promoted fluoridation in the U.S.A. have done so for monetary gains by the companies they represent. That cannot be denied. On the other hand the opponents of fluoridation are those who through their own enterprise, will, money, time, and effort have carried out research, have come up with findings, and have too often been ostracised by those who promote fluoridation.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: Are you accusing scientists of distinction of advocating fluoridation for monetary gains?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I did not say that. Scientists have come up with findings for or against fluoridation, and their reports have been made to the public health authorities in America. I did not imply they promoted fluoride for gain; I should have said that the health authorities in that country have advocated fluoridation, in the main, at the behest of the manufacturers of this poison—because that is all fluoride is. That was proved in the debate in another place by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It was stated, not proved.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: It was stated, and the matter has been published in a journal. If the report was not true it would be most libellous for it to be published. When I was a waterside worker, on many occasions I had to handle sodium fluoride, as well as other types of poisons which came through the port of Fremantle. The supply of protective clothing by the employers is not easy to obtain on the waterfront, but after much argument—and possibly after several stoppages—the waterside workers were supplied with gloves, and sometimes with overalls for the handling of poisonous cargoes.

I have here a label which is affixed to drums of sodium fluoride. Irrespective of what type of poison a drum contains, it is marked "Poison." In the first column of this label the following appears—

Warning

May be fatal if inhaled or swallowed.
Avoid breathing dust.
Keep away from feed and food products.
Wash thoroughly after handling.
Sweep up spillage.
Store in a dry place.
Keep drum tightly closed.

In the second column the following appears:—

Call a physician immediately!

Antidote: Give a tablespoonful of salt in a glass of warm water and repeat until vomit fluid is clear. Precede by lime water of 1% calcium chloride solution if available. Give strong tea or coffee or aromatic spirits of ammonia, teaspoonful in water.

In the third column the following appears:—

Direction for water fluoridation: Application of this product for water fluoridation is subject to approval of all interested state and local health authorities. Its use should conform to the American Water Works Association's "Statement of Recommended Policy and Procedure."

Exact dosage must not raise the total fluoride concentration in drinking water above 1.5 ppm (U.S. Health Service maximum limit).

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Have you the labels for chlorine and benzene?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I have the labels for sodium sulphate, sodium chloride, and other poisons.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Under our Act these substances have to be labelled as poisons.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Of course they are labelled as poisons. I am now talking about the danger of handling these substances. I have another label here showing that sodium fluoride is an insecticide which is effective against cockroaches, waterbugs, and lice on poultry. Of course we know that this substance has been used as a rat poison for many years. We find that the medical profession is quite divided on the use of fluoride.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: Under what authority do you make that statement?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I have a booklet before me titled, *A Statement on the Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies* by the Medical-Dental Ad Hoc Committee on Evaluation of Fluoridation. The authors of this statement are Jonathan Forman, M.D., National Chairman Columbus, Ohio, and A. Allen London, D.D.S., National Secretary Boonton, New Jersey. This is the September, 1958, issue of the booklet.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: It has not grown up. It is too young.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: There are 800 doctors' and dentists' names on this document and this is only a portion of the list of those who have joined this foundation against the fluoridation of water supplies in America.

Then we come to France. A lady wrote to the Ambassador of France in Canberra, and the following is the reply she received on the 12th September this year:—

I refer to your letter of June 9th

requesting information on the subject of Fluoridation in France.

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

As far back in 1955, the "Conseil Supérieur de l'Hygiène" had declared themselves against the fluoridation of public supplies of drinking water and water used for cooking purposes and in the preparation of food. They considered that the innocuousness of consuming, over an extended period of time, food, and especially water to which fluoride had been added, even in small, strictly controlled doses, had not been sufficiently established and proved, and that, under these circumstances, fluoride should be administered individually, on a doctor's or dentist's prescription and under their supervision.

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

Yours faithfully,
Michèle Dantec.
Third Secretary.

He is the third secretary in the Consulate in Canberra. I could go on for hours, but I have no intention of doing so. I have much documentary evidence and not some of the stuff that has been discarded by many members. I have some of the more authoritative documents made available to some members.

Last week I had the privilege of presenting to this House a petition which had 7,101 signatories. The petition was collected over a period of two weeks; but since that time I have had sent to me another seven sheets, and I believe several thousand more sheets have been received by the Pure Water Association, the organisation which I believe is responsible for distributing the sheets for people to sign.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: Some people sign things they do not want to sign.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: That is quite true. Mr. George Brand the other night signed a letter he did not write.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: I sign a lot of cheques I do not want to sign, too.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: That is quite true. A lot of people sign things which I am sure they would not sign if they knew what was in them.

The Hon. E. C. House: Has that any relationship to your 7,000 signatures on that petition?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The honourable member will find out whether it has any relationship, if he listens to me for a while. These signatures were gathered within a period of two weeks.

The Hon. T. O. Perry: High-pressure salesmanship!

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: It is claimed by this organisation that at least 200,000 people throughout Western Australia

would have signed this petition if sufficient time had been available to circulate the petition far and wide.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: That would have won the referendum well and truly.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: On those figures it would have done so, if we can take this as being a truthful statement. If we study the two folders containing the petition we find that the petition has been signed by people in many parts of the State. Some come from the northern parts, some from the wheatbelt areas, some from the goldfields areas, and others, from as far away as Esperance. It is reasonable to assume that this statement is a truthful one and that many others would have signed a petition if given the opportunity.

As true as I stand here in this Chamber, I have, over the past four years, been approached by only one person who has asked me to support the fluoridation of water supplies; and that person was a lady doctor from Dongara. She is the only person who has ever asked me to support the fluoridation of water supplies. However, I pity my good wife who has to be at home answering the phone all day, because she has been kept very busy both before and since this debate commenced in another place.

Many people, mainly from my own province—there have been very few from outside my province—have complained that they do not want their water supplies fluoridated. They have said that they are prepared to give their children fluoride tablets but they do not want the water supplies fluoridated. Some of these people have kidney complaints. One lady was in tears when she spoke to me. She had a congenital kidney condition and she claimed doctors in Western Australia had told her that if she drank fluoridated water her life-span could be reduced considerably.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Did you reassure her and tell her she was being needlessly terrified?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: At no time have I expressed an opinion to any person who has rung me. I have said that I will take their views into consideration when the matter is before the House.

The reason the petition was drawn up is stated on the front page. It is stated that the intention is to ask the Legislative Council to take into consideration the views of those persons who have signed the petition and to do all that is possible to stop the fluoridation of water supplies. The covering note reads—

The number of people from various parts of the State who have signed the petition which has been presented to the House is evidence of the very great concern which is felt as a result of the Government's proposal to fluoridate all public water supplies to a fluoride content of 1 part per million.

This concern arises from the fact that fluoride is a cumulative poison which is highly toxic and has a very narrow margin of safety.

Many eminent scientists have declared that the ingestion of fluoride even at such a weak solution as 1 p.p.m. may be hazardous and that persons with diabetes and kidney disease may be specially vulnerable.

Listed amongst these scientists are Dr. Alfred Taylor, Ph.D. of the Bio-chemic Institute of the University of Texas, and four Nobel Prize winners, Dr. James Sumner, formerly Director of Enzymic Chemistry, Cornell University, Hugo Theorell, Warburg and Euler.

To the opposition to fluoridation by these eminent men may be added that of the Health Department of France which declared in 1955 and has maintained to this day that "they considered that the innocuousness of consuming, over an extended period of time, food and especially water to which fluoride had been added, even in small strictly controlled doses, had not been sufficiently established and proved and that, under these circumstances fluoride should be administered individually, on a doctor's or dentist's prescription and under their supervision."

Members can see that these people have brought eminent authorities into the field and given sufficient reason why their views should be taken into consideration.

The first local authority in Western Australia to distribute free fluoride tablets to its ratepayers was, to the best of my belief, the Fremantle City Council, and from May, 1965, to May, 1966, the council issued 1,104 bottles to 2,135 children. Each bottle contains 200 tablets. In June 1966, the council issued 144 bottles, in July 1963, in August 230, and in September 138.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: What was the reason for the dropping off from 230 to 138?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I think when I was given these figures it was before the end of September. That could be one reason. The other could be that these bottles contain 200 tablets—

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: Was there not some concern at the drop in the number distributed from 230 to 138?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The town clerk gave me these figures and also a letter the council received from New South Wales.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The drop was from 20 to 21 per cent.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The letter was addressed to the town clerk and was received on the 23rd August. It reads—

We regret the delay in the preparation and dispatch of the enclosed document.

News items on "Freedom of Choice" in regard to compulsory fluoridation scarcely ever appear in our local paper.

Unhappily, we have come to accept these limitations of the freedom of the press as one of the regrettable by-products embraced in the concept of compulsory fluoridation.

It was only by chance that one of our team noticed the report of your Council's democratic decision in an old newspaper.

Your flame of freedom has crossed our continent, and has kindled in our hearts a warm glow of hope.

You inspire us to intensify our efforts to secure our own release from the bondage of "mass-medication-through-the-tap" in which we, at present, are held.

Thank-you for what your decision means to us in Grafton, New South Wales.

Yours faithfully,

A. W. Purnell.

It goes on to indicate that 3,300 signatures were collected by the Grafton Council for the discontinuance of fluoridation of public water supplies.

Before I conclude, I would like the Minister, when he replies, to give me some information, concerning clause 12.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I would suggest that the honourable member not ask the Minister such a question because the clauses will be dealt with in Committee.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Very well. I will say that the fluoridation of water supplies throughout Western Australia will bring a heavy burden to bear on those people who control water supplies. The Bill states that the authorities will be responsible, through the Minister, for payment for any equipment when such is installed or demanded by the Minister. Although the Metropolitan Water Board will be responsible for maintaining the supply of fluoride at one part per million, when we come to clause 12, which deals with country water supplies, we find there is no amount of fluoride stated. It says that it will be calculated on parts per million, as is specified in the direction. That is what is contained in the Bill and I would like the Minister to point out to the House whether or not there will be two volumes of fluoride, one for the metropolitan area and one for the country areas, or whether there will be 10 or 12 different volumes of fluoride.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You mean in total in the water?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I realise that the content of natural fluoride must be taken into account and that the amount of fluoride added to the water supply will bring it up to one part per million. However, when dealing with country water

supplies it is not stated the amount will be one part per million.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That is right, because it will vary between Albany and Kalgoorlie.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I cannot understand that argument, because if the natural content of fluoride, at Albany is, say, 0.5 parts per million, it would seem to me that 4.5 parts per million would have to be added to the water to bring the content up to one part per million.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It might not be necessary to have the water at one part per million.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: If it is not necessary to have the water at one part per million, why is it necessary for the people in the metropolitan area to have this quantity of fluoride? It is stated in the Bill that the quantity shall not exceed one part per million.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It is because there are differences in climate between here and Broome.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: That point has not been explained to us.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You have raised it, so I will explain it in the reply.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: This is the first I have heard that there will be varying degrees. I do not think this was mentioned in the debate in another place.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Yes, it was.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I listened rather carefully to the debates in another place but, of course, I could have missed it. However, to my knowledge, this is the first I have heard that there are going to be varying degrees of fluoride. At all times, the understanding I had was that the fluoride content would be at one part per million.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Not more than one part per million!

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: That is correct: I should have said not more than one part per million. I will conclude by saying that I consider this legislation is an infringement on personal liberty and freedom. I say that if this were to happen in an eastern country, or in Russia, and if we in the West were opposed to fluoridation, we would find all types of propaganda being fed to us to the effect that these other countries were giving mass medication to their people against the people's will.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You know that has already been said.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Possibly it has, but I am saying it now. One finds a dictatorial attitude is being adopted. The money which has been spent to promote fluoride in Western Australia—the cost in dollars—would have more than paid for the conduct of a referendum of the people. Why is the Government afraid to take this to a referendum of the people, who

would exercise their democratic vote and choose whether or not fluoridation is their wish for the benefit of their children, or whether it is considered a disadvantage to those people of mature age in later life?

I realise that the passing of this measure is a foregone conclusion—we all know which way the vote will go. However, by the same token, I think we would be remiss as responsible people if we did not support Mr. Willesee's amendments, so that the people of Western Australia, in a democratic manner, may make their choice through the ballot box. I oppose the Bill.

THE HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central) [8.35 p.m.]: It is now some three years since a similar Bill to the one we have before us was introduced in this Chamber and defeated. Since then there has been an election; over 12 months have elapsed and now we see a Bill, which is similar to the 1963 Bill, once again before the House.

Over the past three years, I have heard it expressed particularly that some of the people who are opposed to fluoridation are cranks. In quite a number of places I have heard that opinion expressed.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: Have you ever heard it in this House?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I do not think anyone has made a statement to that effect on the floor of the House, but I have heard it said around the House. I would say that if some of the people who oppose fluoridation are considered to be cranks, I suppose one could come to the conclusion that some of the people who support fluoridation also must be cranks. I have seen many people who are entirely imbued with the idea that nothing else will match fluoridation for the treatment of dental caries. I suggest that some people make statements in favour of fluoridation which are just as wild as some of those made against fluoridation.

As a matter of fact, at one particular conference I attended, a statement was made with reference to the bad state of children's teeth in the south-west of this State. My four children were born and reared in the south-west. I stress that my four children had excellent teeth, and still have excellent teeth, but this was not through fluoridation—it was through proper food and proper care. All the fluoridation in the world would not have improved their teeth. Therefore this kind of statement is just as wild as perhaps some of the statements and some of the pamphlets we have received from the opposing forces.

Reference has been made to the amount of money which has been spent in opposition to fluoridation. This is a democratic right; if anyone wants to spend his money in that way, he has the right to do so.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Hear, hear!

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: To say, as one member said this evening, that the amount

of money used and the effort put in could have been put towards a better cause and for a better purpose, is not being democratic. The same member held up democracy in this State, and in Australia, as his theme. We have seen many themes in this Parliament which are not democratic, and I do not like that kind of statement.

In dealing with the Bill itself, we see that, as with the 1963 Bill, a definition is given of fluorine. This is contained on page 2 of the measure and is as follows—

"Flourine" includes any compound of fluorine.

To obtain a definition of "fluorine" I referred to *Nuttall's Standard Dictionary of the English Language*. I mention this in case any member wishes to challenge this definition.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: *Nuttall's* is your friend!

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I was presented with a standard dictionary of the English language and I understand that this is a dictionary which is well used throughout the world. It is a reliable publication and it would not be published in order to mislead any person with regard to the meaning of words. Therefore, I do not think it is possible to condemn this dictionary in any way. It says—

"Fluorine"—a non-metallic yellowish and poisonous gaseous element of the halogen group present in fluor-spar.

It also gives the definition of "fluoride", which reads—

"Fluoride"—any sort of hydro-fluoric acid.

I wonder why the term was used in the 1963 Bill and why it is used in this Bill in relation to the type of fluoride which the Government intends injecting into the water supplies of Western Australia. I think something more specific should have been used. "Fluorine" is a very wide term, and I will say no more than I have said on that matter.

I refer to clause 9, subclause (3), which is contained on page 7 of the Bill. This reads—

(3) Subject to section thirteen of this Act, the cost of and incidental to the fluoridation of the public water supply pursuant to the direction of the Minister —

I presume this means the Minister for Health. To continue—

—shall be borne by the water supply authority.

I understand this legislation is put forward as a public health measure—mass medication through the water supplies of Western Australia, where possible—to cut down the incidence of dental caries in children in Western Australia. We have been told that this will reduce the cost of dental

treatment to the Government of Western Australia. However, the cost is to be borne by the public through their water bills.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It will reduce the cost to the people of Western Australia.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Will it reduce the cost to the people of Western Australia through their water bills? There are, of course, other clauses in the Bill which deal with what the Minister can do with regard to the recovery of costs when an authority does not fluoridate the water. The Minister can send the water supply authority a statement of account showing the cost of actions in that regard.

Clause 16 of the Bill, which carries a marginal note, "regulations," provides—

16. (1) The Governor on the recommendation of the Committee may make regulations not inconsistent with this Act for or with respect to—

(a) the protection of persons employed in adding fluorine to any public water supply from inhaling fumes or dust containing fluorine;

Paragraph (c) of the same clause reads—

(c) the disposal or destruction of containers from which fluorine has been removed for addition to any public water supply;

This indicates that we are dealing with something which has been admitted by everyone to be poisonous in large quantities. Nevertheless, it is intended that this should be injected into our water supplies for medical purposes. Members in this Chamber have stated that poisons are used in many medicines. Perhaps this is so, but they are not used in any volume and they are not used through the water supply. Any poisons which are used to any extent in medicines are under strict supervision and control.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You could not get much stricter control than is prescribed under this Bill.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I suggest we could have much stricter control than is prescribed by this Bill. A system will be introduced whereby machines will inject fluoride into the public water supplies. These machines will measure the quantities for hundreds of miles—not for a few miles, but hundreds of miles. We will have to rely on certain people to control those machines which will put this substance into our water supply. Am I a doubting Thomas when I say that something could go wrong with this system in Western Australia, because of the extent of our water supplies? In connection with the running of our trains, we have seen many things go wrong, because of carelessness.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The machines are built on a "fail safe" basis.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: No machine is infallible.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: They are using these machines now to inject fluoride.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Maybe these machines do inject fluoride now, but they could still break down.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: It has not poisoned anybody yet.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: The purpose of the water supply authority of Western Australia is to supply to the people of the State water not only for drinking purposes, but also for gardens, ablutions, and so on. The job of the authority is to supply good, pure, potable water. I do not think it should be incumbent on any water supply authority to have to start a mass medication scheme; and that is what is envisaged in the Bill, because it aims to decrease the dental caries of the children of Western Australia. I will now turn to the Minister's speech. The Minister said—

Fundamentally this is a public health measure and, as in other public health measures, there are certain tests to which it should be put. These are normally classified as follows:—Is it necessary? Is it the most efficient? Is it safe? Because of the various arguments which have been brought forward I intend to vary these slightly and deal with the subject under the following headings:—

- (1) Is the measure beneficial to health?
- (2) Is it safe?
- (3) Is the cost justified?
- (4) Are better alternative methods available?
- (5) Is fluoridation an infringement of civil liberties?

We are led to believe that the taking of fluoride is beneficial to health, particularly as it relates to the teeth of children. Later on in his speech, the Minister said—

Is the cost justified? If one accepts that dental health has long since reached alarming proportions in this State, then one is forced irrevocably to the conclusion that the answer to this must also be "Yes."

I will now turn to the report of the Commissioner of Public Health. The report I have is for 1953, which gives figures for the school dental services. At page 2994, appendix XIX of the bound volume, I found that in 1953 the number of children examined was 9,368; and those treated for dental troubles numbered 6,280. Let us work these figures out in relation to the treatment. I find that a comparison of the teeth of the children treated with the number of teeth they possessed was 16 per cent.; that is amongst 6,280 children. We will now turn to the report for 1963 which, incidentally, is the latest report from the Commissioner of Health which has been presented to this House. It is nearly three years old. In relation to this aspect the Act states—

The Commissioner shall on or before the 1st day of July of each year furnish to the Minister for presentation to Parliament a report of the public health of the State and the work of the department.

That is incidental. The latest report we have been able to obtain is dated 1963. The Minister has said he is concerned about the dental health problem and about dental caries; but in spite of that Parliament cannot get a report dated later than 1963 from the Commissioner of Public Health.

In the report of 1963 I find that the children examined numbered just over 1,000 fewer than was the case in 1953. The number was 8,259. On working out the figures I found that 11 per cent. of the teeth of the children were treated, and the number was 5,280 treated in 1963; a drop of 35 per cent. as relating to dental troubles. Yet we find the Minister making the statement he did, that dental caries had reached alarming proportions. These figures do not bear that out at all; they entirely belie that statement. Those are the departmental figures for the examination of school children in the metropolitan area.

The Hon. S. T. J. Thompson: Have you the figures for those sent home with a note saying they require attention?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: If the honourable member wishes to read this report he is welcome to do so. He is only indulging in wishful thinking.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: What are you doing?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: The figures are there as proof, and they were put up by the Minister's own department; though I will admit it was before his time.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Have you heard of mobile clinics and of dental hospitals?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: These figures show the number of children treated.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: But one branch.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I know there are thousands of children who are not examined, but when children in the country schools and the metropolitan areas are examined, surely we get a cross-section of what is happening in Western Australia. It would be very unlikely that the number of children examined at school did not comprise an average throughout Western Australia.

The Hon. E. C. House: You have not indicated the degree of attention given.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I have quoted all that in the figures I have given.

The Hon. E. C. House: What about those who were not treated?

The Hon. J. Dolan: How can you get figures for those who were not treated?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: That sort of interjection shows how little research the honourable member has done into these figures. If he looked at the figures he would see that they take in the number of country schools visited; the number of metropolitan schools visited; the number of country orphanages visited; the number of metropolitan orphanages visited; the number examined or treated; the numbers needing no attention; the number who received private attention; the number whose parents desired no treatment to be done; and so on. The report then sets out the operations performed, and the different types of treatment carried out on the children whose teeth were found defective.

The Hon. E. C. House: All my children have been going to these clinics, and they have returned with a note to say that three teeth have been filled and others need filling.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: And they go to different schools.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: These figures must indicate an average of the dental health in Western Australia; if they do not, then the report is not worth the paper it is printed on. The Minister said he had gone into the dental health of the children of Western Australia, and in his speech he continued—

On my assuming the office of Minister for Health in this State, I initiated a careful examination of the dental needs of Western Australia. In this connection the department, the Australian Dental Association, and the Perth Dental Hospital have done a tremendous amount of work.

I recognise that these people have done a good job. To continue—

Private dentists have been contacted far and wide throughout the State, and several agencies have examined the findings, in an effort to arrive at some sort of blueprint for a dental health programme suitable to this State.

At this stage of my examination I was looking for a possible means to improve the dental health of the community; I was not thinking specifically of a fluoride Bill.

I do not wish to disbelieve the Minister in this connection.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Then do not.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: But knowing the Minister's attitude in 1963 I doubt whether in the intervening three years the question of fluoride was not at the back of his mind. He was a strong exponent of the need to fluoridate the water supplies of Western Australia.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Surely you can produce a better argument than to call me a liar.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: The statements made by the Minister do not carry much weight with me. I do not think any man can do that sort of thing when he is imbued with something like this in the back of his mind. Later on in his speech the Minister said—

Fluoride has been added to milk, to salt, to toothpaste, to chewing gum, and to tablets. But there is no method, other than its ingestion through water supplies, which ensures that all children will receive this benefit irrespective of whether their individual parents are forgetful, neglectful, unaware of its advantage to health, or unable to meet the costs involved.

There are a number of children who are not served by the public water supplies; quite a large number of them. The Minister said that this would be provided to all children. He probably meant a big percentage of the children. It would not be possible for all children to receive fluoride from the water supplies of Western Australia. Towards the latter part of the Minister's speech he referred to the use of kindly private dentists to assist in the plan for dental care. Because of the shortage of dentists in Western Australia, I wonder where these people will be found. It may possibly take some years to find them. This brings me to the thought of the fluoridation of water supplies being supported by the Australian Dental Association (W.A. Branch), and the members of the Australian Medical Association.

If one reflects on this matter, one realises that doctors and dentists are extremely busy men. One can walk into a doctor's surgery on appointment, but will have to wait a quarter of an hour, 20 minutes, or perhaps longer before the doctor is able to keep the appointment. The dentist is in much the same position. He has to attend to his patients, and perhaps one takes a little longer than the dentist anticipates and the other patient has to wait. The dentists and doctors are extremely busy people; and, I would say, too busy to study all the facets of the fluoridation of water supplies.

Yet a big majority of support for fluoridation is based on somebody else's sayso and not on their own investigations. I would say that Dr. Gordon Hislop would be one of the few doctors in Western Australia who has made a study of the fluoridation of water supplies.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: And he supports it.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Because he is a member of the Legislative Council he takes a great interest in these matters. However, the majority of doctors and dentists would do very little study of the pros and cons and would do very little investigation. It astounds me when I am told that the majority of the medical profes-

sion and the dentists are in favour. Yes; on somebody else's sayso!

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: It is not as bad as blindly signing petitions.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: The honourable member can assume that the petition presented by Mr. Ron Thompson was signed blindly. He is only assuming; he does not know how genuine the signatories were. Possibly a percentage of the people may have blindly signed, but mark my words that would not be so in regard to the big percentage! It is being assumed that the majority of people in Western Australia are very much in favour of fluoridation of the water supply.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: You are assuming the dentists and doctors do not know what their business is.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I did not. All I stated was that they did not have time to study the pros and cons of this matter.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: The same remark applies to those against it.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: You haven't made a speech.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: No, that is wrong. The people opposed to fluoride in water have studied both sides. However, I would say the honourable member has studied very little.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: By what right do you assume these professional groups have not?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: An exceptionally busy doctor or dentist would not have sufficient time.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: After listening to your speech I assume you have done very little study.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: They do not have the time to study the pros and cons on a subject as involved as this is.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I think every doctor and dentist gets a certain amount of free time.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: They certainly want some leisure time; but they would want a great deal in which to study this subject.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I would say that the most prolific students and readers are doctors.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: With a trained mind to absorb.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: That is right; but that same trained mind has a lot more subjects to absorb in relation to health and medical matters than in relation to fluoridation of water supplies.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: O.K. Carry on.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Mr. McNeill, when speaking tonight, referred to certain

poisons and quoted 1080 being used by people in this State. I am afraid I was out of order when I interjected but I could not help doing so as I knew that the only people allowed to use 1080 poison are the officers of the Department of Agriculture.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: They are people in this State.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Yes, but the impression was given—

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: —that anyone in the community could get 1080 poison.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: He said, "thousands of farmers."

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I do not think he used those words. He said, "many people." There are not many people who use it. A limited number of people use it; and those people are officers of the Department of Agriculture because it is a very volatile poison. I have been told of what is said to be an authentic case of a man who is slowly dying. His condition has been brought about by the materials he used for jetting sheep. His trouble was caused by the organic phosphates in the fluids he used. This man was treated by specialists in a Sydney hospital who said that they knew of half a dozen cases of people who died as a result of using chemical sprays. These things can be quite dangerous; and Mr. McNeill tonight said that fluoride is in a sense, still related to 1080 poison.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Did I understand you to say that 1080 was a volatile substance?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Extremely so.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It is volatile, is it?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Yes, extremely so.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You would know.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I do not intend to speak for much longer on this subject as I have said about all I can say on it. However, I asked some questions of the Minister for Health some weeks ago regarding a certain Dr. Waldbott of the United States of America. In the first question I asked the Minister if he knew of Dr. George L. Waldbott, and gave a list of his qualifications. I also asked the Minister if he were aware that Dr. Waldbott had written one book entitled *A Struggle with Titans*. I do not know whether the Minister's reply was supposed to be facetious or not.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I am not facetious when I answer questions.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: The Minister's reply was as follows:—

I am aware that he has written several articles and that he is alleged to

have published something under the dramatic title referred to.

I did not see anything dramatic in that title.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Wouldn't you say it was dramatic?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: No.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It appealed to me as being dramatic.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Perhaps the titles of other books are dramatic, too.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: Have you any faith in that book?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I would not say everything in it is futile.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: In the book did you see a picture of bones with the statement, "It is presumed to be caused by fluoride"? One should not include a presumption in a book like that.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I would not go along with that. Doctors are not infallible. Quite often they have to presume what is wrong with a patient; and I think Dr. Hislop will go along with me when I say that. I do not think he would say that he has correctly diagnosed every complaint that has come to his attention. Even he has probably had to presume that something is wrong.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: This man puts in a presumption of what is supposed to be scientific proof.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: During the war years I became ill. I went to a local doctor who was a capable man. He examined me and gave me a prescription which I took home and started to take in accordance with the directions. It was the most vile medicine I had ever taken in my life. However, if I am sick I will take any medicine. After a few days it turned out that what the doctor thought was wrong with me was not wrong at all. It was another complaint altogether; so do not let Dr. Hislop mislead the House by letting members think that doctors do not presume certain things. If Dr. Waldbott "presumed" then he was doing what many other doctors do in certain cases. But here is a doctor who, according to this book, was not the least bit interested in the fluoridation of water supplies to start with. I do not know whether Dr. Hislop or the Minister has read this book.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I said I had not, so there is no need to suppose.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I think Dr. Waldbott has honestly tackled the job of investigating the subject of fluoridation. I do not think he set out to malign anybody or deliberately to mislead anybody. I think he has handled this subject in a sensible manner. Right throughout the debate in this Chamber Dr. Waldbott, Dr. Steyn, and Dr. Polya have been quoted. When I spoke in 1963 on this subject, I quoted Dr. John Polya. Whether all the statements that have been made are correct or not I do not

know. I now make a further quote in connection with Dr. Polya—

Dr. John Polya is a biochemist at the University of Tasmania who wrote a scholarly book dealing in part with methods used by health officials to discredit valid research. As a result, Dr. Polya has not only been relieved of his position as chairman of the department of biochemistry which he established but, according to recent information received from him, is now under pressure to relinquish his professorship.

I read that because there is a tendency—there was in 1963 and there is now—in this debate for anyone who opposes fluoridation to be criticised, such as Dr. Waldbott, Dr. Steyn, and others, including Dr. Polya have been. But are not these men entitled to their views? Cannot they carry out an investigation just as well as other people? Surely there must be something in what they say!

I look at this matter this way: I have read nothing since 1963 to convince me that I should change the opinions I held then.

I conclude on the note that apparently the fate of this measure, in this Chamber, is a foregone conclusion. I am not going to say in conclusion; I shall say in memoriam. There will be, I should anticipate, an official opening of the first fluoridation plant in Western Australia and I would suggest to the Minister for Health that there should be erected a monument of a cherub—quite life size. It should have a large set of teeth in its mouth, and in that set of teeth should be a plaque. I suggest that on that plaque should be written, "This fluoridation plant was officially opened by The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon, M.L.C., Minister for Health, on the 1st April, 1967." Am I anticipating too early or too late?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You are bound to be right.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: To continue, the inscription on the plaque should go on, "to commemorate the artificial insemination of public water supplies with fluoride," and on the bottom, "in spite of the wishes of large sections of the community." I oppose the measure.

THE HON. H. R. ROBINSON (North Metropolitan) [9.17 p.m.]: I support the Bill because I believe it will be beneficial to future generations. I have two daughters and I know what it cost me for dental care over many years. I think Mr. House mentioned the figure of £600. I do not know the exact amount I have spent on dental care, but it is many hundreds of pounds. The fluoridation of public water supplies will prove to be beneficial to many working people, and to people of all classes.

Much has been made of the issue of free tablets, so let us look at this matter. Let us see if the issuing of tablets would be

successful, if implemented by the Government. I think Mr. Ron Thompson quoted the fact that the Fremantle City Council issued free tablets, and he quoted certain figures. I also have some figures for the City of Fremantle which were given to me in answer to a question I asked last year. The population of Fremantle, according to the statistics, is 24,200 which is quite a fair size population. I will quote a question and the answer I received, which can be found on page 1733 of the 1965 *Hansard*. I asked—

Since the inception of free issue of fluoride tablets by the Fremantle City Council—

- (a) How many tablets have been issued each month;
- (b) How many ratepayers have availed themselves of the service each month;

The rest of the question related to the cost. The answer I received to that part of the question was as follows:—

(a) Tablets issued

May	.....	33,000
June	.....	36,600
July	.....	20,600
August	.....	12,200
September	.....	14,400

(b) Number of ratepayers

May	.....	165
June	.....	183
July	.....	103
August	.....	61
September	.....	72

The number of ratepayers who availed themselves of the service in that period, dropped from 165 in May to 72 in September. Surely those figures alone indicate that the issuing of free tablets would not be successful.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Those figures show that there are a lot of uninterested adults.

The Hon. H. R. ROBINSON: The honourable member has the answer there. Of course they are uninterested. That is why the fluoride has to be put into the water—so that the children will get it. With a population of 24,200 in the City of Fremantle, those figures are very poor. Only 72 ratepayers were interested enough to go along and pick up the tablets.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Would not a lot of people be obtaining their tablets from doctors?

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. H. R. ROBINSON: Other members have made their speeches, and now I am making mine. I have made many inquiries from medical men and a number of men associated with the dental side of the medical profession. Each time the answer which comes up is that this is the best way to handle the problem—to fluoridate the water. Mr. Dolan, when speaking had this to say—

I would be happy if I knew the same state of affairs existed with other members instead of their having been brainwashed to the extent that they will support this issue blindly.

I am not supporting this issue blindly and I would say that neither would any members of the Liberal Party or the Country Party. We have not been brainwashed as was stated by Mr. Dolan.

The Hon. J. Dolan: We will see in a few minutes.

The Hon. H. R. ROBINSON: We have had information supplied, and we have the co-operation of departmental officers. If we want any information those officers are most co-operative. But at no stage could anyone say we had been brainwashed under any circumstances.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: No Government brings in a Bill unless it knows it will be supported by its members.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Remember, the measure was defeated in 1963.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It was a very unfair thing to say.

The Hon. H. R. ROBINSON: As far as I and my colleagues are concerned, I can assure Mr. Dolan we were not brainwashed in regard to this matter, and I take a dim view of his implying that we were. Many statements have been made in regard to letters received by various members. The North Metropolitan Province, which the Leader of the Government in this House and I represent, has 51,191 electors on the roll. Where are all the objections coming from? I have had one telephone call, and three letters all written by the same person in Scarborough. I think that person has written to every member in this House and every member in another place, and she objects to fluoridation.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: I have received plenty of letters.

The Hon. H. R. ROBINSON: You have made your speech and you interjected during every speech made by other members.

The Hon. J. Dolan: You interjected yourself.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Order! I do not want any more interjections.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Tell him not to speak in that way.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Order!

The Hon. H. R. ROBINSON: The woman from Scarborough who wrote to me enclosed two photos of the legs of children. The photos were reproduced by permission from *Once more—fluoridation* by Professor D. G. Steyn, University of Pretoria, South Africa. We have heard so much about Professor Steyn that I wrote to the Minister and asked his ad-

vice, and I asked if there was any truth in the statements made by Professor Steyn. The reply I received included an extract from a fluoridation case in the High Court, Dublin, in 1963. The extract was from the judgment given by Mr. Justice Kenny, paragraph 47, and reads as follows:—

Professor D. G. Steyn (Professor of Pharmacology and Toxicology in the University of Pretoria, South Africa) who came from the Union of South Africa to give evidence was a most impressive witness. He said that the preponderance of evidence was that the fluorine, as he called it, built up the tooth enamel and makes it caries resistant. He remarked that he agreed with this view. In his opinion caries is the most serious disease of our civilisation, not merely because it causes bad teeth, but because bad teeth run down the human system, and he thought it desirable that modern society should take steps to deal with it. He favoured the use of fluorine in the battle against dental decay, but thought it should be used topically, that is, by application, and that it should not be put in the water supply. He also said at a concentration of one part per million, fluorine does not produce severe mottling of the teeth. His objection to the use of the fluoride ion in the water supply was that he thought there was a connection, in the Union of South Africa at least, between the presence of the fluoride ion in water and the high incidence of goitre.

Judge's comment:

I do not accept the view that the presence of fluoride ion in the water at a concentration of one part per million will produce goitre in anybody.

It seems to me more likely that the high incidence of goitre in many parts of the Union of South Africa is caused by iodine deficiency.

The Newburg-Kingston observations show that the fluoride ion at a concentration of one part per million, or even higher, does not cause goitre in any of those who drink water containing that concentration.

I often wonder what would happen with the antifluoridationists and the members of the Pure Water Association, and those types of organisations, if they were sent to a town where there was fluoridated water. What would happen if they were sent to Canberra or Cue. Would they drink any water? I was rather interested to note on the back page of the pamphlet which was sent to me by the lady from Scarborough part of an article obviously written by an antifluoridationist. It seems that this small group of people who are so violently opposing the fluoridation of water supplies, are trying to press home their

point at every opportunity. On the back of this pamphlet it states as follows:—

Write to or preferably see your M.P. Ask him to tell you if he approves of conditions being created which will have the effect of making everybody take a drug, day in and day out for life, whether they want it or not. If you want a reply to a letter you should send him a stamped and self-addressed envelope. If he replies, it would be helpful if you would send his letter to the Hon. Secretary of your nearest Anti-Fluoridation group.

Take every chance you can to send a letter opposing fluoridation both to the local and national press. This is most important. Even if your letter is not published, it will help our cause by showing editors that the public are not asleep in this matter.

If you hear fluoridation mentioned on the radio or television, write at once to the producer of the programme and give him your views on what was said—or not said!

To me, this is just building up a pressure group and I am not convinced at all. I am prepared to accept the overwhelming medical and dental opinion on the question of the fluoridation of water supplies.

THE HON. S. T. J. THOMPSON (Lower Central) [9.30 p.m.]: This is the second occasion, in my brief experience as a member of this House, when I have listened to a lengthy debate on a Bill for the fluoridation of water supplies. Three years ago I listened to the speeches of several members on a Bill similar to the one now before us, and many of the speeches that have been made on this measure were much the same as what was said, at great length, on a previous occasion, but there have not been many changes since then.

I have risen to my feet to speak on the same grounds as those on which Mr. Robinson based his remarks; that is, to refute the charge that we have been brainwashed on this subject. The reason why I intend to support the Bill is that my grandchildren are now being given fluoride tablets. If it is good enough for the young parents of these times to raise their children and to ensure they have good teeth by giving them fluoride tablets, who am I to stand in their way? They are the ones who are raising the children and they are quite capable of knowing what they are doing.

As for those who are getting on in years, Mr. Wise has already stated that 80 per cent. of the members of this Chamber have false teeth, so people in this age group would not be seriously concerned about fluoridation of the water supply. As to the reaction to fluoridation of the water supplies in the districts I represent, I have had only one telephone call from an elector who registered his protest against the Bill.

Admittedly, I have not had anyone telephone me to say he is in favour of it, but this is an indication that the people in my province are not very concerned about the matter.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: They know you will do the right thing.

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: Most of the towns in my province are connected to the country water supply scheme, but I would point out that many people will not be affected by fluoridation of water supplies for many years, and a Government which is so sincere as the present Government is will take every step to ensure that fluoride tablets are distributed among the people, if not free then at the minimum of cost. I have not heard any mention of this yet, but hope the Minister, when replying to the debate, will make some comment in this regard.

In returning to the gentleman who telephoned me to register his protest against the Bill, I do not want to suggest that he is a crank. He is a very reputable citizen with an earnest conviction, and in opposing fluoridation of water supplies I respect his right to do so. I wish to make one or two comments on the statements made by Mr. Baxter and Mr. McNeill on the use of sprays, and the use of poisons generally by members of the farming community. Mr. McNeill is quite correct in what he says. Farmers do use poisons and sprays very freely—in fact, with dangerous freedom at times, as has been expressed by Mr. Baxter—and it will only be the Medical Department which will prevent us from going astray in the use of these sprays.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The same department is being accused of trying to poison you.

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: Already this year we have had a warning on the residual effect of sprays on wheat. This is a most important subject and one to which the farmers of Western Australia, and in fact throughout the Commonwealth, will have to pay a great deal of attention in the very near future. It is possible to build up either on grain or on one's body a residual effect of the use of some of the chemicals we are using so freely at present. Mr. Baxter is right in regard to the remarks he made on poison 1080. This poison is under the control of an officer of the Agricultural Department only; the farmers are not allowed to use it themselves, although we have had some battles in the past in endeavouring to obtain the right to use it. If farmers could be granted that right there is no doubt that they would mix the poison themselves.

On the other hand, Mr. McNeill is correct when he says that thousands of farmers are using poisoned grain which is supplied to them. In fact, this is being used quite freely. It is no unusual sight to find bundles of oats poisoned with 1080

hanging in the rafters of a shed until such time as the farmer can use them.

I do not think Mr. Baxter put forward a very good case when he referred to school dental treatment. For instance, Mr. Baxter omitted to mention that in the first instance which he quoted there were 134 country examinations, but in the second instance there were only 84. It is evident that the school dental services covered a wider field in country areas in 1953 than they did in 1963, which was the year in which the second report was made.

So it is obvious that the school dental services were making a more concentrated effort in 1953, and naturally one would expect to find fewer cases of dental decay on their second trip. Even so, those figures refer only to the number of children who were treated, and do not indicate the extent of the treatment that was given to each child. Therefore, I consider that any comparison in that respect would not be of much value.

Rather than register a silent vote on this occasion, I wish to state that I am confident that fluoridation of water supplies will be of great benefit to my grandchildren, and perhaps to their children in years to come.

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (Lower West—Minister for Health) [9.37 p.m.]: We now come to the crucial stage along the very long road we have travelled in debating this Bill, and I thank members for the great interest they have shown in this subject. It is obvious that members have done a great amount of reading and conducted a great deal of research. It is of course realised that none of us present in this Chamber are in a position to carry out any clinical research. There has been some reference to people being placed in the position of having to accept the writing and knowledge imparted by other people, but this is only natural.

It should follow that anyone who has accepted a position in Parliament should, to some degree, be able to evaluate the type of literature he reads. In this connection, I would take issue with Mr. Baxter; dentists and doctors are better trained than most people in the community in being able to evaluate any literature that is written on this subject, in exactly the same way as a lawyer, being trained in jurisprudence, is able to evaluate anything written on some legal problem.

In returning to the many documents that have been quoted during the debate on this Bill, I would point out that the article quoted by Dr. Hislop was an extremely valuable document. If ever there is a document that can be taken as a bible for the purpose of introducing fluoridation of water supplies, it is this one, because if members care to examine

it, every aspect of the cases referred to is backed by reference and notes on a properly-controlled clinical experiment, and frequently, more than one. This is the type of document that one should study when giving consideration to the subject of fluoridation of water supplies, especially if we have made a point of reading writings both for and against it.

On the back page of this particular document all references are given. These, of course, could be secured in detail in regard to the actual form in which the experiment was conducted. I know it is possible to make statements about a particular programme which could almost be regarded as being defamatory, but again those statements would only be based on hearsay and therefore I do not wish to make them.

Mr. Robinson mentioned Dr. Steyn, a veterinary scientist, who apparently has specialised in pharmacology and toxicology, and Mr. Robinson gave some details of that gentleman's qualifications. What this professor has said or what that doctor has said, has been quoted to the House almost *ad nauseum*. All I want to say is that Dr. Steyn's statements were made before a judicial inquiry; a properly set-up court. He was a witness and was regarded by the judges as a good witness and a person of whom they took notice. However, the judgment in that case was against the case given by Dr. Steyn, and that judgment was made by five judges. Therefore, Dr. Steyn was wrong.

Quoting opinions expressed by Dr. Steyn in that context is exactly the same as quoting one witness in a murder trial who appears on behalf of the accused after the accused has been found guilty, absolutely and conclusively, and on the strength of the evidence of that witness, stating that the accused has been proved innocent.

I do not know Dr. Waldbott. The answer I gave is directly in accordance with the injunctions given by Sir Erskine May, in that one refers the questioner to the answers already given. Waldbott appeared before a commission of inquiry in Milwaukee, or some place in the United States, and he also appeared before a commission in New Zealand. I will not repeat what was said, and I would not give the information in a written answer, because I do not think it is fair. Suffice to say that I would never raise my head again if the things said about this gentleman were said about me, and I would point out that they were not said in the heat of debate. They were said in the solemn atmosphere of a judicial inquiry.

I will not go on to refer to the other authorities, because I think it is unfair to do so. I have referred to those two gentlemen because their opinions have been quoted at great length. It has been said that those who have expressed their

opposition to the fluoridation of water supplies are entitled to express such views, and with this I agree. However, I feel constrained to remark, briefly, that as a citizen of this State I am becoming somewhat worried over the nature of some forms of opposition.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: We are worried about you!

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I am worried about the type of opposition which culminates in a cool drink bottle being thrown through a plateglass window; I am worried about the type of opposition which brings forth remarks directed at departmental officers when a Government measure is introduced; and I am a little concerned at the heat of the opposition which engenders the kind of fear that much of the opposition to fluoridation has engendered, and at the personal attacks on genuine and well-meaning people. That has been the type of some of the opposition to this measure.

In these days when we can proudly boast that we have no illiteracy in this country, I do not expect to hear the things which have been said about me, and to see printed the things which have been printed about me. I suppose that as the one responsible for introducing this measure, I am fair game, but I feel constrained to say that the type of opposition which has become apparent in this country over several completely unrelated questions is deplorable.

I have worked out the main points which ran through the theme of the arguments which have been used, and have set them out in question and answer form. However, I will continue for a few minutes to make one or two general remarks. Some of the dates which have been quoted by members are not correct, but those mentioned by Mr. House, who did a tremendous amount of careful research on this subject, are correct. In 1805 Bertoll reasoned that the constant presence of fluoride in teeth and bones was essential; in or about 1908 the first suggestion was made that fluoride might affect tooth decay; in 1916 it was demonstrated this was caused by some element in the water; and in 1931 Smith and Churchill of Pennsylvania carried out research on the mottling of teeth.

Mottling of teeth has been mentioned in this debate, and the information which I have been given on this aspect should be placed on record. It is possible that in a few years time there might be a debate on the mottling of teeth, so I would like the position to be clarified. The information I have been given is as follows:—

The fact that prolonged excessive intake of fluoride can be associated with "mottling" of teeth is often misunderstood; and indeed can be misrepresented as being something very unsightly and undesirable.

The term "mottling" in the first instance merely implies a patchy loss of sheen in some teeth, i.e. The gloss-

white of the surface enamel of some teeth is replaced in spots by a matt-white. This is hardly detectable except by the trained observer and is certainly not unsightly.

In any event, it can occur quite independently of excessive fluoride intake.

A proportion of children in any community (whether served by fluoridated water or not) will show some mottling. This seems to vary from 30% to 50%. The following are some of the factors known to be associated with this type of mottling.

1. Incipient decay.
2. Some antibiotics.
3. Metal bands previously applied to straighten crooked teeth.
4. Defects in diet.
5. Incidental illnesses during dental development.

In addition there is a group of cases where no obvious cause can be detected. Dentists usually refer to this group as "idiopathic hypo-calcification" or "hypoplasia".

The fact remains that excessive fluoride cannot and should not be blamed for all such cases. Indeed it has been reported that the incidence of mottling (from whatever cause) is at the lowest level when the fluoride content of the public drinking water supply is adjusted to 1 p.p.m. of fluoride.

Only when the fluoride intake is grossly excessive and prolonged does the mottling advance to horizontal striation and a patchy brownish discolouration which is cosmetically undesirable. These levels are impossible to attain under the safeguards which apply to artificial fluoridation.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: That is rot! You have never seen mottled teeth.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I have carefully examined this type of mottling of teeth. I have seen photographs of badly mottled teeth which I did not think would be possible to find in Western Australia. I have seen photographs of the teeth of many children, but in not many instances would I class them as being excessively mottled; and also one or two photographs showing the beginnings of striation, where horizontal ridges appear on the teeth.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Is that information which you have just given from our local officers?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Yes. I have seen mottling of teeth when I looked into the mouths of the children in the kindergartens I have visited. I am assured that this type of mottling known as hypoplasia is found in all groups of children.

The Hon. R. Thompson: What is the cause of it?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I read that out. I understand that teeth are formed by a little fold in the skin where a cell growth is found, and this attracts certain substances from the body. A tooth is formed from this bud. If a child, or his mother during her pregnancy, has some illness or has to take antibiotics, it could result in mottling of the teeth. I understand that illness is a cause of deformation of the teeth of children, and sometimes the deformation is so slight that it appears to be hypoplasia. Dr Hislop is nodding his head, so I take it I am correct.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: It is influenced by periods of illness or malnutrition.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: It is brought about even by the teeth bands worn by some children. Answers have been given in Parliament to 200-odd questions on this subject. I have written to the Alcoa Company in the Eastern States and in America. I was given the information that the only company in America which is currently manufacturing fluoride is Kaisers; that in aluminium plants fluoride is a prime product, completely independent of the manufacture of aluminium; that fluoride is used in producing aluminium and that it is added to the aluminium at a late stage of the process. Because of the high cost and the difficulty of replacement, fluoride is recaptured from the flues; this is done also because of the provisions of clean-air legislation. The recaptured fluoride is used again. This substance can be reclaimed by some fertiliser firms, and if there is a sufficient sale they are prepared to install the necessary plant.

There is only one party that I know of which makes a lot of money out of fluoride, and it is the manufacturer of fluoride tablets. I am accusing no-one although I have been accused. Because there is so little to be made out of the bulk supplies of fluoride, it is unfair that I and my officers should be accused of advocating fluoridation because of a supposed desire to make money. I repeat, that all the big money to be made out of fluoride is made by the sale of fluoride tablets; yet many of those who oppose fluoridation advocate the taking of fluoride tablets.

Mr. Lavery asked what substances would be used to fluoridate the water supplies. We are not sure, and the substance will depend on the price. The current quotes are—

Sodium silico fluoride \$120 per metric ton (free in store).

Sodium fluoride \$176.35 per metric ton (free in store).

Sodium silico fluoride £38 17s. sterling at Fremantle.

Sodium fluoride £103 sterling at Fremantle.

The difference in the prices is determined by the purity of the substance and by other factors.

Mention has been made of calcium fluoride. There is only one plant in America, which uses calcium fluoride, be-

cause this substance is very difficult to mix. Although one plant in America uses it, its use is not considered advisable.

In Australia sodium silico fluoride and sodium fluoride are used without exception, and as far as I can ascertain three types of plant are used. All of this equipment is fail-safe. The set amount of fluoride is metered into the flow chamber, and it is all arranged on a fail-safe basis, so that the amount of fluoride passing into the water cannot exceed the set amount. If anything goes wrong the whole plant is shut off automatically.

Mr. Strickland was anxious to learn about the results of the Gallup polls that had been conducted. These polls were conducted over a period of years, from 1957 to 1965, and were restricted to the age groups in which the greatest interest was expected to be taken. In the 15 to 20-years group, after allowing for the undecided votes which amounted to between 13 per cent. and 20 per cent., the result worked out at 85 per cent. in favour and 15 per cent. against in the year 1957; while 74 per cent. were in favour and 26 per cent. against in 1964.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Can anything go wrong with a plant?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Any unauthorised entry into the plant would cause an alarm to be set off, and that automatically shuts off the plant. There are one or two experts in these matters. Mr. Brian Burt, who won a scholarship as a Bachelor of Science, has been working for the Minnesota Department of Health on fluoridation surveys, and is now employed by the United States Department of Health on dental surveys and health education. Somehow or other he has heard about our Bill and he says—

I feel a sense of frustration at reading the fluoride stuff in the West Australian cuttings. So much of it is wrong, plain wrong by any standards.

He is a little too outspoken, so I will not read the next portion. Continuing—

Their medical know-how is so good that they don't know that an allergy can only be developed against a protein . . . If fluoridation fails in this one, we'll still be in the dark ages for at least a generation . . . Trying to organise any form of dental health program, whether for kids, for pensioners, or for the family, or any dental benefits scheme, would be utterly pointless if it were not based on fluoridation's benefits . . . Surely this Bill will get through!

The Hon. R. Thompson: Some members who have spoken in favour of it have claimed that fluoride is a protein. Some of the members here have claimed that.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: No. I have sat here all the time. The honourable member cannot say that. There is

another point in this letter which I wish to read. He says—

The man who died in America: I'm familiar with that one, and it just isn't true.

Anyhow, Dr. Henn has already given a very careful analysis of this and he covered it very adequately.

As members are aware, this could go on and on and on, and I do not think anyone is interested in it. I am very grateful to the number of members who have spoken and to those who actually gave answers—and very accurate answers—to much of the comment. I am referring to those members here in favour of fluoridation after having carefully examined previous speakers. I think that perhaps the most careful analysis—and perhaps I should have asked him to write my speech—was done by Mr. Stubbs. His was an extremely careful analysis of the whole situation. I think I have said before that we have come to expect this from Mr. Stubbs as a matter of course. Many questions have been asked by members and I shall reply to them in the form of question and answer.

The first one is, "Are the costs justified?" If the benefits are as they are claimed to be—and I believe they are, and most antifluoridationists agree with me; even in this Chamber of course, most have agreed that it is desirable—the cost is justified. Even if fluoridation costs more than tablets, the cost is justified, because fluoridation is effective as a public health measure, and the cost is worth while. Tablets as a public health measure are not effective and the cost of material and organisation is wasted.

We must remember that they must be used every day for 14 years whether mum is sick or not. Consider the position of the working man with a wife who is sick. Nearly all families have this experience at some time or other during pregnancy, family sickness, and other difficulties. Surely it is understandable that in such circumstances the mother might forget. Surely, with the best will in the world she might forget. Perhaps she is the mother of three children, and having forgotten she says, "What's the good?"

A family might be battling to make ends meet, or might be living in the country where supplies are hard to come by. Surely these people are as entitled to the benefits that can be derived in the city areas, or where public water supplies are available.

The Hon. J. M. Thomson: Won't those in country areas still have to rely on tablets?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Yes, if they are outside the public water supply areas. Many people in this State are not as well off as are members in this House. Many young couples are battling.

Many couples are bringing up children and they have not a tremendous amount of money to spare. Nevertheless, they care as much for their children as we care for ours, and surely they are entitled to this. Surely if a family is in financial difficulty, and the mother has to go to work, or she is desirous of going to work in order to put a bright child through school, it is entitled to this relief. If we can give this relief we should do so.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: I am worrying about the people who are suffering, who are aged, and who are sick.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: It is only fair that I should answer this interjection now because this is a matter which has caused a tremendous amount of anxiety.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: It has!

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: We have a fellow who came in a little while ago and he was suffering; he was sick, really genuinely sick! He could smell the fluoride in the water! He could see it in the water! Members will recall that Mr. Jack Thomson mentioned that it was possible to see the green colour of the water when fluoridated water was passed through copper pipes. Before he made a statement like that Mr. Jack Thomson should have obtained a copper bowl, gone to the children's hospital and asked for a cup of fluoridated water, and put it into the copper bowl and let it stand for a week to see what happened. If he had done that he would have known that his statement was completely, and utterly, without the slightest shred of foundation. Fluoride will not affect the copper, otherwise all the Carnarvon water pipes and hot water systems would be falling to pieces, as they would be in Canberra and Yass also. But they have not done so.

This fellow who came in was suffering from acute kidney trouble, and they cured him by giving him rain water. It was psychosomatic, brought on by health-fear propaganda, put out by opponents of fluoride.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: What a lot of nonsense!

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: This is the absolute God's truth!

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: What a lot of rot!

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: It is not a lot of rot!

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Of course it is!

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I would suggest that Mrs. Hutchison ask Dr. Hislop if this is possible. This treatment at times must be applied because people get so overwrought. No fluoride has been artificially placed in any water supply in Western Australia, but this fellow could smell it.

This sort of thing does happen, and I felt constrained to comment on it because

a tremendous number of people have been genuinely worried because they know that a person with kidney trouble must drink a lot of water. I happen to be a full bottle on this because I have already had a large kidney operation and I know what is necessary, and what doctors tell such people to do.

Dr. Hislop read out a carefully documented result of a clinical experiment which proved without the slightest shadow of doubt that water fluoridated at one part per million will not affect a person, no matter what is wrong with him.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: Kidney disease will kill you first.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Yes if it is bad enough to do so, but the presence of fluoride will not have any effect one way or the other.

Another question that has been asked is "Why do all people have to have it?" All people do not have to have it. The New Zealand inquiry—I might add that this was a very thorough inquiry and if anyone is interested I will make available a copy of the report of that inquiry—says that whilst it would be difficult to avoid the use of fluoride, it would never be impossible. I think that was mentioned in the speech which turned out to be an amusing one by Mr. Abbey.

The present generation of old people will not benefit dentally, but eventually the benefits extend to all the people, young and old, as they grow up in fluoridated areas. Dr. Hislop said that they will benefit in other ways. The community as a whole benefits when the health of the community improves and this will happen with fluoridation. Old people should be glad of this, and I think most are.

Another question was, "What is the nature of the fluoride ion?" There is no difference in the fluoride ion as it appears at one part per million, irrespective of the compound from which it comes. Calcium fluoride, sodium fluoride, sodium silico fluoride, or any of the acids or bases of fluoride, when dissolved in water to one part per million always give the fluoride ion. This was explained very carefully by Mr. Stubbs and Mr. Clive Griffiths.

The next question: "Are tablets more effective?" Tablets are not more effective. In 17 shire councils distributing free fluoride tablets, the acceptance has been disappointing. Figures available show 20 per cent. and 21 per cent. for two metropolitan shires. In Hawaii the figure dropped from 95 per cent. to 12 per cent. in four years, in spite of intensive dental health campaigns.

The figures quoted by Mr. Lavery on the effectiveness of tablets were the result of successful dental health education in kindergartens, and must not be confused with

the effectiveness as a public health measure. It is recognised that an alternative will need to be found for some areas where there are no reticulated waters, and it is intended to have similar educational campaigns in these isolated areas. As a general public health measure, tablets have not been as effective as fluoridation, even though in some isolated schemes they appear to be so.

It must be remembered that the excellent results referred to by Mr. Lavery were not achieved by fluoride alone, but by a positive campaign of oral hygiene and diet control.

The next question: "Does fluoridation invade the sacred rights of religious groups?" This question has been argued at length in law courts and at public inquiries. In no way does it prevent the belief or practice of any religion or cult. The right to believe is absolute, but the right to practise a belief must sometimes be subjugated to the health of the citizens generally. Even the tenet is not closely approached in fluoridation. There is no involvement of religious liberties. That is not my opinion. That is the opinion of the courts which have examined this subject.

The next question: "Is dental decay transmissible?" Really there are two questions here—one philosophic and one academic. Philosophically it can be argued that caries is communicable. Experiments have shown that caries can be started in caries-free rats after infecting them with saliva from caries-rampant rats. Academically, what is the sense of arguing communicability when 99 per cent. of the population suffers from dental decay? Who is left to contaminate? Eighty per cent. of members here wear dental crutches.

But viewed in the light of treatment needed, the Government accepts the responsibility to give dental care to an increasing number of school children and pensioners, and surely has a moral right to reduce the amount of work needed in these mouths by a proved, safe, and effective health measure.

The problem of treatment of dental decay is so great that every legitimate means must be employed to bring about its reduction. I do not accept Mr. Wise's contention that just because it is not a killing disease it should not attract our attention.

One other matter: Never at any time have we claimed that fluoridation is a means of preventing dental decay. It is possible to prevent dental decay or minimise it to a great extent, if we are prepared to eat exactly the right diet, but the addition of fluoride to the water supplies will make teeth relatively immune to dental decay under present-day conditions. These are the conditions with which we have to deal.

The next question is: "Why not have a referendum?" Because we accept our obligation to legislate for health. Gallup polls have shown the popularity of fluoridation. The children would not be considered in a referendum. I would like to add to this answer by saying that teeth are a personal matter; smoking is a personal matter; alcohol is a personal matter; but lifelong damage to children's teeth is caused and they have not the power, nor the development necessary, to assume their personal responsibilities. The answer continues that a referendum would be conducted in an atmosphere of half-truths, and emotionalism. At this point, I would like to say that I think it is reasonable that we, as members of Parliament, should make up our own minds.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: I admire your nerve.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I am delighted that Mrs. Hutchison finds something in me to admire. The next question: "Is there a division of scientific opinion?" Of course there is a division of scientific opinion, because this is the way we have made progress. It is not so much the division, as the correct assessment of scientific opinion that matters. I remember I spoke about this before. Such assessments have been made by authorities whose deliberations we have learned to trust, and always our health advisers have come down strongly in favour of fluoridation. There is no need to wait longer for proof of safety, or effectiveness. This is evident from the long history of natural fluoride, and in the 21 years of duplication by competent water authorities.

There is only one more comment I wish to make, and that is to revert to what I said when I first introduced this Bill. Whether Mr. Baxter is prepared to believe me or not, this Bill has come about because there is a desire to improve dental health in this State, and there is a desire to improve the service which is available to the children. In broad principle, I enumerated what these were. However, the cost is such that it would be completely beyond the scope of any State to handle, unless it first fluoridates its water supplies. Even if we use other alternatives which are at our disposal, such as tablets, the application of fluoride, and all these things, we just could not cope with it.

I was told as late as this morning that an order has been issued by the dental authorities in Tasmania to their school dental officers that because the state of the dental health is so bad in Tasmania they must put the children under a general anaesthetic in order to clean up their mouths. On the average there are a great many teeth which must be extracted. The position here in Western Australia is very little better, if any.

We have laid the foundation for our plans, and there is wonderful co-operation this year, I do not think we can pass

the necessary measure through Parliament this year, but it will be ready for early next year. We might be able to start on one or two pilot plans if this Bill is passed. As Mr. Burt wrote from America, we are still in the dark ages.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: You know it will be passed.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I do not know anything of the sort.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: Yes, you do.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: No, because one never can be sure in this House of Parliament, or in any other House of Parliament for that matter, that legislation will be passed. There is one point on which I am more than a little disappointed and, that is, because the case for fluoride is so overwhelming and so obvious, I had hoped we might have been able to pass this measure for the sake of the future of the people of our State by mutual and unanimous consent. Whatever the result, with absolute sincerity, I commend the Bill to the House.

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

Ayes—17

Hon. C. R. Abbey	Hon. L. A. Logan
Hon. G. E. D. Brand	Hon. G. C. MacKinnon
Hon. V. J. Ferry	Hon. N. McNeill
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. E. H. C. Stubbs
Hon. C. E. Griffiths	Hon. S. T. J. Thompson
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. J. Heltman	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. J. G. Hlalo	Hon. H. R. Robinson
Hon. E. C. House	(Teller)

Noes—9

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. J. Dolan	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. F. J. S. Wise
Hon. H. C. Strickland	Hon. J. J. Garrigan
Hon. R. C. Thompson	(Teller)

Pair

Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
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Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (The Hon. F. D. Willmott) in the Chair: The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Minister for Health) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1 put and passed.

Clause 2: Commencement—

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: The amendment which I have on the notice paper deals with the probability of a referendum being held before this Bill takes effect, and the necessary machinery will be written into the Act. In the course of the debate, references were made by various speakers in support of the benefits that could obtain if a referendum were held by the Government throughout the State. The main point is that the people of the State could vote for or against this issue.

This was the situation which obtained in our approach to this legislation in 1963. It is consistent with what we said upon the hustings at the subsequent elections, and is consequent upon an undertaking

given by our leader in another place that it was Labor's policy to test this issue.

Having regard both to the vote which has just been taken and to the very long debate which has taken place in this Chamber on the Bill, I am led to believe that there would be no point in endless reiteration of the benefits of this particular amendment, if it is accepted. Accordingly I move an amendment—

Page 1, line 9—Delete the word "This" and substitute the following passage:—

"(1) Subject to subsections (2) and (3) of this section, this."

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: As Mr. Willesee said, this is in accordance with the policy enunciated by him and others of his party. They suggested that a referendum should be held. This matter has been interwoven through the debate ever since the measure has been before Parliament. I think the pros and cons have been adequately expounded. I touched on this when I introduced the measure. Many members have spoken on it since, and I touched on it again at the conclusion. I agree wholeheartedly with Mr. Willesee when he said that there is little left to be said about it. By now it has become a matter of conviction as to whether a person feels he is negating his responsibility as a member of Parliament by putting matters such as this to a referendum. I consider it is a question of whether or not we are prepared to accept the responsibilities we undertake as members of Parliament, and for which we are remunerated.

My personal view is that we should not hold a referendum. One member remarked earlier that we have a referendum every three years and as far as I am concerned that is often enough. Therefore, I oppose the amendment.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I support the amendment moved by my leader and, without going over the whole of the debate again, I would just like to refer to one particular point. Canberra's water supplies were fluoridated, but in protest, a motion was moved in terms that "This House is of the opinion that a referendum should be held." A division was called for and the figure for a referendum was 56, and against, 52.

Of course, members with different political affiliations voted together, regardless of party considerations, to give the majority in favour of holding a referendum. The national Parliament has set at least one example where it is prepared to leave a decision to the people on such vital matters. I support what my leader has said.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I would like to make a comment in view of Mr. Dolan's remark. I think there was a reason, which we must accept, as to why a divi-

sion was called for on the question of a referendum so far as Canberra was concerned. Unlike other cities and towns in Australia, Canberra has no local authority of its own. Canberra is virtually administered by the Federal Parliament under which an advisory committee functions, and it is this committee which virtually administers the City of Canberra. The people in Canberra have the opportunity of electing only one member to the House of Representatives. In the circumstances they would have no voice through a local authority, and that would be the case with the referendum proposed in the amendment.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Can you tell us why 52 members opposed the referendum?

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Because they did not think it was worth while.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I do not wish to argue that point. I only endeavoured to point out what could happen in circumstances such as this.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: This was a vote taken in the national Parliament on whether or not there should be a referendum as to whether or not the water supply should be fluoridated. The vote was 56 in favour and 52 against.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: After listening to Mr. McNeill it would seem that what happened at Canberra was a local option poll. It gave the people an opportunity to vote, and I see no reason why something similar cannot be done in Western Australia. We do not know whether all sections of Western Australia would be satisfied with fluoridated water. Nobody knows that, and the only way to find out is by a referendum. The Minister referred to the election and implied that a referendum was held every three years. Mr. McNeill claimed the Government had a mandate and that this was part of its policy. It was only the policy of the Liberal Party, not of the Country Party at the last State election. So the Government cannot fairly claim to have a mandate. I support the amendment.

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS: I will vote against the amendment. I will vote all the way for fluoridation. I believe in it and I will not have it on my conscience in relation to depriving children of its benefit. The Labor Party has no policy on this. We vote according to our consciences, which is exactly what I am doing.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I do not know what the decision of the Federal members has to do with this. Reference was made to America and how fluoridation was done there by counties. The only water schemes which are not under the control of the State are those at Busseton, Bunbury, and Harvey. Whether it is easy or hard to organise a referendum is beside the point. From the debate I think most members would like to accept responsibility in this matter.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: I do not regard a referendum as an evasion of a responsibility by members of Parliament. I accept that the Government has a right to institute this legislation in the form it wishes. But the people in remote areas should be given an opportunity to decide whether or not they want their water supplies fluoridated, and the only way to do it is by referendum. I think a referendum would be a more democratic approach to the matter, because we would know what the people felt about it.

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I would regard a referendum as dangerous, because in the weeks that have gone by the only communications I received were from the antagonists of the legislation. If a referendum were held the same percentage would probably apply. It is much easier to organise people who are opposed to something than it is to organise those who may not be opposed to the same thing. Approval has been given to the second reading, and if a referendum is held we may get a forthright band of antagonists defeating the whole purpose of the measure.

The Hon. E. C. HOUSE: I oppose the referendum. It would be difficult to get the whole story of the advantage of fluoride across to the people. In a referendum held recently in connection with the stabilising of wool marketing the number who did not read the literature thoroughly was remarkable. The public takes more notice of one bad thing than it does of 10 good things. We would not get a true assessment with a referendum. It would stir up a good deal of fear and mistrust in the minds of people.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I would like to comment on Dr. Hislop's remarks. The referendum he mentioned was in the national sphere, while that mentioned by Mr. House was in connection with wool-growers. This is a different thing altogether. It deals with something we will have to consume whether we like it or not. I have always provided myself with a rain-water tank whenever possible so the question of fluoride does not affect me. It is not the question of fluoride but the apathy of the people who want it which is disturbing. The only way to decide the issue is by referendum. We know of the fear that has been engendered by drugs that have been discovered in the course of medical research. We did not know, for instance, that thalidomide would have the effect it did; we did not know babies with no arms would be produced; nor did the doctors or the chemists know that this would be the case.

Those for fluoridation are concerned with the teeth of children yet to be born. They should reflect on what happened in the case of thalidomide, and the babies that were produced. That was a tragic discovery. I am not conversant with all the drugs that have proved to be ideal for certain diseases or complaints.

Later on these drugs have, in some cases, proved to be detrimental to human beings. Since dentists have been operating, dental decay is not something which kills; it is a complaint that can be relieved. For those reasons I think the Government has not given sufficient consideration to this matter of forcing fluoridation on the people. I am against compulsion and people having to consume something which up to date has not been proved as having long-term beneficial effects.

In 1922 I was shearing in the Kimberleys and out of 50 men in the team only five escaped what was then termed to be malaria. I think it was really a form of typhoid. The medicine taken for this complaint was quinine. I believe that quinine had a bad effect on my teeth, as it did with others who suggested that was the trouble.

I still have to be convinced that the children born after fluoridation commences will benefit. I would like to see the public express their opinion. The Minister said a referendum would engender fear. Fear of whom?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Did I say that?

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Yes, in your second reading speech. I do not think that would be the case. I cannot see why that would happen. Perhaps the Government is fearful it might lose the referendum. Surely it is not asking too much that a referendum be held.

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

Ayes—10

Hon. J. Dolan	Hon. R. Thompson
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. W. F. Willsease
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. F. J. S. Wise
Hon. H. C. Strickland	Hon. N. E. Baxter

(Teller)

Noes—15

Hon. C. R. Abbey	Hon. L. A. Logan
Hon. G. E. D. Brand	Hon. G. C. MacKinnon
Hon. V. J. Ferry	Hon. N. McNeill
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs
Hon. C. E. Griffiths	Hon. S. T. J. Thompson
Hon. J. Heitman	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. H. R. Robinson
Hon. E. C. House	

(Teller)

Pair

Aye	No
Hon. F. R. H. Lavery	Hon. A. R. Jones

Amendment thus negated.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 3 to 8 put and passed.

Clause 9: Fluoridation of public water supplies—

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: During the second reading, Mr. Ferry interjected and said that people blindly signed petitions. Two notes have been sent to me since

then; and possibly I incorrectly stated that the petition was carried out in conjunction with the Pure Water Association. The petition was not prompted by that association. It is claimed that not one person was coerced into signing this petition. On the contrary, it was explained to each person what he would be signing. I think it was an unfair statement for Mr. Ferry to make; and the people concerned have my faith and trust.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: The petition was headed by a dentist neighbour of mine.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: One of the most prominent and reputable dentists in Western Australia. His name appears at the head of the petition as presented to Parliament.

This clause deals with the fluoridation of public water supplies. Therefore, at this stage, I would like to know from the Minister the anticipated cost of buying the machinery, installing it, and getting it into operation for the purpose of fluoridating the metropolitan water supply.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: A lot of this will be guesswork, because tenders will have to be called. I have answered several questions on this matter and I think the capital expenditure will be about \$240,000.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Who is going to pay for this?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: The State Government.

The Hon. R. Thompson: It does not say that in the Bill.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I will let the honourable member know what the estimate is in a minute, but it is hard to say how much these things will cost.

This, of course, is not strictly applicable to my department. It is a matter for the Minister in charge of water supplies, who looks after this aspect. I think the cost is \$240,000. This would depend on the type of machinery decided on.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: I want to make my final protest on this Bill because I am a rebel. I do not want this imposed on me and mine. No-one knows enough about this matter, and certainly the Minister does not seem to be very sure about it. I hope the Minister is ready to take full responsibility for what may go wrong. I am giving away the idea that we have a democracy while we still have the Legislative Council.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Apart from the capital cost, which is estimated at \$240,000, the estimated cost of fluoridating a water supply serving a community of 5,000 people would be \$81,000. The estimated average annual charge to each ratepayer for fluoridated water is 38c. The choice of chemicals is under consideration, and the annual cost is estimated at \$19,500.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Subclause (3) does not say that the State Government is going to pay. I would take it that the cost for the installation of the machinery will be borne by the Metropolitan Water Board.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I understood the capital costs were to be borne by the loan fund, and incidental costs borne by the water board.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I want to know what costs are to be levied against the Metropolitan Water Board for the fluoridation of water supplies in the metropolitan area.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: The cost of the installation shall be borne by the water supply authority. That seems to be perfectly clear. So far as I know, the money comes out of loan funds and it will be charged for in the normal course of events on the ordinary rating. We did not make any secret of this.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I want to know who will bear the cost and I think I am entitled to know. From inquiries I have made one of the members of the water board feels that the water board will bear quite a substantial part of the cost. Candidly, the board does not know where the money is coming from. I had to extract that information; I did not get it easily.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I should not think that you did get it easily; I do not think you should have got it at all.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Will the fluoridation of the water supply affect the extension of the water mains? There are many areas within five or six miles of Fremantle which have no scheme water. There is a large housing area three miles from Fremantle. It covers 750 acres and possibly only 200 acres would have a water supply. If the water board is to pay costs for the fluoridation of water and deny householders mains extensions, then I do not think this is right and proper. I would not want to see the water board pay one penny towards fluoridating the metropolitan water supply. The cost should be borne by the Public Health Department or the Public Works Department.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: It is reasonable that the water should be paid for by the people who use it. In a number of areas where it is not possible to fluoridate the water, we will supply tablets. The tablets will be sold through the local authorities at as low a rate as possible. If those people have to pay for their tablets, it is reasonable that people pay for the fluoridated water also. We want an equitable distribution of costs, and at the present time this is the most equitable scheme.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: Since I have been in Parliament, I have seen

cases of where small taxes have got larger. I refer to the metropolitan region improvement tax. First of all it was to be $\frac{1}{4}$ d. and then 1d. The Minister has said that the cost of fluoride will be 38c per ratepayer. Will it stop at 38c? I am sure the Minister is not in a position to assure us of that, but Parliament should be given some information on the matter. In the case of the metropolitan region improvement tax the money comes from property owners. It has been suggested that the cost of fluoridating the water will be borne by the ratepayers. The water board should certainly not go into debt to fluoridate our water.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 10 to 13 put and passed.

Clause 14: Certificate to be evidence—

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: This is the clause where a certificate of evidence is required. It purports to be signed by the Minister. I am sorry—I am on the wrong clause.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 15 and 16 put and passed.

New Clause 16—

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: I move—

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

<p>Damages for loss caused by fluoridation to be recoverable.</p>	<p>16. Damages for loss, illness or injury suffered by any person as a result of the addition of fluorine to a public water supply shall be recoverable by action from the Crown in right of the State.</p>
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The purpose of this clause is to provide damages to any person for loss caused by fluoridation. If a person suffers as a result of ingesting fluoride following Government direction, such person should be able to recover from the Government for loss or illness brought about by fluoride. I hope the Minister will agree to the amendment, because if he does so he will show confidence in the Bill and in his belief that the ingestion of fluoride will have no ill effects.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I would like to express the complete and utter faith I have in the efficacy of fluoride in water supplies at one part per million. However, this is a clause, if agreed to, where one would be over a barrel, as it were, because although I hold that belief we are faced with the problem of psychosomatic diseases and all types of health legislation which the State has to enact. If one placed one's-self in the position of having to administer the Health Act and its attendant Statutes, I feel one would agree it would be difficult to accede to the amendment. Therefore I ask the Committee to vote against the proposed new clause.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Even the Minister would concede that there are people who

are allergic to fluoride. My own daughter, on one occasion, when pregnant, was administered fluoride and became violently ill. The doctor took her off fluoride and she became quite well again. Subsequently the doctor thought he was mistaken in the belief that fluoride had caused her illness, so he advised her to take fluoride once again and she immediately became ill as she did on the previous occasion. This proves that there are people in the community who are allergic to fluoride.

The purpose of the new clause is to ensure that people shall have the right to take the Government to the courts on this matter, although I do know that anyone would have the job in front of him to prove his case was a just one. I know the Minister will give us the assurance that fluoride is perfectly safe, and at this stage I would be inclined to agree with him. However, the basis of our argument is that there are asthmatics and others who are allergic to fluoride.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Perhaps I did not explain one or two matters as well as I should, but it is appropriate for me to do so in speaking to this amendment. To indicate to members that I know a little about asthma, my youngest son has suffered from asthma ever since he was very young. When he decided he did not want to do something, or did not want to eat anything, he could bring on an asthma attack immediately and at will. I would venture to suggest that if the man who was reported to have burst into the Premier's house was given a piece of chalk instead of a fluoride tablet, it would be found that he probably would react in the same way as he would if given a fluoride tablet.

There are 65,000,000 people in the United States of America, drinking fluoridated water, and there is not one case of a person suffering as a result of fluoride has been substantiated. Every member in this Chamber has ingested fluoride. If one drinks a cup to tea one has ingested fluoride at one part per million. I have been Minister for Health long enough to have studied a considerable number of files. I have read of cases dealt with by both male and female Ministers for Health and by Ministers who have been members of the Liberal Party and those who have been members of the Labor Party, and I have yet to learn of any legitimate case that has been proven to show that a person has suffered from fluoride.

I can assure the Committee that this is a matter entirely free from politics, but personally applicable to the individual. I do not think there has been any Minister of Health who has not had knowledge of the details of a case similar to that outlined by Mr. Dolan. I base this contention on what I have gleaned from the files I have studied, and those that have been studied by my predecessors.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: My views do not coincide with those expressed by my colleague. A great deal has been said by

those who are in support of the Bill about a mandate to fluoridate our water supplies, but together with that mandate at the Country Party conference one of the provisos agreed to was that compensation should be payable to any person who was affected by fluoride. The only omission from the new clause, compared to what was agreed to at the Country Party conference, are the words "or animal." I will go so far as to say that if sheep are to be watered from a country water supply containing fluoride, and there is a great loss of lambs, or the sheep are affected by some disease, I am certain immediate action would be taken within the country areas to repeal this legislation.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Sheep can stand 200 to 300 parts per million.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: If animals are affected and there is a loss to the farming community through the fluoridation of water supplies, I am sure a Bill will be presented in the following session of Parliament to repeal the Act.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: If it were possible for fluoride to affect animals or human beings we would not have introduced the Bill.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Claims for compensation would come from all quarters. If it is good enough for the Country Party to move a resolution to cover animals, then it should be good enough to include a provision in the Act to cover human beings for any loss or damage.

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS: I should point out that it is only the proteins which cause allergies, and fluoride is a mineral. Some people who eat strawberries or shellfish break out in a rash, and others have a reaction to certain types of injections, but I do not know of any substance, other than proteins, which would cause an allergy.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: I accept the assurance given by the Minister that, if any case comes before his notice to link the fluoridation of water supplies with a disability or injury to a person, a just settlement will be made.

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

Ayes—8

Hon. J. Dolan	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. F. J. S. Wise
Hon. R. Thompson	Hon. H. C. Strickland (Teller)

Noes—15

Hon. C. R. Abbey	Hon. E. C. House
Hon. G. E. D. Brand	Hon. I. A. Logan
Hon. V. J. Ferry	Hon. G. C. MacKinnon
Hon. A. P. Griffith	Hon. N. McNeill
Hon. C. E. Griffiths	Hon. H. R. Robinson
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. J. Heitman	Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs (Teller)
Hon. J. G. Hislop	

Pair

Aye	No
Hon. F. R. H. Lavery	Hon. A. R. Jones

New clause thus negatived.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (Lower West—Minister for Health) [11.40 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

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

Ayes—18

Hon. C. R. Abbey	Hon. L. A. Logan
Hon. G. E. D. Brand	Hon. G. C. MacKinnon
Hon. V. J. Ferry	Hon. N. McNeill
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. H. R. Robinson
Hon. C. E. Griffiths	Hon. R. H. O. Stubbs
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. J. Heitman	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. E. C. House

(Teller)

Noes—8.

Hon. J. Dolan	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. H. C. Strickland	Hon. F. J. S. Wise
Hon. R. Thompson	Hon. J. J. Garrigan

(Teller)

Aye Pair No

Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
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Question thus passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

STATE FORESTS

Revocation of Inland Areas: Assembly's Resolution

Message from the Assembly received and read requesting the Council's concurrence in the following resolution:—

That the proposal for the revocation of State Forests declared under the Land Act Amendment Act, 1904, laid on the Table of the Legislative Assembly by command of His Excellency the Governor on the 25th October, 1966, be carried out.

BILLS (2): RECEIPT AND FIRST READING

1. Aerial Spraying Control Bill.

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Minister for Health), read a first time.

2. Financial Agreement (Amendment) Bill.

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), read a first time.

House adjourned at 11.46 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 3rd November, 1966

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The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (19): ON NOTICE

1. and 2. *These questions were postponed.*

ELGIE CLIFF STATION

Beef Road: Provision

3. Mr. RHATIGAN asked the Minister for Works:

To assist the stations of Tableland, Bedford Downs, Moola Bulla, Spring Vale, and Bow River in transporting cattle to the Wyndham Meat Works, what plans has the Main Roads Department in mind for a beef road from Elgie Cliff Station to connect with the main road from Halls Creek to Wyndham?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

The department does not have any definite plans for this road at present. However, recently engineers made an inspection of the area and preliminary investigations are proceeding on the examination of several alternative routes. If the Commonwealth