

Mr. GAYFER: By is. You are implying that if it was below in this State there would be no argument raised here.

Mr. Hawke: There would be no legislation if our figure was below the Federal figure.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Elliott.

FIREARMS AND GUNS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Returned

Bill returned from the Council with amendments.

*House adjourned at 12.20 a.m.
(Wednesday).*

Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 26th October, 1966

CONTENTS

	Page
BILLS—	
Fire Brigades Act Amendment Bill—3r.	1693
Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies Bill—2r.	1693
Local Government Act Amendment Bill—	
2r.	1709
Com.	1714
Perth Medical Centre Bill—	
2r.	1699
Com.	1708
Report	1709
MOTION—	
Ord River Scheme—Condemnation of Federal Government for Refusing Financial Help	1689
PETITION—	
Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies—Motion Withdrawn	1688
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE—	
Goldmining: Research into Non-explosive Means of Ore Recovery	1688
Workers' Compensation—Van Gelderen, F. R.: Withdrawal of Summons	1688

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

QUESTIONS (2): ON NOTICE

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Van Gelderen, F. R.: Withdrawal of Summons

1. The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS asked the Minister for Mines:

With reference to my question on Thursday, the 20th October, 1966, as Mr. Van Gelderen has eight children, and has been on workers' compensation for sixteen weeks and two days, and is therefore in financial difficulties—will the Minister give consideration to arranging for the withdrawal of the summons issued by the Royal Perth Hospital for \$44, and write off the remaining accounts due to Mr. Van Gelderen's injury whilst at work?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

This is a matter for the hospital to consider and I would suggest that Mr. Van Gelderen contact the hospital.

GOLDMINING

Research into Non-explosive Means of Ore Recovery

2. The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS asked the Minister for Mines:

Further to my question on Wednesday, the 14th September, 1966, relating to research in ore breaking, will the Minister advise if he has obtained the information and, if so, would he reply to my questions which are repeated here—

- (1) Is it a fact that research is being carried out in South Africa by the Chamber of Mines that promises to alter the economics of ore breaking?
- (2) Does this research involve a non-explosive means of recovering ore, thought to be ultrasonic waves, and other methods?
- (3) Will the Minister endeavour to obtain particulars and tell the House if it would be of possible assistance to the goldmining industry of Western Australia in future?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) and (2) Advice from the Chamber of Mines in South Africa is that some research is being carried out on various methods of ore breaking but none of these employ ultrasonic waves.
- (3) The correspondence indicates that the methods under observation are not considered to be practical although they show some promise. The information received will be supplied to the Chamber of Mines.

FLUORIDATION OF PUBLIC WATER SUPPLIES

Petition: Motion Withdrawn

THE HON. R. THOMPSON (South Metropolitan) [4.38 p.m.]: In view of the fact that the Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies Bill is on the notice paper, I ask leave of the House to withdraw the following motion which appears in my name:—

That The Hon. R. Thompson be granted leave to explain to the House the reasons for the presentation of the petition from the residents of Western Australia regarding the compulsory fluoridation of public water supplies.

I will avail myself of the opportunity to explain my reasons during the second reading debate on the Bill.

Question put and passed.

ORD RIVER SCHEME

Condemnation of Federal Government for Refusing Financial Help: Motion

THE HON. H. C. STRICKLAND (North) [4.39 p.m.]: Mr. President, I desire to move the motion standing in my name on the notice paper.

The **PRESIDENT**: If it is the purpose of the honourable member to speak to this motion, I suggest he make his speech and then move the motion.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I beg your pardon, Mr. President; I thought I was on the right track. I move—

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.

I think the motion, itself, explains everything very clearly and vividly; it explains the anxiety which the Government and members of Parliament generally feel as a result of the shilly-shallying by the Federal Government with respect to its aid for northern development.

One cannot lay enough stress on the fact that the second stage of the Ord River development scheme is vital. The development of the East Kimberley area is also vital, and I will quote some figures on results which the development of the Ord River basin has brought about.

It would perhaps be well to retrace some of the history of the Ord River project, because in the Commonwealth Parliament the question of aid for it has been misrepresented by several Western Australian members on the Government side and the record should, for the information of those who do not know, be put in its proper perspective. I will therefore outline a short history of the work that has been done on this scheme from 1943 up to the present.

Shortly after the Willcock Government commenced its second term in office in this State the first sum for public works in the Ord River irrigation area was approved, and an investigation of the area was commenced. In 1943 the Public Works Department selected a dam site and established levels based on the low-water mark at Wyndham. In 1944 a composite party, consisting of officers from the Lands Department and the Agriculture Department, with Mr. Richter, a surveyor in charge of the technical side, classified the Ord River basin on a broad scale. The party also selected a site for the Kimberley Research Station.

In 1945, when my colleague, Mr. Frank Wise, became Premier of Western Australia, Mr. Richter returned to the area on a land work assignment and surveyed the boundaries of the research station. He connected traverses to the trig system on the Ord River basin.

We now go on to 1954, and of course it is known that in the interim, between 1945 and 1954, the research station was established and its cost met on a 50-50 basis between the Commonwealth Chifley Government and the Western Australian Wise Government. The research station operated for some nine or 10 years before any further approach was made to the Commonwealth for assistance, and before finance had been obtained to establish an irrigation scheme which involved the damming of the Ord River and the irrigation of the surrounding area.

In 1954 control surveys were carried out by surveyor J. McFadden. That was an investigation made into the possibility of controlling the waters. Gauging stations had been established in 1953 and continued to be established until 1956 or 1957, to my knowledge, with a view to gauging the volume of water that came down the Ord River. In 1958 a decision was made by the State Government to send a survey party north to select a townsite in the Ord River area, and early in 1959, surveyor McFadden commenced a survey of the layout of what we now know as the Kununurra townsite.

Members of Parliament have since paid a visit to the area and to the townsite, and in this year, of course, we have seen the development that has rapidly taken place since the townsite and the farms were surveyed, and the farmers established on their properties.

It has not been easy for any Government to obtain financial assistance to develop the land in the northern areas of our State. Following motions that were carried in both Houses of Parliament in 1957, Premier Hawke led an all-party delegation to Canberra to seek financial assistance to develop the north. Two Country Party members—the Hon. A. R. Jones, M.L.C., and the late Mr. Hugh Ackland, M.L.A., moved a similar motion in each House of Parliament in Western Australia, after making their first trip to the north, because they were astounded by the sparse population and the lack of effort that had been made by pastoralists in the area to develop the properties. It was this revelation that led them to move the motion.

In 1958, when Premier Hawke led the delegation to Canberra, the No. 1 priority was the Ord River irrigation scheme. The members of that delegation were the Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly (the late Sir Ross McLarty), the Leader of the Country Party in that House (Mr. Arthur Watts), the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly (Mr. Rodoreda), the Premier (Mr. Hawke), and myself. From the outset we could sense that our approach to the Commonwealth to develop the Ord River scheme was doomed.

It should be realised by members that the growing of cotton in the Ord River basin was not at that time considered.

The major crop in those days was sugar. There was a world shortage of sugar in 1958 and the price for it was firm. Tests had shown that sugar could be grown satisfactorily and successfully in the Ord River basin, but to mention sugar to the Commonwealth Treasurer—it was Sir Arthur Fadden at the time—was like a matador waving a red flag at a bull in Madrid, and one could imagine immediately, judging from the views he held, that our efforts to obtain Commonwealth assistance to grow sugar in the Ord River basin would be to no avail.

Sir Arthur Fadden rightly contended, "Why should the Commonwealth spend money on the development on the Ord River basin to grow sugar when a tenth of the potential sugar-growing country in Queensland still remains to be cultivated?" He added that the sugar mills and their attendant railways were already established in Queensland. After hearing him put forward that argument, to my mind that was the end of our submissions.

Subsequent events showed there was a bias. It took almost two years for the Prime Minister to give a substantial reply to the representations of the delegation. The reply was that he would make £2,500,000 available for expenditure on approved works in the north. But this amount had to be cut up into small portions for the various phases and associated works. The Wyndham jetty was a most essential requirement before the Ord River scheme could be commenced, and there was need for adequate port facilities.

However, the Hawke Government of that time submitted that the scheme was a first priority, and that the £2,500,000 was insufficient to enable much development to take place, unless further financial assistance was available. That Government put forward five items of development, but the Commonwealth Government agreed to only three—the Wyndham jetty, the Black Rocks jetty, and the Napier Bay-Broome jetty to enable the North Kimberley area to be opened up. The Hawke Government was not satisfied with the decision of the Commonwealth Government, and pointed out that the £2,500,000 was insufficient to enable the main development of the Ord River irrigation scheme to be commenced.

It was reported a few weeks later that at a by-election—it might have been a general election in one of the States—the Prime Minister (Sir Robert Menzies) had declared, in reply to a question asked by one of those present, that if the £2,500,000 was inadequate he would double the figure. His statement was reported in the Press.

Premier Hawke took up the matter as a result of the Press report, and subsequently the Prime Minister verified by telegram that a further £2,500,000 would be made available by the Commonwealth.

As soon as that confirmation was received the Cabinet of Western Australia got to work, and decided to proceed with the Ord River irrigation scheme. The Cabinet decision, which was made on the 1st December, 1958, reads as follows:—

Cabinet agrees, in connection with the announcement made by the Prime Minister during the recent election campaign to make a second grant of £2,500,000 available for North-West development in Western Australia, to request the Commonwealth Government to allow this money to be used to commence work on the proposed Ord River Irrigation Scheme, on the basis that the Commonwealth Government should make a grant of £1,000,000 per year for a period of ten years, with the State Government making available approximately £600,000 a year during the same period, the approximate total estimated cost of the scheme being £16,000,000.

That decision of the Cabinet was forwarded to the Prime Minister on the 9th December, 1958.

The Hawke Government was not asking for all the money that was required for the project; it was prepared to contribute from its loan funds 6/10ths of the Commonwealth contribution. Other Governments in Western Australia had, up to that time, expended very large sums of money on the initial survey of the scheme. They had spent money for 14 years; and the expenditure totalled £500,000 as half the cost of the research station's operations.

It was thought at the time that the proposition of the Hawke Government was fair and reasonable, but the Commonwealth Government did not suggest that the scheme might be approved. It replied to the effect that insufficient evidence was available to convince the Federal Cabinet that the project was economical, and that the expenditure was justified. It asked for further particulars. The same procedure has been adopted since that time, and the same excuse has been given by the Commonwealth Government to every approach which has been made by the Governments of Western Australia—the Hawke Government and the Brand Government.

Every time a case is submitted to the Commonwealth Government it requires new evidence, and it wants to know why something better could not be achieved. Even when the objectives of the Commonwealth Government are reached it is still not satisfied, and it requests further evidence and greater achievements. It is very hard to understand the attitude of the Commonwealth Government, and I agree with the remarks of Mr. Brand when he summed up the position in a few words by saying, "What more can be shown?"

I have traced the history of this development, because I want to refer to some

of the debates on the Ord River scheme which are recorded in Federal *Hansard*. Some members have been completely out of line, and have been most untruthful in the remarks they made, particularly Senator Scott. He told the highest House in this country that Labor Governments of Western Australia had never dreamed of the north and never had visions of the dam. When people elect members of the calibre of Senator Scott to stand in the Senate it is time they reconsidered their action.

I have read through the *Hansard* report of the debates in the Federal Parliament, and I found that all Government members were in unison in declaring they were all for the scheme; but what they say and what they do are totally different. I noticed that earlier this year Mr. Collard, the member for Kalgoorlie, which embraces the Kimberley district where the Ord River is situated, moved a motion in the House of Representatives. It did not receive any support other than lip service from Government members that they were all for the scheme. No member on the Government side had sufficient fortitude to vote against the closure of the debate, or for killing it. It appears to me that in respect of this development it is not a matter of what a member says, but a matter of what he does.

Mr. Collard moved a motion on the 10th May of this year in the following terms:—

The failure of the Government to proceed with the next stage of the Ord River Irrigation Project as requested by the Western Australian Government.

That was to be debated as a matter of urgency—which it was. One contribution was from the Minister for National Development (Mr. Fairbairn) who was speaking for the Government, I take it. He summed up his speech by relating the Ord scheme to the production of cotton only. He takes the very short-sighted view in my opinion of quoting the increased production of cotton from all sources in Australia, and suggests that by 1970 Australia will be over-produced.

Heavens above, I suppose it will be if the population and the economy stay the same as they are today; but one expects the demand for cotton to expand, and the over-production of cotton for Australian requirements is not the only point. I wonder how all the wheat farmers in Australia would get on if they were restricted to producing only the amount of wheat consumed in Australia. The idea is just too ridiculous.

The Hon. E. C. House: It was suggested once.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: It might have been, but that was when the taxpayers were paying for it. It has not been suggested now because it is profitable. However, there were times when acreage

of wheat was restricted, but that was for a particular purpose. We know that there is a bounty on cotton and wheat does not have a bounty; but a subsidy is involved and that is no small item either.

We find that the members of the Government in the Federal House, who should be supporting moves to develop Western Australia, and help the Western Australian Government in its efforts to gain financial assistance, give merely lip service. We find that in the Senate, on the 16th March last year, Senator Cant moved as a matter of public urgency, the following motion in connection with the Ord scheme:—

The need for the Commonwealth Government to make an immediate favourable decision to grant the request of the Western Australian Government for financial assistance to complete the Ord River Irrigation Scheme and associated works and housing.

The motions in the Federal House are dealt with as urgent business. Some senators spoke to this motion, and I have told members the views of Senator Scott. The late Senator Paltridge was then in charge of the House and he replied in a not unfriendly strain, but he did question the yields of cotton. He said—

But the honourable senator must realise that in the first year of picking the average yield from these five farms was 1,330 lb. as against an expected yield of 1,700 lb.

Talking of cotton, he said—

I repeat that for the five farms for one season the average yield was 1,330 lb. as against an expected yield of 1,700 lb.

As most wheatgrowers know, one cannot expect a bumper crop on virgin land. Virgin land, particularly when it is sour, which it is in these tropical areas, must be cultivated and improved to a stage where it can produce much more than it has previously. Now this land is producing about three times the quantity just quoted.

Senator Paltridge did not commit himself at all in the matter. As I have already remarked, Senator Scott made a speech which one would expect from a soapbox orator on the Sydney Domain. He used a barrage of words to indicate to the Senate that the Labor Party knew nothing about the Ord and had had nothing to do with it. When members in the highest House in Australia say such things, and they know better, there is no excuse for them at all. He says—

The Labor Government at that time—

that was about 1958—

—did not envisage the greater Ord scheme.

The Labor Government in 1958 already had two aerial photographs of the scheme

sites, and they are probably hanging in the office of the Director of Works in the new Government building. The Labor Government had surveyed the area and had chosen two alternative sites. As all those members who have visited the area know, one of those two was selected. The two were only a matter of a couple of hundred yards apart. Those members who have been there know which site was chosen.

Those Western Australian members in the Federal House are not acting in a fair manner or one befitting their office. They are expected to support their State and not criticise and ridicule its Government; neither are they expected to dodge the issue. The next speaker was Senator Drake-Brockman. He had been accused of being two-faced, and he said—

I am not being two-faced. All I am saying is that the Commonwealth Government has asked for time to have a look at these matters. That is all it has done. I do not make the decision.

Then he said—

I am in favour of granting money to this area. I believe, having studied the case, that men and women who go up there can make a success of it.

They say those things, and state that they believe in them, but later on, when someone moves the adjournment of the House, and a division is taken, they vote for the adjournment, as did Senator Scott also. The only members who voted for the continuation of the debate were members of the Labor Party.

For those who are not aware of the procedure in the Federal House, when the adjournment is moved in that manner, the debate is killed. Under our Standing Orders we have various procedures to follow if we want to kill a motion or Bill. For instance, we can adjourn it until Christmas Eve, or for six months, or something like that. In the Federal House it is necessary merely to move the adjournment of the House.

During the debate on Mr. Collard's motion, many members gave lip service to it. Then Mr. Cleaver moved that the next business be proceeded with. That is the extent of his feelings. Again, for those who do not know the procedure, that motion kills the debate.

I think it is a dreadful thing when a Federal member lets his own State down. There is not the slightest doubt that those Western Australian Government members are not doing what they should be—sticking up for the rights of Western Australia and its Government.

To return to the benefit which the diversion dam and the expenditure on the Ord have already brought to that area, I would like to quote some population figures. The population of Kununurra on the 1st

September, this year, was 995, and a further 70 were at the Kimberley Research Station. That means that over 1,000 people are happily settled, and not one of them has any doubts about the success of the venture. They are all happy and all making money. They are very satisfied with the whole set-up.

It is a marvellous achievement to have 1,000 people happily settled and making money from a farming venture which has been under way for only five or six years. It is really remarkable, and something of which the State and the farmers concerned can be justly proud. There are 1,000 people settled where previously no-one existed. A kangaroo or two might have been found in the area, but nothing else.

What effect has the scheme had on Wyndham so far? That town has enjoyed a similar increase in population. I notice in the latest report of the Harbour and Light Department—which is for last year—the traffic over the Wyndham jetty has increased enormously since the cotton growers began their operations on the Ord; and a substantial quantity of materials was handled at Wyndham prior to the establishment of the irrigation scheme. That is something which proves conclusively to the Federal Government that the scheme is certainly not uneconomic. It is exceptionally economic; and the whole scheme is based on cotton now.

However, when the scheme first commenced it was based on rice and safflower. The first five farms allotted established rice and safflower crops, and then the research station found that cotton could be grown, and was a much better crop, so there was a switch-over to cotton. Enormous development has resulted and this justifies the further development of stage two of the scheme.

I have often tried to determine why the Federal Government continually rejects the proposal to carry out stage two of the scheme, particularly when some of the areas to be irrigated are in the Northern Territory, which is administered by the Commonwealth itself. However, I have not been able to arrive at any conclusion as to why the Commonwealth Government continues to hedge, and defer from time to time a decision on the request from the Western Australian Government for financial assistance.

In the speech of the Minister for National Development (Mr. Fairbairn) he referred to the enormous amount of money required for underdeveloped countries. I do not know whether the Ministers in Canberra are blown up with ego to the extent that they lose sight of the fact that Western Australia is an underdeveloped country.

Heavens above, we have fewer than 12,000,000 people in this vast continent of ours, and almost one-half of them can be found in the cities of Sydney and Mel-

bourne. If the populations of those two cities were combined they would represent almost half the total Australian population; and when the Federal Government submits as a reason for being short of finance that money is required for underdeveloped countries, I think it is time its members had a look at Australia.

I am not saying finance should not be made available to underdeveloped countries, but it must be remembered that the assistance which this Government requires from the Commonwealth Government is a mere £2,000,000 a year, or \$4,000,000 in our present currency. The State Government does not want the whole of the £30,000,000 in one month; it wants that sum of money spread over 12 to 15 years. Surely that is not something which would break the Federal Treasury!

The industrial expansion alone, apart altogether from the expansion in agricultural production and land development in Australia each year will surely, by way of increased income tax receipts, cover the amount required. Surely the expansion in those industries will cover the \$4,000,000 required each year in Western Australia for the Ord River scheme! In addition, each year a further 1,000,000 acres of land in Western Australia are being developed and are producing.

For the \$4,000,000 a year that the Federal Government invested in the Ord it would get a return from the farmers and the people working in the district. These people are not exempt from income tax; they are all paying their share. Therefore, it seems absolutely ridiculous, and completely beyond understanding, that the Federal Government should continue to refuse to aid our undeveloped north. I wonder whether some of the Government members in the Federal Parliament will one day find enough courage—and we saw evidence of this recently in this Parliament—to stand up in the House and say something and do something in the interests of the State they represent.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines).

FIRE BRIGADES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Third Reading

THE HON. L. A. LOGAN (Upper West—Minister for Local Government) [5.19 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

Yesterday Mr. Willesee asked me why it was necessary to alter the interpretation of the word "year" in the Act. I gave him an explanation yesterday and from information I have gained today, that explanation was the correct one. The amounts for the next year have already been set and there will be a nine months' period in the following year before the date for the financial year for the board will revert to

the 30th June—this will be in 1968. If I remember aright, I gave this explanation to the honourable member yesterday and my investigations today prove that that information was correct.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

FLUORIDATION OF PUBLIC WATER SUPPLIES BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (Lower West—Minister for Health) [5.21 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This is a Bill to do what has come to be known as fluoridate the water supplies of Western Australia. Many of the water supplies do already contain fluoride. This Bill is designed to authorise the State to add a compound of fluorine to the public water supplies in order that they shall contain not more than one part per million of fluoride.

The Bill sets out the necessary definitions and provides for the establishment of a committee, to be known as the fluoridation of public water supplies advisory committee. Its membership is set out in the Bill and consists of the Commissioner of Public Health, the Director of Engineering of the Public Works Department, the Chief Engineer of the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Board, the Director of the Government Chemical Laboratories, a representative of the A.M.A., a representative of the A.D.A., and of local government. Method of appointment, holding of office, and termination of office are, of course, included, as are some of the procedures relating to the meetings.

The duties of the committee are to consider, advise, and make written recommendations to the Minister in respect of the addition of fluorine to water supplies, making, amending, or revoking regulations, and such other matters which are conducive to the achievement of the objects and effective administration of the Act. It will be seen that the committee may initiate and make written recommendations to the Minister on these various matters.

It is specifically laid down that the committee shall ascertain the amount of fluorine already contained in the water and so ensure that the amount of fluorine so ascertained, together with the amount of fluorine that the committee proposes to recommend should be added, will not result in a concentration of more than one part by weight of fluorine per one million parts of water.

Where the committee makes a written recommendation, the Minister shall, if he approves, authorise and direct that the recommendations so specified shall be carried out. Safeguards are written into the Bill which make it an offence to add

any compound of fluorine without authority, or for any unauthorised body to make the addition even though it might have been authorised. Authority is written into the Bill in order to ensure that these aims and objects will be carried out and to give the necessary powers to the committee to perform the investigations which it would be necessary for it to do.

Water supply authorities are likewise given the necessary authority, subject to the necessary limitations, in order to ensure that the specified compound is used in the correct proportions with all necessary care. Authority is also provided that a recommendation, once made, can be rescinded, revoked, or altered. The power to make any essential regulations is, as one would expect, included likewise.

This measure has proved to be controversial and it is, therefore, reasonable to suppose that all members have taken the opportunity which has been available to them to examine the legislation in some detail. This being so, I have, of course, dealt with it in terms of broad principles as is normally expected on its introduction.

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?

There is no doubt whatsoever that fluoridation is beneficial to health. Even the majority of those who are opposed to the fluoridation of water supplies recommend, or at the very least condone, the use of fluoride tablets. There is a mass of clinical evidence which shows conclusively that fluoridation of the water supplies is beneficial. There is a quite imposing amount of clinical evidence to prove that dental decay has reached the proportions of being a public health problem. Even Professor Steyn, who is often quoted by the anti-fluoridationists, said before the Eire judicial inquiry that dental decay had reached alarming proportions, that authorities should tackle this by every means at their disposal, including the use of fluoride.

My point is that, despite the fact that he was known to express some doubts as regards the fluoridation of water supplies, he was in no doubt that the use of fluoride was beneficial to health. We have, of course, experiments which have been con-

ducted in Western Australia which support this contention.

Is it safe? When we discuss this subject I think it fair to define what we mean by an authority. Whenever the Government has used this word it has used it in the sense that an authority is a body of people, the members of which have been generally regarded as having the necessary qualifications to fit them to examine the evidence. In this sense I know of no authoritative body which has not regarded fluoride at one part per million in drinking water as perfectly safe. It is agreed that there are individuals of authority who have expressed doubts or, at times, complete opposition. Far and away the majority of these have expressed their opposition on the grounds of the infringement of personal liberties rather than on the scientific facts and the actual safety of fluoride when ingested through water at one part per million. A careful examination of a number of such cases gives proof of this.

A considerable number of other authoritative individuals have expressed doubts and have subsequently had those doubts resolved. A classic case in this regard is that of professor Theorell who, in 1958, expressed some doubts and in 1962 indicated that the Norrköping experiment had resolved many of those doubts. I instance this to indicate to members the need to secure up-to-date information.

As there were some prolonged discussions on Professor Theorell I would, at this stage, like to read a letter I received this morning. Naturally, when dealing with matters such as this, there is always a certain amount of doubt about the year in which certain things happen, and whether one is dealing with 1958 or 1966. This letter, written by Dr. Helge Berggren, from Stockholm, and dated the 20th October, 1966, reads as follows:—

It was indeed a pleasure to have your letter of September 23rd, 1966. You should have had an earlier reply had I not been away from the town for some time.

I am happy I can inform you that the situation in Sweden on the fluoridation front is quite satisfactory. Professor Theorell has changed his mind and the Government and Riksdag has decided to allow fluoridation when the National Board of Health find the local conditions satisfactory. Consequently the water supplies of Norrköping are now fluoridated again and several cities, including Stockholm, are waiting for their turn to be allowed to fluoridate their water supplies. It now depends only upon local initiative.

The procedure has always been strongly endorsed by a unanimous Swedish dental profession and I am

pleased to inform you that it is also endorsed by our most recognised medical experts.

In a special letter to the Government in December 1965 the Swedish National Board of Health has urged that immediate measures be taken to facilitate the accomplishment of this important health procedure.

In summary: The dental and medical professions, the Government and the National Board of Health have all of them shown the green light. I do hope the same will be the case in your country.

Dr. Helge Berggren is the Director of the Eastman Dental Institute, Stockholm, Sweden.

In the sense that an authority is regarded as a body of competent people, those who oppose the fluoridation of water supplies have been able to produce no comparable authoritative support for their side of the case. Great play has been made, for example, of the problems associated with fluoride relative to allergies and the possible occurrence of asthma and eczema. It is only possible for a person to develop an allergy to fairly complex compounds, such as protein. Fluoride is not one of these substances. The very isolated instances of suspected allergy which have been referred for investigation in this State have not been substantiated.

A short examination, of course, makes the logic of this completely apparent. Every day everyone of us ingests a certain amount of fluoride. It is completely, utterly, and absolutely impossible to avoid it. There are few of us who have not, at one time or another, swallowed a mouthful of seawater which contains fluoride of one part per million. To avoid fluoride one would have to avoid eating and drinking entirely.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: What a life!

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: That alone would be fatal!

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: This is obviously absurd, and it must surely, therefore, be equally obvious that as people we have, over the millenniums of our existence, become well and truly adapted to fluoride.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Then why do you want to poke more down our throats?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: There are people in some countries in the world who, over the millenniums, have become accustomed to eating; but, apparently they do not get enough to eat and thus suffer from malnutrition. They would be anxious to get a little more food poked down their throats, because they know it would do them good.

Irrespective of whether the fluoride appears naturally or artificially, the water takes up the fluoride ion and is indistinguishable one from the other. If any further proof were needed as to the abso-

lute and complete safety of fluoridating water supplies, we have, firstly the 20 years' experience of artificially fluoridated water supplies and, conclusively, the observations in those areas where fluoride appears naturally at levels markedly in excess of those proposed in this legislation.

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 think at this stage I should say that I am very aware that some three years ago my predecessor—the present Minister for Works—introduced a similar Bill into this Parliament. This Bill, as you will remember, Sir, was subsequently defeated. 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. 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.

Very early in these considerations it became apparent that sufficient manpower was just not available to do the work under the present circumstances. The more one examines the position the more one is forced to the conclusion that something must be done in order to provide a basis for good dental health so that the problem may be reduced to manageable proportions.

Fluoridation of water supplies will, without doubt, reduce the dental decay among children in this State by something in excess of 50 per cent. This is a disease of no small magnitude. Remembering that "disease" is an easily defined word—"dis" meaning not, and "ease" meaning comfort—we have within our grasp the opportunity to remove from children over 50 per cent. of the pain, discomfort, and at times disfigurement, which results from dental decay by a simple and comparatively inexpensive method.

The examination by this Government, by its officers, and by every other authoritative body in the world almost, has resulted in all of them arriving at the conclusion that the cost is justified.

The Hon. J. Dolan: Why did you put in the word "almost"?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I think this was clarified a long time ago. The notes from which I am reading are used by me only as a guide, and I am at liberty

to add any word I like. I have prepared the notes myself, and I know what they should contain. I know that one is generally taken up on such small matters, and having noticed that the word "almost" was not in my notes, I just popped it in. Does that satisfy the honourable member?

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: It was not a very generous explanation to a very simple question.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I do not think it is reasonable to ask questions like that on such simple matters.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: Why not be generous about it?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I did not think I was being ungenerous.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: You were very high-hat.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I know that this sort of thing does happen, and I know I am likely to be attacked on this question.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: It is typical of you.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Fluoride has been added to milk, to salt, to tooth-paste, 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.

Is fluoridation an infringement of civil liberties?

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Yes, it is.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: This is a point which could be argued interminably. However, the establishment of a Government of whatever sort presupposes the acceptance of some infringement of civil liberties. I think it was a famous English jurist who once said, "Your freedom to swing your arm stops just short of my nose." Our individual freedoms are limited in many ways. If we drive a car, we must keep to the left and obey the speed limits. If we keep animals, we must be considerate to them. When we have children they must attend school. If we have a cold, we must not spit on the road. The real question, then, is not whether our liberties are infringed, but whether the infringement is justified.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: I suppose you think it is, because we have a Liberal Government.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: So does the Tasmanian Government, and the first towns in Australia to be fluoridated are located in Tasmania. So it is not isolated to the Liberal Government in Western Australia.

The Hon. R. Thompson: What would you term an infringement of our civil liberties?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: When we have to drive on the left-hand side of the road I think it is, to a certain extent, an infringement of our civil liberties; as is the fact that we must send our children to school, because it does take away a certain amount of parental responsibility. I have no doubt that there were people who opposed these things when they were first started. There were people who opposed Jenner and his theories. All Government actions involve some degree of infringement of our civil liberties.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Usually rule by force.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I have not seen any signs of force in Western Australia.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I would like the co-operation of all members on this matter. We are all aware that this could be quite a vexed debate, and I would like all-round co-operation. I assure members that the Chair will give them all an opportunity to speak if they so desire.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I must apologise, Mr. President, because I feel I might have been over-enthusiastic in my answers to interjections which were made. Are better alternative methods available? No. There are alternatives certainly, all of which have been tried.

It is interesting to note that whenever this subject has been examined by judicial bodies, they have always ruled that the fluoridation of water supplies does not constitute an infringement of civil liberties. That bastion of private enterprise, the United States of America, has accepted the fluoridation of water supplies to a marked extent.

It is also interesting in this issue that a party founded on the principle that the freedom of the individual must always be secondary to the good of the State should be using civil liberties as the main prop of its opposition.

I think, in view of the constantly expressed opinion that a matter such as this should be the subject of a referendum, that I should, in my introduction of this measure, also say something about this. This is a public health measure. Should we, therefore, submit every public health measure which happens to be new—whether it be a new method of treatment in the medical field or a new proposal for the handling of waste materials—to a referendum?

Every public health measure, from the chlorination of water onwards, has had its opponents. All these critics have been proved wrong, and I have no doubt that as a result of the pseudo-scientific scare-mongering which went on with all of them, the attainment of a completely objective vote would have been absolutely impossible.

I think we have all seen the cartoons which greeted Jenner's proposals for

vaccination for smallpox. These cartoons depicted mothers giving birth to children with cows heads, and so on. The only other question on which a vote could be taken, is whether or not the public is prepared to accept the degree of compulsion which it has been said this measure embodies. Again, if the referendum could be directed to this in an objective sense, it might just possibly be advisable. But I think we must face the fact that any referendum on this matter would be fought on hysterical health fear propaganda.

This is a question which is properly the responsibility of Parliament. This is properly a subject which members of Parliament should examine and decide upon themselves. Ours is the responsibility and we must shoulder it.

I have heard it said that, as Minister for Health in introducing this, I could find myself morally guilty of manslaughter. This of course, is arrant nonsense, and that it is arrant nonsense is highlighted by the fact that I subsequently heard the same person forcibly advocating a referendum, which would be tantamount to asking the population to accept the responsibility for committing manslaughter themselves if one were to accept the speaker's own arguments.

There is one other question that I think we ought to ask and answer. That is, what do we hope to accomplish through fluoridation of water supplies?

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Benefits to a big company.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: In a State as widespread as ours it is just not enough to say that those persons who are in a position where they will regularly drink publicly supplied water, if young enough, will be blessed with healthy teeth. There are obviously a number of other things which have to be done and, as the Government has stated over and over again, fluoridation of water supplies gives us the foundation on which we can build a better dental service.

Before any real advances could be made in medicine, the fundamental problems of hygiene and nutrition had to be solved. Contagion had to be arrested with proper control of drains, privies, food handling, etc. Even with this vast improvement, there was, in broad terms, not a great deal of progress until means were found to ensure that everybody had a basically healthy body, well nourished, in order that the slightest complaint did not bring to the surface such things as insipient rickets and other problems of malnutrition. This, of course, is a generalisation and oversimplification; and I know that people can point to the wonderful advances in antibiotics and all those other things, but the broad contention above is correct enough in terms of illustration.

In much the same way, at the present time, we need certain fundamental things

with regard to dental health. Fluoride will give us basically sound teeth. It will also give us basically sound bones, but this is an aspect on which I will not elaborate. Let us concentrate on the teeth.

It is obvious that there are some areas in this State where children will not be regularly drinking fluoridated water. The supply may be too small—too small to justify the expenditure on the machinery—or perhaps they have no public supply. In regard to these people, the Government intends to make fluoride tablets available through local sources, at as low a price as possible.

It has, as members are aware by previous publicity, been decided that the charge for fluoridated water supplies will be borne by the public through their rates. It is only reasonable, therefore, that the charge for fluoride tablets should also be borne by those using them.

Co-incidental with the advent of the general use of fluoride, there will also be an increase in the tempo of dental health education. This will not be very difficult because automatically there will be an increase in the tempo of dental health. Members are no doubt aware of the very excellent job done by Mr. Bonney and the Health Education Committee over the last few years in connection with dental health, and the very excellent results which have been achieved by this means.

As with our general health programme, progress is rarely dramatic. Dental health will, of course, take a number of years to show the benefits of fluoride. Evidence collected from around the world indicates that there will be some improvement within two years. The long-lasting results for which we are looking will begin to show when the first children enter school in six years' time. These children will have had fluoride from conception and again, based on widespread experience throughout Australia and overseas, it will be expected that the majority of these children will have excellently formed teeth with very little decay. Those persons working in this State in the field of dentistry will, for the first time, have a general population blessed with sound healthy teeth, instead of the heart-breaking situation in which they find themselves today.

It is, of course, necessary to ensure that, given a good start, the children keep their teeth. It is therefore necessary that there should be an increased activity within the school dental service. This will also be done. The Government intends to alter the school dental service in order to concentrate on the six-year-old group with a view to working up to the stage where all children of six years of age are examined by the school dentists. This is a crucial year in their life so far as dental health is concerned. In remote areas, or localities in which there is no private dentist, all the work will be done by the school dental service. Where private den-

tists exist, final plans are now being made whereby the necessary work may be done by the local dentist on the same basis that it is performed at the Perth Dental Hospital. Parents will be advised of any teeth requiring attention. Dentists will perform this work at normal rates unless the parent is unable to pay the necessary charge, when the ordinary means test as applied at clinics or the Perth Dental Hospital will be applied. The balance, of course, will be met by the Government.

A considerable amount of work has been put into streamlining this in order to avoid unnecessary administrative problems, making the whole procedure as simple as possible. This, of course, will give an additional encouragement to private dentists to operate in country areas or suburbs which are not now served.

Six years from the time when fluoridation starts, every child coming into our schools will have had the benefit of an adequate amount of fluoride. It is expected that by this time the dental services will be such that these children will be able to be examined on an annual basis as they proceed through school. It is hoped and expected that, so far as possible, private dentists will be used for this work. It has been found overseas that where Public Health Department dentists do this work the child never gets into the habit of attending the family dentist. On leaving school, therefore, he faces the difficulty of finding a dentist and getting into the habit of attending him. It is hoped that by the use of private dentists this habit will be formed early in life.

It must be remembered that with modern treatment there is nothing like the same anguish in visiting dentists we older ones tend to associate with this necessary action. With fluoride, it is confidently expected, again based on both Australian and overseas experience, that the pain and discomfort of dental decay will be so minimised that the very normal fears children tend now to associate with a visit to the dentist will entirely disappear.

There is, of course, a shortage of dentists. This shortage would appear likely to remain. It is hoped that the available accommodation at the Perth Dental School will, over the next few years, be increased. There is currently also a very marked movement for the streamlining of dental procedures; and this includes the use of new types of chairs and equipment by dentists in order that their productivity may be increased. The Government intends to assist in this also.

It is hoped that, on the passing of this Bill, or, if time does not permit, at least very early in the next session, the Government will introduce a Bill to establish dental therapists in this State. Here it is only fair that I should explain to the House the difficulty in which we find our-

selves in this regard. If this Bill should fail to pass, then there is little point in establishing dental therapists as we are currently envisaging them. What we would need under those circumstances is a dental hygienist whose main duties would be health education and the prophylactic application of fluoride on children's teeth. These girls could then move around the schools throughout the State, painting children's teeth with fluoride. It is a cumbersome and expensive method at best, but at least it would give children some chance of having good teeth.

But let us look on the brighter side. Let us suppose, Mr. President, that this Bill will pass. Under these circumstances it is the Government's intention to introduce a dental therapist who would work on the mouth under the supervision of a dentist. These therapists will be entitled to do a wide range of work on what are known colloquially as baby teeth. Actually they are deciduous teeth, as most members know. They will even be allowed to do certain work on permanent teeth—again under the supervision of a dentist. Incidentally, that work on the permanent teeth would, of course, be fairly minimal, because most of the children would still have a number of their baby teeth.

It is interesting to note that in this regard a great deal of discussion has gone on with regard to whether or not these girls should be empowered to extract baby teeth. This is where the effect of fluoride is quite dramatic. In New Zealand, where there have been experiments in two towns, it has been found that a school dental nurse can handle almost twice as many children in a fluoridated area as she can in an area which is not fluoridated. One of the reasons is that once a child has had fluoride from conception it is a rarity for that child to have a tooth extracted. Baby teeth erupt in the normal course of events, followed by the permanent teeth. The roots of the baby teeth dissolve and wear away and the child lifts the tooth out itself—a perfectly healthy little stump, which most of us as parents have seen from time to time.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: It generally costs us 3d. or 6d.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You are pretty Jewish; it always cost me a couple of bob.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: So, although these girls are trained to extract teeth, once the children have fluoride they find this is almost unnecessary. This is only one instance of the way in which dental practice will change; in fact, it will change quite a deal.

Another is that there will be a lesser number of full dentures, for it is hoped that, with the introduction of fluoride and the establishment of the extended dental service which the State will be able to supply in conjunction with private

dentists, people will retain their teeth well into middle age. With the increase in dental education and the concentrated scientific research now taking place, it can reasonably be expected that sooner or later success will be achieved over that other great threat to teeth, pyorrhea. When this happens, of course, we can expect to keep teeth for life—maybe not all of them, but at least enough. Members will notice that I was very careful, on this occasion, to explain the situation in regard to pyorrhea. From a slight abbreviation of a previous speech of mine I got into some trouble. A number of people wrote to me and accused me of saying that fluoride solves the problem of pyorrhea. Of course, it does not. But I see no reason why it cannot be solved in the foreseeable future.

The need for an improvement in the dental health of the people, and the dental health services of this State, is a responsibility which this Government is prepared to face. Any investigation that has been undertaken in this regard has indicated that to secure an improvement in dental health of lasting benefit, fluoride is essential. Fluoridation of water supplies is necessary to make any scheme economically viable. It is necessary to make any scheme physically attainable. The fluoridation of water supplies is a matter which every Government must ultimately face and which legislators must ultimately accept. To deny it to the population in the face of the known bad state of our dental health would be to evade our responsibilities.

With absolute sincerity and complete confidence, I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. J. Dolan.

Sitting suspended from 5.58 to 7.37 p.m.

PERTH MEDICAL CENTRE BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 25th October.

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North-East Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [7.37 p.m.]: This Bill was described by the Minister as a very important measure and the proposal for which it legislates was described by Dr. Hislop as a gigantic undertaking. That truly could be said of a piece of legislation which envisages the expenditure of \$33,000,000. One could not say this Bill should be opposed; the project is an immense one and carries with it promises of great things to come.

However, it is worth while to take stock of the fact that the \$33,000,000 expenditure is projected over a long period of time in a very fast moving world. If one relates the amount of money to be spent per annum to the situation of medicine in Western Australia, one has reason to

believe careful consideration should be given to what priorities are involved from year to year. It could be said that this very general, overall picture, embracing a 15-year period, might well need some further thought in quite a short period of time from now.

The fact that the existing hospital system is expensive is undoubted, but it is essential. It is an ever-increasing problem, in an expanding State, and covers all phases of hospitalisation and the many facets of the profession. Any layman, such as myself, has to be guided greatly by his elders in this matter—elders who have the necessary training and who have adopted the profession of medicine.

However, I am concerned that some very serious thought should be given as to what might be the best way to spend this quantum of money from year to year. Should we fall down on the implementation of any of the necessary aspects in the field of medicine, then the whole structure, in my view, could very easily collapse.

At the moment, I feel the situation with regard to nursing in Western Australia is not appreciated, nor are the probable difficulties which could confront this profession within the very near future. I am concerned with the aspect of intake and the aspect of the financial reward to the people in this profession, and also with the fact that the time must be close at hand when there must be a differentiation in the standard of nursing. It would be idle to deny that we of the legislature fall down considerably when we see that, in the main, our aged are being cared for today by charitable organisations. In that respect, there is a field for a particular form of nursing. As was pointed out so clearly last night, I, too, wonder whether it is necessary to have a particular scholastic entrance to this field when one of the greatest attributes could be the kindness of one person to another and, in particular, one person prepared to help another who is incapable of helping himself.

I refer to the report of the Royal Perth Hospital and I think some very deep consideration should be given to it; it is not only the publication of this report which brings the issue to mind, because there are many other people within the profession of nursing who feel serious concern as to the future.

Within Western Australia we develop systems whereby departments are created and, within the laws that we as a Parliament enact, these departments propound what should be done. However, within the very circumscribed orbit which we provide for those people, it could be that they miss many things which are happening outside of the laws which we ask them to administer. It would be idle to deny that our aged people today are not getting the care that they should from the Government or the members elected to legislate

for them. Every one of us could be, and should be, taken to task for the position into which we lead so many people in this State today. When people are in the pitiful condition of old age, we should endeavour to help them.

In the Government-sponsored field of medical and health services the facilities necessary to deal with this situation are hopelessly inadequate. Therefore, if we are to introduce a further scheme of training we must first of all take an immediate grasp of the existing situation with which we are faced. Not for one moment, in the remarks I am making, do I introduce a personal note of criticism against the Minister. The existing situation is one which has reached its present proportions gradually, and over a period of many years, and it has now become very serious. Over a long period of time those in authority have not faced up to the position in the way they should have done, although the attitude that has been adopted no doubt has been quite involuntary and has been in no way deliberate.

I do not want to criticise the people who, in this field, are doing their best to deal with the present situation. A matron of a "C"-class hospital once said to me, "God help us if this is the best we can do for aged people." All of us will grow old, because it has been ordained that every man dies but once. All of us are not in the fortunate position of being able to call upon the best medical advice available. I submit that, in a democratic State, it is within our province to administer in such a way that we can meet this situation so that when people become old, no matter what their financial circumstances may be, they should be able to expect from the Government of the day that they will be cared for at a level and a standard which will ensure for them good health, as far as possible, until they die.

This Bill is grandiose in concept. One could not argue in any way with the provisions it contains, but one must ask, "Will it solve the problems which face us today?" By agreeing to this legislation will those in authority recognise what will happen to our medical and hospital services within 12 months from now? Does the Bill seek to get down to tin-tacks to solve the problem of the bed shortage in hospitals at present? Within the last 12 months it has been my unfortunate lot to endeavour to get people beds in the St. John of God Hospital, or in the Royal Perth Hospital, and I have rapidly learned that there is an acute hospital bed shortage.

I was asked to take a very close blood relative of mine out of a hospital in which he was a patient as quickly as I could, so I am aware of this pressing problem from personal experience, and no denial will make me alter my opinion that the problem is serious. Therefore, in expressing my support for the Bill, I want to urge that serious consideration should be given

—if necessary at a level apart altogether from the departmental level—to reviewing the overall picture of what is happening to our aged. What is happening when we have to delegate our authority to charitable organisations to look after these aged people? It is the responsibility of the public to support these people as they grow old because they are unable to support themselves. I sincerely hope that the passing of this legislation will mean that a start will be made to deal with first things first.

THE HON. C. R. ABBEY (West) [7.50 p.m.]: I support the Bill with considerable pleasure. I do not regard it as a grandiose gesture by the Government. Although Mr. Willesee has said he supports the Bill, he expressed some doubts as to the future of our medical services. We have to plan for the future and I think the passing of this Bill will enable us to do just that. When introducing the same Bill on another occasion the Minister made his point very clear. He said that the plan could only be brought to fruition over a long period, and we all must realise that this will be so.

In his contribution to the debate Dr. Hislop, a friend and colleague of mine, made some comments with which I cannot agree. He considers that the best course to follow is to centralise all our specialist medical services within the metropolitan area. I cannot find it in my heart to agree with him. The present policy laid down by the Minister for Health and the Public Health Department is to decentralise our medical services as much as possible, and in my view this is sound thinking.

Recently, facilities to increase those already in existence for the medical care of the people of this State were established in Geraldton and Bunbury in the form of regional hospitals. Albany, of course, has had a regional hospital for many years. Although the Albany hospital has not been used to the maximum, the demands made upon it must increase because the area adjacent to Albany is developing rapidly. I am convinced that the regional hospitals in these large country centres will, in the future, attract medical specialists to care for those who require their services. If in the unlikely event they do not attract the specialists who are needed in these centres, I consider the Medical Department and the Minister will find some way to overcome the problem.

It is known that even in small country centres today life can be very pleasant, and therefore I see no reason why professional men will fail to realise this and accept the facilities that are offering in these country centres which will enable them to practise.

In the large country centres, such as Albany, Bunbury, and Geraldton, where regional hospitals are already established, there are fairly large populations and the people are able to obtain the benefit of all the facilities that can be obtained in the metropolitan area. Northam is another

large country town which has been promised a regional hospital in the future, and I hope in the not too distant future. Although there may not be large numbers of the medical profession practising within those centres as yet, I believe that the demands for their services must come in the future and so they will be encouraged to practise there. If we are suffering a shortage of medical men—as we undoubtedly are—we must find the means to overcome this shortage.

I have no doubt that this plan for a medical centre in Perth will eventually be put into effect because no person could vote against the establishment of such a centre even though it will not be completed for quite some time. Surely then, when it is established, it will attract medical practitioners—many of whom will be specialists in their own field—and they must eventually see the light and disperse themselves among the country centres of the State so that people residing in those parts can avail themselves of their services.

It is not only my view, but it is also the view of many people that medical services should be decentralised as much as possible. I shudder to think what could happen should this country ever become involved in another war. If our medical services are to be confined wholly and solely to the metropolitan area we would be in a very sorry state in the event of another war.

I make my contribution to the debate with these points, and I take the opportunity to commend the Minister for Health for introducing this measure. I know that previous Ministers and previous Governments have all contributed to the ultimate objective of having this Bill brought before Parliament, but it takes a great deal of courage on the part of the Minister and the Government to come forward with such a plan to expand our medical services to such a great degree in the future.

I have sufficient confidence in the Minister, and in the officers of the Medical Department to appreciate that even though we agree to this Bill we will not, in the future, see the efforts of the department centred on the metropolitan area. I am supremely confident we will see a reasonable and fair distribution of our medical services throughout the country centres of Western Australia, and that the existing country medical services will continue to operate at the same standard as they have been operating in the past. I will pay this tribute to the department and the Minister: In the last few years the country medical and health services have improved to a point that one could not have imagined five or six years ago. There are many country centres which are served by a well-equipped hospital adequately catering for the needs of the area in which it is situated.

As I have said, such hospitals have difficulty in attracting medical men to practise within these areas. However, with a greater number of medical students completing their course at the Western Australian Medical School, I am sure that after they have gained sufficient experience they will look beyond selfish interests and take up a practice in one of our country districts. There are many medical men who are completely dedicated to medicine. For example, Dr. Hislop has dedicated the whole of his life to the profession. I am also certain that eventually we will see a dispersment of medical services throughout the State because the decentralisation of such services must come about in the future and we look forward with confidence to that objective being achieved.

In some country centres the medical and health services that are offering are not very good. An example is Beverley, the town in which I live. Fortunately, an adequate hospital is planned for Beverley, but had not these plans been put in train I sincerely believe that we could have lost the only medical man we have in the district. Many other country centres are in the same position. There is no doubt that if a doctor is able to work in a decent regional hospital, in an area under his command and which can be readily served by him, his task must be greatly lightened. At the moment we have the position of country medicos sending many of their patients to the metropolitan area for simple operations, because the medicos themselves do not have the facilities with which to perform those operations, or the assistance they require. In my opinion, the centralisation of medical services within the metropolitan area is not a wise move.

I have been placed in the same situation as Mr. Willesee in having aged relatives who were in need of advanced care. They were brought down to the metropolitan area to receive that care. In many such instances it is saddening to see the reaction of the aged people. When they are brought to the metropolitan area their relatives and friends cannot visit them frequently, and all too often they feel they have been abandoned and forgotten.

I am sure this would not occur if within reasonable distances of their home centres adequate medical care and regional hospitals were available. Their personal reaction would then be much better and their recovery would be much quicker. I suppose this is a personal equation which no amount of advice or talk can overcome, but it is a very significant factor in the recovery of elderly people.

I bring this matter before the House because other members might have had experiences similar to those which I have had. If sick or old people are taken many miles away from their friends and families,

and they cannot be visited by their loved ones, it has a bad psychological effect on them.

Although I wholeheartedly support the concept of a medical centre I am firmly of the opinion that we must have decentralised and dispersed regional hospitals, backed up by small hospitals in country towns. I feel this is absolutely essential and is part of the whole set-up.

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West) [8.2 p.m.]: The opportunity has been taken during the debate on this Bill, which is for an Act to enable a medical centre to be established by reserving certain lands, by a number of members to give some penetrating comments on the medical and health situation; and arising out of some of those comments I would like to make a few brief remarks.

Regarding the medical centre I suppose there is some preoccupation with the amount of money which will be involved in its establishment. I confess quite freely this is not a matter which I understand, and I suppose that justifies a retort that it is a matter on which I should not be speaking. But it is because I do not fully understand that I am speaking, and this is a view which is shared by a large number of people.

People can believe in the establishment of the medical centre for one or two reasons. One is that they may have implicit faith in those who control the medical and health services of this State, and in their correct assessment of the situation in arriving at the decision which they have made to spend the money available on the establishment of the centre. The alternative is that it may well be they do not understand the subject, and I repeat that I do not understand this subject fully. It is because people do not understand that they say those in control cannot make a mistake in respect of a matter such as this.

I shall not use the word "grandiose" because it is not the right one to use, but certainly this is a very significant step for the medical services to take in the establishment of the centre, so I accept their decision.

I pose the question: Is this really the greatest need we have in Western Australia at the present time in terms of medical services? I would like to think it is, but penetrating comments have been made on the shortcomings and the failings in some aspects of medical care. Mr. Willesee mentioned geriatrics. The study of geriatrics is a continuing and an accelerating one. We can all recall the time when nothing was done in this field, but since then great advances have been made. I accept the fact that a great deal yet remains to be accomplished in the fields of geriatrics, because not all the problems are understood, and those in charge of the medical services will be the first to admit this.

Reference was made by Mr. Abbey to decentralisation. With my short experience of country hospitals I wonder whether the position has not been reversed in respect of the medical services of Western Australia; whether, in fact, we started off with decentralisation; and whether, as a result of the development of the State and the improvements in facilities, communications, and transport, the general tendency has been for the State to become more and more consolidated; and that in sympathy with this tendency there has been a consolidation, and not a centralisation, of medical and health services. Western Australia has a need for consolidation not only in respect of medical services.

I believe it was with the intention of consolidating the medical services that the regional hospitals at Bunbury and Geraldton, and the one proposed for Northam were planned; but whether the intention will be borne out by experience remains to be seen. I wonder whether there will be a consolidation of these services in districts which, in terms of their size, their improved facilities and their improved transport, will become somewhat smaller as the years go by.

In this regard I have in mind the hospitals which have been established for many years in remote areas, which have battled under all sorts of difficulties, and which are cut off from the amenities available in major towns and in the metropolitan area. One wonders how they did manage to carry on, not only in rendering medical service, but also in the provision of equipment and nursing facilities.

Reference has been made to nurses and their training. I bow to the experience of Dr. Hislop and Mr. Willesee on this matter. One could be inclined to believe from the remarks that have been made that the profession of nursing is limited simply to the care of the sick in hospital wards and beds. I do not think Dr. Hislop or Mr. Willesee had this in mind completely, but it might be claimed that, after all, a nurse is a nurse, and she is there to care for the sick, without due thought being given to what is involved in providing that care.

Nursing embraces more than care of the sick; it embraces treatment. At one time it was thought that this work could be carried out by nursing aides, who did the medical chores and occasionally saw to it that the patients were comfortable. Nowadays nurses are required more and more to exercise hospital care by administering certain treatment. How are they to be fully equipped to provide this treatment if they have not some added qualification? I do not say that a trainee nurse is required to have the Leaving Certificate, but she certainly needs to have the Junior Certificate. That is essential if nurses are to understand the type of treatment they are required to give in hospital wards.

A member of my own family is in the

nursing profession, and on looking at her examination papers in recent times I am reminded of some of the examinations which I took at the University. Having seen these examinations I know they have something approaching the first year University level in biochemistry. One does not expect nurses to be experts in this field, but it is certainly advantageous to them if they have to administer to sick people and, with a better means of diagnosis, to give the treatment that is required. Nurses should have adequate knowledge of the treatment they are expected to give. How can they be expected to render this service unless they have the educational standard which will equip them to absorb the required teaching?

I am aware that nurses have to attend fairly rigorous lectures and to study various subjects. It is a great credit to them that so many of them have succeeded in passing the course, in view of the long hours they have to work under fairly arduous conditions, and at the same time the need to combine studies, attendance at lectures, and the subsequent passing of examinations.

If we are to adopt the provision which requires a higher qualification, there would be a better opportunity for trainee nurses to understand medication, treatment, and the use of drugs; but whether by doing so we are setting the standard too high, and whether there is a need for another group of people to give bed or ward care, I do not know. It would be a pity if any impression was created in this debate that trainees do not need the higher qualification to become nurses. I believe they should have this higher qualification if they are to do the job adequately.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: That applies to other people, but there is no need for girls to have the Leaving Certificate before they become nurses.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: That is true, and that was the point I made a short while ago. The situation now is that they are not required to have the Leaving Certificate. All I ask is that members accept the fact there is a need for certain qualifications in order that trainee nurses can be equipped to absorb the technical jargon and understand the treatment they are expected to administer. My only purpose in speaking in this debate is to give point to those topics. Mr. Willesee said that if the conditions and pay were improved, enrolments of nurses would increase.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: It certainly would in regard to the higher qualified ones.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I would think so, too, but nurses believe that theirs is a dedicated service and a labour of love. I understand the situation is that to be a good nurse one must be dedicated to one's profession. While the money is important, I believe it would be an error to provide

for such a remuneration that girls entered the profession for the money rather than the dedication. I support the Bill.

The Hon. J. Heitman: Money is very handy!

THE HON. F. R. H. LAVERY (South Metropolitan) [8.16 p.m.]: I rise to support this Bill, and in doing so I have one or two comments to make. Having looked through the 20 clauses and two schedules to the Bill I feel that strictly, under Standing Orders, the previous speakers have not dealt solely with the provisions in the measure. I, too, would like the same privilege extended to me for a moment or two, because I feel the very fact that I am standing here today is a result of the wonderful work of those in the very worthy profession of medicine—the doctors and nurses.

Last year, when I was travelling through South Australia, I was suddenly taken very ill and was admitted to the Tailem Bend Hospital at 4 p.m. The next thing I remember was waking up in the Adelaide Hospital the following morning. I was on the danger list there for a number of days, and was being treated in the Medical School. It is because I have had experience of the Medical School in Adelaide that I believe Western Australia deserves a medical centre as is envisaged in the Bill.

I do not often quote poetry, but when I was going to school I learnt a poem about a babbling brook, and portion of it was, "Men may come and men may go, but I go on for ever." To relate that poem to this situation, Ministers may come and Ministers may go, but the medical profession goes on for ever.

With that in mind, I feel that some of the comments made in connection with this proposed centre might well be taken notice of by those in authority in future years. Would the Minister let me know, by way of interjection, whether the whole project is estimated to cost \$30,000,000 or £30,000,000?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It is \$30,000,000.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: My idea is that because a period of years will elapse before the scheme is fully completed, it will be possible for this particular centre to be one of world-wide renown. This will be possible because each year new equipment, including new electrical equipment and nuclear-powered equipment, is being invented. If ever a country had an opportunity to look ahead and plan for its medical future, Western Australia has the opportunity to make Australia that country by means of the medical centre, because our Medical School has been in existence for only a few years.

I hope that the planners in the future will ensure that the buildings on this area

of land referred to in the Bill will not be of a stereotyped nature. I hope that from time to time those concerned will be big enough to realise the mistakes that have been made in, say, 1967, and then, before they progress to the next stage in, say, 1973, study them to ascertain how they can be rectified and thereby avoid further mistakes being made.

Some years ago a group of members of Parliament visited Esperance and I was in one of the cars with Dr. Hislop. The point to which I am going to refer may seem a small one, but I feel it is worth relating for the benefit of our present Minister and those who draw up plans in the future. As I said, we visited Esperance, and on the way, by the good grace of Dr. Hislop, we inspected the Lake Grace Hospital, which is a very necessary building and set-up to cater for a sparsely-populated agricultural area.

However, immediately one enters the hospital it is obvious that anyone but a doctor planned it. The hospital was a 20 or 25-bed hospital, but the kitchen in the building was capable of catering for 120 patients. The equipment in the operating theatre was very modern, admittedly, but Dr. Hislop pointed out how inexpertly it had been arranged. The operating table was 9 ft. to 12 ft. from anything else in the room. A tremendous amount of space was wasted because the right people had not been consulted before the building was planned.

I have wanted to refer to this matter for a number of years, and I feel that tonight is the opportunity. I am not naive enough not to know that others beside architects will be involved, but I must impress upon the Minister and those concerned that amongst those who must definitely be consulted in planning for this hospital centre are those who are well versed and skilled in the use of medical appliances, in order that the mistake that was made at the Lake Grace Hospital is not repeated in this medical centre. I feel that by passing this suggestion on I am making a worth-while contribution to the debate.

I have two further points to mention concerning the centralisation and decentralisation of medical services. On the same trip when I received my set-back in South Australia last year, we were just entering a place called Bega when we saw a helicopter flying overhead. This was at 8 p.m., and we went to the recreation ground to see why it should be in use at that time. It transpired that a very nasty accident had occurred on the road to Cooma. Five people had been killed, and two who had been seriously injured had been brought in by ambulance. The helicopter picked them up, and in a very short time, those two injured people were in the hospital at Canberra.

I do not think I can go along with Dr. Hislop all the way on this particular point. We must have regional hospitals. We require them; but I believe that as far as the specialist treatment is concerned, this should still be established in a central modern medical centre. From that centre the specialist should be able to travel by plane, or, if we are ever able to acquire one for the medical profession, by helicopter, in order that in a very short time patients or doctors and specialists might be transferred to or from our country centres, such as Merredin or Bunbury, to the nearest central hospital. With the helicopter or plane, this would be possible in something under the hour.

Mr. Leach was the doctor in charge of the section of the hospital in which I was placed in Adelaide. He was training a large number of students and he was able to do this because of the modern equipment in the planning of that particular hospital. It was possible also for those in need of hospitalisation in the far-out areas, to be transferred speedily to that hospital.

One person said that a medical centre should be removed from the metropolitan area because of the possibility of its being demolished if there were another war. I believe, having attended the lectures held by the civil authorities, that if there were another war, there would not be much left of Perth after the first bomb had been dropped.

I will close on this last point which concerns junior nurses. I mentioned this point several days ago and I believe the situation must be compared with a football team or, if preferred, with members of Parliament. All of us start from scratch when we arrive in Parliament, but, after experience, some of us rise and as we go further along the road we hold higher positions than our colleagues.

As far as the nursing profession is concerned, I must agree with those speakers who have said that a person does not require a Leaving Certificate to become a good nurse. The opportunity for further study is available to all who enter the profession, whether they have a Junior Certificate or a Leaving Certificate. Whether a girl is able to absorb all the technical knowledge which is imparted to her is a matter of individual ability.

I would like to quote one particular case of which I am personally aware. A young lady in this State was reared by Legacy. She was the youngest of a family of nine and entered the nursing profession through a private hospital after first having obtained her Junior. This young lady was appointed as a deaconess in the Methodist Church in Western Australia, and then went to New South Wales to do bush nursing. She became a member of the Australian College of Nursing and was appointed Deputy Matron of the Memorial Hospital in Adelaide, which is a 300-bed

hospital. She is now a deputy assistant matron at the Royal Perth Hospital, and is only about 32 to 33 years of age.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You should never divulge a lady's age.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I am sure this lady would not object, if she were aware I was talking about her. The point I am making is that if we have 100 girls entering the nursing profession, 50 with their Junior Certificate and the other 50 with their Leaving Certificate, it would be reasonable to assume that the girls with the Leaving Certificate would go to the top, although this is not invariably the case, as indicated by the deputy assistant matron to whom I have just referred.

After a certain period of training, some of those who enter the nursing profession with the higher certificate realise that they are not suited to the profession and are aware they can obtain a higher salary outside it. Consequently they leave the profession, and the field is then open for the girls with only their Junior.

It does not matter whether a girl has the Leaving Certificate or the Junior Certificate. The important thing is her ability to absorb the learning imparted to her while she is training. I can assure those members who have not been in hospital as much as I have been, that the nursing profession does a wonderful job under the control of girls who become staff nurses, and, later on, ward matrons.

We must also realise that some in the medical profession are good administrators, and others are good doctors. Some, of course, are both, as is Dr. Johnnie Rowe who we all know is a first-class doctor and a very wonderful administrator. This applies also to those in the Education Department. The principals of high schools, however, are expected to be administrators when, in fact, they are not capable of being administrators, but are first-class teachers.

With those remarks, I wish the medical centre all the very best for the future. I hope I live long enough to see the plans come to fruition, and that the medical centre is eventually all that the instigators of it hope it will be.

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (Lower West—Minister for Health) [8.30 p.m.]: In terms of having this Bill passed—at least from what everyone has said—perhaps I should not say very much but, in view of what has been said, it would probably be remiss of me if I did not make some comments. This is a Bill which really sets out an agreement between the University and the Government to secure possession of a certain area of land, and the ownership of it will enable a medical centre to be built on that land.

A medical centre is a complex establishment because it really touches on every aspect of health and this, of course, is

why we have had some very interesting comments on the general health situation in Western Australia; and I thank members for the interest they have shown in this question. It is natural that this should be so, of course, because one has only to work in this field for a very short space of time before one realises that the question of health is very close to the hearts of everybody. In town after town that I visited the hospital was the focal point; indeed, it is usually the hub around which the town revolves, and I would go so far as to say that in isolated instances it is the reason for the town's existence.

During his speech Mr. McNeill said that he felt we were probably adopting a reverse procedure so far as complete decentralisation was concerned, and I think that would be so. Members might have noticed that I slipped out of my place to check on something with the Deputy President (The Hon. N. E. Baxter). It was in regard to the Wyalkatchem Hospital. When I opened the new Wyalkatchem Hospital the townspeople took me up to show me the original hospital building. It was a room about 12 ft. by 14 ft. which had been built by the returned soldiers after the first World War. It was a two-bed ward—a form of a two-bed hospital. In those days I think most hospitals were of about the same standard. Not all of them were 12 ft. by 14 ft. two-bed ward hospitals; some were much bigger, but the main aspect of medical care in those days was what the nurses refer to as plenty of T.L.C.—and T.L.C., when translated, means tender loving care.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: I thought you were talking about the Trades and Labour Council.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: No, they are down the other end.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: That was the position during the era about which I am talking. I have heard Dr. Hislop mention this point on many occasions in the House, and there was little else that the nurses and other members of the medical profession were able to offer by way of treatment. However, times have changed radically since then. Now there is a necessity for a great number of facilities, such as good theatres, good delivery suites, excellent sterilisation equipment, and so on. All these things are necessary today.

In reply to some of the comments made by Dr. Hislop, let me say that I think the general practitioner is entitled to the very best conditions. After all, he is the front line of defence in our medical care and, at times, in the country areas, he is our only line of defence. When we are able to make provision for better facilities in country towns the country doctors are able to raise the level of their service to the public. If we can imagine sickness as being classified at various levels of acuteness we can realise that if those doctors

have better facilities they can deal with the more acute cases. However, that certainly means, automatically, what we refer to as the regional centralisation of hospital services.

I had sent to each member a book on the Geraldton Hospital and this, to some extent, tells the story of the movement from a nursing post to, say, a cottage hospital, in some cases, or to a sub-regional hospital or a regional hospital and, of course, finally, to the State hospitals such as the Royal Perth, the Princess Margaret, and the Sir Charles Gairdner. The State hospitals are those which, in the main, cover the acute cases and deal with the top level treatment.

There is only one linear accelerator in the State and, naturally, we would expect to have only one and it has to be located in a position convenient for people who are to be treated—and they come from all parts of the State—and convenient also for those who specialise in work in this field. Naturally those specialists would be concentrated at that hospital.

There are political consideration financial consideration and all sorts of other considerations which have to be taken into account in deciding when and how hospitals are to be erected. Naturally one would expect this to be so. All these things have to take their proper place in the scheme of things but, over and above it all, there is, of course, the time and distance problem.

In areas where aeroplanes are used almost as a daily occurrence, such as in the north—and in other places—which Mr. Wise and Mr. Strickland know so well, one would not expect hospitals to be built close together. In those circumstances the distance is measured in terms of time of aerial travel. In the south-west, where road transport is used, hospitals have to be built closer together, but not as close as in the old days. It is a difficult problem to rationalise these things and I can well understand the problems I would have to face, personally, if I suggested the Yarloop Hospital had to be closed. I can well understand the reaction there would be on the part of Mr. Jack Thompson if I suggested that the hospital at Tambellup had to be knocked down or moved.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You can imagine the reaction there will be when you open the one at Medina for us.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: This is a matter that touches the hearts of all of us, and particularly the women and children. Whenever I have opened a hospital the people in the district have told me that the crowd assembled to see it was the largest that had ever assembled in that particular town. When the Premier opened the regional hospital at Bunbury there were about 1,000 people there to

see it. The same applied with Geraldton. There were about 1,000 people there.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Over 1,000 people. There would have to be more than at Bunbury!

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Even at Exmouth Gulf I was told, at the opening of the building there, that the largest crowd that had ever assembled in the place were there to witness the ceremony. That is because of the interest shown in these matters. The question of health is so important to the women and children in those places.

One or two matters which were raised during the debate could be discussed subsequently during the Committee stage when the clauses are being dealt with. One to which I refer was raised by Dr. Hislop regarding the appointments committees.

A number of comments were made with regard to nursing and I take it that members were referring to the certificated nurse—the three-year nurse who does her training and then finishes up with a certificate. Modern nursing is divided into different categories; in some places there are three but almost universally there are two categories—the nursing aide and the certificated nurse.

The requirements for a certificated nurse are laid down by the Nurses Registration Board and not even a Junior Certificate is asked for. All that is required is for the girl to have passed certain subjects at the Junior level. Certainly the Leaving Certificate is not required, but as all of us know, today if there is a vacancy for an apprenticeship in a very good trade, it is generally the boy who has the Leaving Certificate who gets the position because there is a demand for that job. If there are enough applicants for a particular position it enables a selection to be made and, if no qualifications are laid down, but it happens to be a good job, the boy who gets it is the one with the Junior, a sub-Leaving pass, or a Leaving Certificate. That happens in nursing just the same as in every other calling.

The matron in charge of the hospital makes her choice. That is the system we use now and it is a legitimate field of authority for her. I am not saying it is the ideal solution; indeed we would not have spent the time and money that we have spent in investigating nursing training had we thought so.

Currently each hospital trains its own nurses and the fact that they leave that hospital to go to another is purely fortuitous. The Government school of nursing trains girls by using certain Government hospitals in the metropolitan area, but there is a need for a greatly expanded training system within this concept. There is a need for a sort of centralised training system associated with one of the metropolitan hospitals where the girls get the sort of clinical experience one can get only

at a major hospital; and, in association with that, there should be training for a period at a country hospital where one can get the sort of clinical experience which is available only at a country hospital.

At this stage I think it is reasonable to announce that preparation for this sort of training system is well advanced, and this system, too, will be part and parcel of the Perth medical centre, with a new concept in nursing schools capable of handling a large number of nurses. This, too, calls for a great amount of detailed work to be done before finality can be reached. However, its conception—or even beyond that stage—has been agreed to.

It is considered probable that one day we will need the type of nurse who will in fact have her Leaving Certificate and who will do, probably, a one-year University course, or even spend a little more time at the University. This girl will be the professional-type nurse who will be a highly-skilled technician and who will handle all the highly-skilled work that will be required more and more in the future.

Perhaps at this stage I could branch off into the problems raised by Mr. Lavery when he mentioned the almost immediate obsolescence of buildings being erected now, the difficulty of safeguarding against errors in building, and the requirements one needs to upgrade buildings to progress with the times. At the Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital we have made provision for a theatre which will be completely monitored in the same way as space flights are monitored. With space flights the astronauts have tapes connected to different parts of their bodies and the technicians make notes from big dials. It is a highly-skilled operation and provision has been made for the theatre to be monitored in this way. Everything is put through a pipeline but it would be used only for the most complex operations. There is also provision for a supersonic theatre. Experiments have been conducted in this regard and it is considered that this type of theatre might be needed in the future.

As regards the Lake Grace kitchen being too big, if one looks at the map one will see that Lake Grace is the ideal place for a regional, or at least a subregional hospital for that area and this should call for an extension of the hospital, perhaps with nursing posts feeding patients into the hospital from the surrounding districts. Unfortunately the Lake Grace Hospital finds it difficult to retain doctors. I shall not elaborate on that aspect now, but that is the position.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: In this instance there is a big kitchen and yet a mother who has just had a baby delivered has to be taken onto an uncovered verandah. That is nonsensical.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: There has been no doctor there for some time and probably when the honourable member was there the same thing applied.

With the modern theatre everything is piped through a boom and there is plenty of working space with everything at hand to make an operation easier. However, with most hospitals—and Bunbury and Geraldton are classic examples in this regard—there are centralised services—theatres, delivery suites and sterilising—with centralised unit facilities in central blocks. These hospitals are capable of handling a bed average of about 350, but are currently handling 120 beds, because it is more economical to do this now. The other beds can be put in at a later date.

It is reasonable at this stage to comment on the statement by Dr. Hislop that it is a waste of time to build these hospitals in the country areas in the hope of attracting specialists. Bunbury already has a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons on its hospital staff, and Geraldton will have one in November. There was the case of a dramatic trip by a specialist to Bunbury to save the life of a little girl who could not be moved. It is commonplace for a specialist to visit the Augusta Hospital monthly, and he has done very valuable work there.

Because the facilities are adequate we are able periodically to take specialists to the north-west of the State and thus save people being separated from their families. There is a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons at the Derby Hospital. Specialists are prepared gradually to go out to the country areas, and I think as time goes by more and more of them will be prepared to do so. Currently we are making some efforts to secure the services of the operators of a group of light aircraft to facilitate this movement.

We will still need the highly qualified specialist centralised in the very sophisticated hospital with all the facilities needed for future treatment. In that connection it was very interesting to hear the comments made by Mr. Willesee early this year when we were discussing the major problems in the field of health. The problems were classified as dental health, the motorcar, and the aged.

A group of persons to whom I was talking said the solution to the dental health problem was the addition of fluoride; and this was interesting seeing that we have just dealt with the matter. It was felt that the solution of the problem associated with the motorcar was outside our field, because it is really a matter for safety and road engineers. The problem relating to the aged people is one for the social services, but despite this they have an impact on the Medical Department. As fast as we provide beds they seem to be filled by the victims of motorcar accidents or by old people. But what sort of beds do we provide to ease the situation at the Royal Perth Hospital?

According to the people at the Royal Perth Hospital and the Government officers

it was felt that we should provide 60-bed wards to those built at Shenton Park, because this would help ease the situation of long-staying patients. They could be put into the Shenton Park Hospital where there are better facilities. If there is a hospital designed to cater for acute cases, then it is desirable that it should be able to take acute cases. This is why the first move was made at the Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital where we will be able to "build" comparatively economic beds costing, say, \$6,000 each—and this is a rough guess—in comparison with a major hospital where the beds will cost \$20,000 each. There are some 60-odd long-term tuberculosis patients still at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, and they could perhaps be more adequately cared for in a single-storied building than in a multi-storied structure, because they would be able to get rest, and the one level would facilitate their movement.

If we build the one I have mentioned first then automatically it will give us 60 beds which will no longer be filled year after year by the same persons. It will be possible to move them more quickly. If a patient is taken away every fortnight it will mean that 26 times 60 patients, is what the hospital could take over the ensuing 12 months.

We really run into some problems in the field of geriatrics—the aged people—because it is difficult to move them and find a proper place for them. Dr. Lefroy and Dr. Dougan have spent hours of their time on this matter. The last holiday that Dr. Lefroy had—and this is why I sometimes get a little bitter when I hear criticism of this gentleman—he spent taking his family around the country hospitals of Western Australia. While the family went to the beach or elsewhere, Dr. Lefroy visited the hospitals and the old people in them. This is how he spends his time—easing their problems, placing them in the right place, and so on.

This is a very real problem which is receiving a tremendous amount of thought, because views differ as to its ultimate solution. We could perhaps jump into a quick solution, but I feel that here is a golden opportunity for the State to find a solution which will be of lasting benefit to the residents of Western Australia. I could go on speaking for a long time because this is a fascinating subject.

I have no doubt that a number of matters have been raised with which I have not dealt as adequately as I would like to do. We are extremely grateful to you, Sir, for allowing us to discuss this subject so fully. We do not often get the opportunity to discuss it in this manner.

In regard to the question of planning, some mistakes have been made, but we have set up within the department a planning section which now deals with this matter in collaboration with the doctors

and the matrons. We do not stop at the doctors; we bring in the nursing staff, the technicians, and the engineers who are all part of the set-up. It seems that it will take about six months in the sketch plan stage before everybody is satisfied. I could go on for a long time but I do not think I would be very popular if I did.

I have some notes concerning private and public hospitals. Last night Dr. Hislop did not mention the fact that we do give some sort of subsidy to private hospitals. We pay interest on the approved loans, and have done so in the case of St. Vincent's in Bunbury, St. John of God in Subiaco, and St. Anne's in Mt. Lawley, where an additional 100 beds are being "built." I have had discussions, which have been instigated by Dr. Hislop, at the Mount Hospital to endeavour to solve the problem there.

I am grateful to members for their comments. Even those which are critical are salutary, because they leave room for re-appraisal and the possibility that we may find the answers to these problems. All the matters raised will be submitted to the departmental officers who will reappraise and examine the position.

It is obvious the Perth medical centre complex will go on, though some of us may not live to see it established. It is a magnificent concept in terms of medical care, and it will really be wonderful if what we hope for eventuates. This is where the general practitioner and the specialist will meet together; where the University student, the new doctor, the old doctor, and the practising doctor will all meet with their problems and their patients with one common aim; namely, the better care of our fellow citizens.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (The Hon. N. E. Baxter) in the Chair; the Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Minister for Health) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 15 put and passed.

Clause 16: Teaching hospitals on reserve—

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Dr. Hislop raised the question of the appointments committee. As I have said, this Bill is here by agreement between the State and the University Senate. Everything has been checked and put in its present form by agreement. Because the University is providing a lot of land it asked for specific things, and referred particularly to the appointments committee. Everything in connection with the appointments committee will be done under the Hospitals Act. In order to follow this completely it will be necessary to read the Hospitals Act. This provision was arrived at in close co-operation between the University Senate and the hospital authorities.

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Can we expect that the persons concerned will be members of the medical profession, registered medical practitioners under the Hospitals Act? We would like to know this, because it is a serious matter, when it comes to deciding who shall be appointed.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: All I can say is that these are the people the University Medical Faculty would require. So far as I know they would all be medical practitioners with the exception of the chairman, who will be the chairman of the actual hospital. I think there is a balance of people which has been carefully worked out.

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I regard this as very important; and I would like to take the matter back to the A.M.A. and give its finding tomorrow afternoon. It will be a serious situation if these people are not medical practitioners.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: It may well be that they are all medical practitioners. I would like to make progress now and if Dr. Hislop desires, he can recommit the Bill for further consideration of this clause.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 17 to 20 put and passed.

Schedule put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 25th October.

THE HON. S. T. J. THOMPSON (Lower Central) [9.5 p.m.]: I rise to support this Bill; and I intend to confine my remarks in the main to clause 17 because I feel there was a fair coverage of the other clauses last evening. By that I do not infer that clause 17 was neglected. However, it appears to be the most contentious clause in the Bill.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: I heartily agree.

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: There are two main points I would like to emphasise. The first is that C.B.H. is rendering a great service to the community. By taking this attitude, I do not disagree with Mr. Lavery when he said last night that town councils and shire councils render a great service to the community.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: I said, "Who better?"

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: I wholeheartedly agree with the honourable member, but I still hope to be able to give some reasons why I feel C.B.H. is rendering a service to the community.

At the present time C.B.H. has approximately 304 installations in Western Aus-

tralia. Approximately 20 of these are not on railway property—they are "off-line." These would be bins subject to rates. I consider the installations we have throughout the country could really be termed "transit bins" to assist in the distribution and transport of grain to the coast. Under normal conditions one would expect these to be financed by the Government as they are in New South Wales and Victoria.

In Western Australia we have this very large organisation of C.B.H. that has been paid for by the farmers. Admittedly the money has been provided over a long period, but free of interest. I am sure the Minister, when replying, will probably have figures to show just what amount of money is involved at this stage. These facilities, which have been provided by the farmers, have prevented a tremendous drain on loan funds which would have been the position if the facilities had been supplied by the Government. Therefore I think the company has rendered a major service to the community.

I wish to emphasise that C.B.H. does not object to paying rates on the buildings that are known as off-line installations. In my own home town of Wagin we were in the position of not having an installation.

For many years the local wheat was received at the flour mill. However, this mill went out of operation, like many other flour mills throughout the State, and Wagin was without the services of a bin. The shire worked for many years to obtain a bin at Wagin and at last C.B.H. came to the party and installed a big facility. It was not installed in the railway yard, as is the case in many other places. The railway yard is in the centre of the town and the shires are now becoming aware of the fact that it is not a good situation for a wheat bin.

After much consideration, the shire relinquished some land on which it had never received rates. The installation was built on this land and within a few months C.B.H. was rated on the annual rental of the bin, which was a considerable amount. C.B.H. was quite prepared to pay some rates, but it objected to paying the full value. After some negotiation our shire was prepared to play ball. It is situations like this that have led to this Bill coming before the House, as this sort of thing is going on in quite a number of shires; and I can see more and more bins being built away from railway yards as installations are renewed. Other shires could take the same attitude as Wagin, which did not want to have the facilities in the middle of the town; it preferred that they be further out.

At one time we could have resumed the land in question and vested it in the railways, but the powers-that-be were not prepared to go along with that idea and

the situation was handled in the manner I have described. At Fremantle perhaps C.B.H. did not provide any roads. I do not know; but it certainly did provide funds for drainage, septic systems, and its own fire service. Therefore it has relieved the council of some expenditure in that vicinity. Another angle is that the area has gained some advantage by having this facility. Nevertheless, I could never understand why this installation was built at Fremantle.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I agree with you on that.

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: I would prefer it to be at some other place.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Mr. Sleeman wanted it built at Cockburn Sound, where it should be.

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: It might be that in years to come the facilities will be transferred. These points are sufficient to prove that C.B.H. is really rendering a service to the community. The question of C.B.H. being a profit-making organisation was raised. I cannot go along with that at all. This would appear to be so on the figures quoted last night, but C.B.H. has really made a saving on the handling charges it has levied. This money is refunded; and as Mr. Dolan said last night, something over \$1,000,000 has been refunded this year.

C.B.H. not only handles wheat, but oats and barley as well; and at the present time is making provision for the handling of linseed this year. With such a large turnover and fluctuations in seasonal conditions, it is hard to determine the amount of money required for handling charges in one year. Therefore these profits are actually savings on the handling charges and are refunded to the growers.

Mention was made of some property—a theatre. This is so. C.B.H. has other property; and this actually represents a reserve fund.

In the early days it set out to build a reserve. I have no doubt that those properties have been used many times to assist in financing other installations. The money was not refunded to the growers. The theatre, of course, is not owned entirely by C.B.H.; it is owned in conjunction with the Grain Pool of Western Australia.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Do you know how much money is in reserve?

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: I have no idea of the amount. I did not bother to get details of the figures but I feel that the Minister, in replying to this debate, will probably make a point of quoting a number of those figures.

I think we are quite justified in carrying this amendment. Mr. Watson, last night, in his address on this matter, did put forward a method which would possibly have been a better way to overcome

the problem. But that is by the way and we now have this Bill before us. I am firmly convinced we are justified in exempting C.B.H. from this particular tax which the shires are insisting should be paid, bearing in mind we are going to have more and more of these bins built off-line at the request of the shires. I fully subscribe to the idea that the bins should be erected outside of the towns. With those brief remarks, I support the Bill.

THE HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central) [9.17 p.m.]: Like Mr. Syd Thompson, I regard the majority of the clauses in this Bill as machinery measures and I intend to speak on the clause dealing with the exemption from rating of C.B.H.

One would expect that local authority rates to the tune of \$20,000 would provide quite a lot of services and amenities. Even though the members representing Fremantle have stated that the council does provide roads, etc., at Fremantle for Co-operative Bulk Handling, the company says it provides its own roads, fire protection, drainage, and street lighting. The company claims that the port authority is responsible for all services within its boundaries.

Possibly the company makes use of some of the approach roads to the port authority land. Other than that, very little use is made of council facilities by the company. We must not forget, too, that the company employs a number of persons, the majority of whom would reside in the Fremantle area and those people would pay their rates and enjoy the amenities provided by the council.

Mr. Syd Thompson referred to the financial set-up of C.B.H. and I would like to go back a little further in the history of the company. About 1920 or 1921 an attempt was made to introduce bulk handling in this State. However, it did not eventuate until about 1932 and further progressed from there.

As Mr. Syd Thompson has stated, the finance for the installation of the machinery and everything connected with C.B.H. has been provided by interest-free loans from farmers in Western Australia. It is unique in Australia in co-operatives. It is unique because we have the best co-operative bulk handling installations in Australia, bar none, and they are financed by the farmers. Added to that fact, only last year the company subsidised the Government in relation to the installation of the standard gauge railway.

The money made available for that investment is to be amortised by the Government over a period of years. So C.B.H. is not a company which does nothing for Western Australia.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Who suggested that?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Nobody did. I am pointing out that it is a company which does a lot for Western Australia.

We now come to a difference of opinion. Some years ago, when it was decided by the Government that the installations be established at Fremantle on port authority land, there was a big difference of opinion as to whether the establishment should be placed at Kwinana. I know the majority of the wheatgrowers in Western Australia believe that Kwinana should have been the site, but the Government of the day, on the advice of its officers, decided it should be established on the port authority land.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: There is a long story attached to that decision.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I will admit that Mr. Wise is right there. The fact is that prior to this the company was exempt from rates. Now that the land is leased from the port authority, the council steps in and demands its rates—and pretty high rates of \$20,000 a year. I commend Mr. Watson on his attitude that if the rate had been reasonable there would have been no objection. Mr. Watson suggested 1 percent. on the annual value instead of 4 per cent. on the annual value. That figure would probably have met with approval from C.B.H., It is quite ridiculous for the council to expect rates to the tune of \$20,000.

In the Eastern States, of course, where the installations are financed by the Government, there are installations costing millions, and no rates are paid. That is all the more reason, where interest-free money is provided by the farmers in this State, and it is a non-profit-making organisation, that it should not have to pay rates.

I admit the company does pay certain dividends to the farmers, but this would be, more or less, in the way of a small token interest to disperse a certain amount. It is not a profit in any shape or form.

The Hon. E. C. House: It is only a fraction.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Yes, it is only a small fraction. I believe the installation at Fremantle is of benefit to the council because it helps to build up the community. Fremantle revolves around the port and the port authority. Without it there would not be much Fremantle.

The Hon. R. Thompson: There would not be much Perth either without Fremantle.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I will admit that, but one might say there would be not much of anything else, including towns, cities, and ports, if it were not for the farmers. It is the wheatgrowers who are providing the free-of-interest loan money and who are keeping places like Perth and Fremantle, and the big towns of Western Australia, operating. In this case consideration should be given to the people who find this money to put in the instal-

lations right throughout the State for the benefit of the State. Surely the cost of farming, over the last five or six years, has risen. It is all very well to say that the farmer is prosperous, but he is no more prosperous than the rest of the community. Do not let us force them to increase costs.

The Hon. E. C. House: It will only be put back onto the price of bread.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I cannot see it being added to the cost of bread, the way bread is handled today. Last night, by interjection, I referred to the payment of rates by shires which have forestry land and watershed areas within their shires. Surely they are entitled to rates on that land! Should every Crown instrumentality pay rates to the shire or the council, where it holds property? We could extend it further and go on to church lands, which are exempt. On a par with those organisations, the land in question should be exempt from rates. I trust members will support clause 17 of the Bill in the Committee stage. I support the Bill.

THE HON. L. A. LOGAN (Upper West—Minister for Local Government) [9.27 p.m.]: Of the 21 clauses in this Bill only five have actually been discussed in this debate. Mr. Ron Thompson referred to clause 20 which deals with the cancellation of orders. It is necessary, at times, for proclamations or orders made in Executive Council to be revoked because they are no longer effective. As the Act stands at the moment, no proclamation or order of the council can be altered.

Under the Local Government Act, some charitable organisations were exempt from rates but once the proclamation was made there was no provision for the lifting of that proclamation, irrespective of what happened to the piece of land afterwards. Where Orders-in-Council, or proclamations are made, it is necessary on certain occasions to revoke them or alter them. Most Acts contain this provision, and as this Act did not contain it the Crown Law Department suggested that the provision be inserted.

Mr. Dolan raised the question of the repayment of moneys which have been used by the local authorities for the benefit of people who do not have sufficient money to carry out instructions from the council. The payments will now be able to be made on a monthly basis, as well as a six-monthly basis. I do not know that there is any disagreement on this point. Administrative expenses will be increased because instead of 20 payments, there might be 120 payments.

The Hon. J. Dolan: Not necessarily: there is a choice.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: If payments are made monthly there will be 120 payments instead of 20.

The Hon. J. Dolan: You are assuming that everybody will pay on a monthly basis.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: There will be 120 payments for each person who decides to pay on a monthly basis. This will add to administrative costs, and a different rate of interest will apply.

The Hon. J. Dolan: The shire clerk did not think so.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I do not know whether the shire clerk stopped to study it long enough, but that is the effect it will have. If there are 10 people doing the work, surely 120 transactions as against 20 transactions must add to administration costs. However, I am not opposed to it.

The other question raised was why 15 days had been mentioned in one section and 14 days in another. I cannot answer that. I referred this matter to the Parliamentary Draftsman and it seems that one draftsman put in 14 days and another put in 15 days, and apparently this matter was not checked. It does not make any difference. However, it could be adjusted and both periods made consistent—either both 15 days, or both 14 days. As I have said, it does not make any difference.

The Hon. J. Dolan: The Government is very particular about some matters. On page 3 of the Bill I notice a full stop has been substituted for a semicolon after the word "cast." Apparently, the Government is very fussy about the difference between a semicolon and a full stop.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: It is for the benefit of the individual that he has the extra day, so possibly it should be left at 15 days. However, I will endeavour to get some information on this point.

Apart from the points I have mentioned, the only other query was in regard to clause 17, which is relative to exemption. I do not think there is any secret as to why Co-operative Bulk Handling was exempted from rating. I think you, Mr. President, with your experience of C.B.H. and its beginnings, could tell the House better than I the reason for the exemption, and the principle of the exemption. I feel, Sir, that you could tell the House why successive Governments and successive Parliaments have continued to approve of the principle of exemption.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I recall the Bill being introduced.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: And Mr. Wise probably approved of the principle.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: It was to be built on Government land.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The Co-operative Bulk Handling installation was built on Government land, but it was not built with Government money; it was not built with Railway Department money although it should have been built

with funds from this source, together with funds provided by the port authority. This would have necessitated loan money and this would have meant that the taxpayer was virtually refunding the loans and paying interest and sinking fund at 5½ per cent. However, all this was paid for by the grower and this was the reason why it was exempted. The principle applies today, just as it did then. Surely, having established a principle, it does not make any difference whether the building is on one place or whether it is somewhere else. Does it make any difference whether it is controlled by the railway authority or by the port authority? The port was controlled by the Railways Department and, under this control, the installations were exempt. Then, the control of the port was changed from the Railways Department to the Harbour and Light Department, and I emphasise that this is the same building on the same land. One day it was exempted because it was on railway property and the next day it was subjected to rating, because it was under the control of the Harbour and Light Department. Surely, as the principle has been established that this company was entitled to exemption, it must remain that way, because the same principle applies and the same set of circumstances applies—the company is still providing the money.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: So is the Swan Brewery for its building.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I know it is, and while perhaps it is not getting any of Mr. Lavery's money, it is getting some of mine and I am not a shareholder. I should say that the shareholders are getting the value of my money, but there is a lot of difference when we realise that the value of the installations of C.B.H. in Western Australia is \$36,000,000 of which the growers, themselves, have contributed \$30,000,000. Up to date C.B.H. has only repaid \$8,500,000; there is still a debt to the growers of Western Australia of \$21,500,000. This debt has to be refunded some time in the future. This interest-free money, which has been mentioned tonight must be refunded to the growers of Western Australia.

If C.B.H. wanted to build tomorrow either it has to increase the toll—and this is the only way it can be done in order to pay the increase and sinking fund on money it borrows from outside—or else it has to have some assistance from the Government. At the moment C.B.H. is about \$2,000,000 in the red and it is finding it very difficult to obtain the money to carry on, although it seeks finance from all over the world.

This is the reason why this company was exempted from rating. I have mentioned the question of profit, but how can it make a profit? The grower has lent his money to C.B.H.—his own money to his

own organisation, which after all is said and done is only a handling organisation for the Wheat Board.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Does not the shareholder do that?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The shareholder is the grower.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Does not the shareholder in the company do that?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Yes, but a lot of other people's money goes into a company. This is the grower's own money which he puts in to provide for installations and to pay for the cost of his handling. As Mr. House said, if there is a fractional surplus which cannot be paid out, this money is then paid back to the grower. It is his own money, and nobody else comes into it. It is purely the grower himself who is concerned; because he has been able to set up an efficient organisation to handle a commodity for him, the grower receives this rebate, but the company is still \$21,500,000 down the drain—this has not been returned to the growers.

The Hon. R. Thompson: And the ordinary householder has to pay an increase of $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in rates because this person has set up an efficient organisation!

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: We will return to the $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. directly.

The Hon. R. Thompson: We will be on the subject then.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: We are on the subject now; this is the subject of the exemption of C.B.H. from rating and I have given the principles and the reasons for this—there cannot be any other way.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: There is no principle in the Local Government Act as it is.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Mrs. Hutchison would not know anything about it, so I will not worry about her interjection.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Wouldn't I?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Mr. Ron Thompson talked about the Local Government Association, but I am not too sure whether he meant the Local Government Association or the executive. If Mr. Thompson checks, I think he might find that it was the executive of the Local Government Association which made this recommendation.

I have made investigations and I know of two councils which did not make any decision on this, although I must admit I have not gone any further in my inquiries.

The Hon. C. E. Griffiths: The councils were not asked to make any decisions.

The Hon. R. Thompson: The Local Government Association met on the 17th June and on the 16th September, and not a dissentient voice was raised when the vote was taken.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I just wondered whether, perhaps, it might have been the executive.

The Hon. R. Thompson: This is the association meeting to which I was referring.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I have mentioned two councils but neither of them has even been asked for an expression of opinion. To take this matter further, Fremantle is probably the only local authority in the metropolitan area which is affected. If one goes outside Fremantle and makes inquiries in the other areas which are affected, one finds the authorities are in favour of the exemption; in those areas the majority of local government authorities are in favour of the exemption.

The Hon. C. R. Abbey: They are being realistic.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Probably these are in wheatgrowing areas.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: As Mr. Syd Thompson has said, these bins were mostly in the middle of the town but now the company is being requested to move them to the outskirts of the town. It is evident to all those who go through Kalgoorlie and drive to Tammin, where bins are in the centre of the town and, also, at Three Springs that it would be better if the bins were out on the fringe of the town and not in the centre. This request by the local authorities was made for the benefit of the town, and it was only because of the set of circumstances that these installations became ratable. At Morawa there was an installation in the centre of the town, which was not ratable. A new one was built outside the town and last year the town of Morawa used the two of them—one was not ratable, but the other one was.

The situation is the same in Goomalling, only in the latter case the rate went from nil to \$1,400. In Morawa the rate went from nil to \$1,600. However, in the case of Fremantle the rate went from nil to \$3,000 and then to \$20,000. If ever there was a windfall to a local authority, this was so far as Fremantle was concerned. As Mr. Heitman said last night, Fremantle did not reduce the rating on the rest of the community when it received this amount. Of course it did not, and so I cannot see where the $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. increase comes in.

The Hon. R. Thompson: On the other hand, against an increase of rates in other councils and shires, Fremantle did not increase its rates, either.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: And it should not have done so, because Fremantle received \$20,000 from one installation alone, and this is much greater revenue than a good many other shires throughout Western Australia received.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Fremantle's revenue is \$924,000.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: When this matter first came up—and I would mention discussions have been going on for a long time—I made a suggestion to Co-operative Bulk Handling. I suggested that if it were to have this land transferred to the control of the Railways Department, it would be exempted from rating, and the company would not have to worry about meeting the cost of the rating. C.B.H. maintained this was a very difficult question and possibly this was the wrong way of going about it. The company felt the correct way was through legislation which would exempt it from rating, or by some other means which would achieve the same effect. Therefore, this amendment to the Local Government Act was introduced in order to exempt the company from rating.

Mr. Ron Thompson and Mr. Baxter have both said that this is laid down in the C.B.H. Acts of New South Wales and Victoria and in those States the company is exempted from rating. Why should the growers in Western Australia pay the cost, because this what it amounts to? The company is finding its own money and finding its own installations, and paying the costs which go to running the organisation. Why should we turn around and make the growers pay the rates which are not paid by any other growers in the other wheatgrowing States of Australia?

I would like to return to the original principle which is in this Act and which this Parliament reaffirmed in 1962. In 1962 I amended the Local Government Act with reference to section 532 to make allowance that where land was leased from the Railways Department for businesses, this land would become ratable. At the same time I had this to say—

But this section does not apply to any such land while it is leased to C.B.H. Ltd. under section 63 of this Act.

This principle was approved by both Houses of Parliament. As I have said, successive Governments and successive Parliaments have accepted and approved of the principle that C.B.H. installations are not ratable. If they are not ratable in one spot, why should they be ratable somewhere else? Surely, this is obvious.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: The company has to do what this place says.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: This principle has been followed by every Government since 1932. Mrs. Hutchison can work it out for herself—her party was in power for 13 years and six years respectively and during that 19 years the Labor Government agreed to this principle.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: The Labor Government has never been in power.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: It has never been in power, and the Minister knows that quite well.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Reference has been made as to why the facilities were installed at Fremantle. Some members know the situation at Fremantle, and what was called the old hospital silo. I wonder what would have happened over the last few years if installations had not been built at Fremantle and we had tried to use those installations which previously existed in order to get the wheat away?

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: The Government never built the silo—the British Government gave it away.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I did not say we built the silo. I said that I wondered what would have happened over the last few years had we tried to use the then existing installations in order to get the wheat away.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Over the last three years?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The position has improved at Kwinana, but the situation was urgent so far as the wheatgrower of Western Australia was concerned, and that old hospital silo could never have handled the amount of wheat which has been exported from Fremantle over the last few years; it was an urgent necessity to build a silo at Fremantle to do the job.

I do not doubt that over a period this amount will be amortised and another installation will be erected in the future. Mr. Lavery said last night that the Fremantle City Council had budgeted for this amount of money. That is fair enough, because this sum will be paid by the company. Co-operative Bulk Handling Limited will meet its just dues and all the rates which have been charged against it for 1966-67, and therefore the Fremantle City Council will not have budgeted for a sum of money it will not receive.

Most budgets are made public by the end of August, so C.B.H. will have to pay all the rates that have been charged against it for the financial year 1966-67. I think I have answered all the questions that have been raised in regard to this Bill. No doubt further discussion will take place in Committee. I have tried to answer all the questions at this stage so that we may save some time in Committee.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (The Hon. F. D. Willmott) in the Chair; The Hon. L. A. Logan (Minister for Local Government) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1 put and passed.

Clause 2: Commencement—

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: This Bill is the most undemocratic piece of legislation ever to come before Parliament. I would stress again that the Labor Party has never had an opportunity to do anything about it, because that party has never been in power in this Chamber and is not

likely to be with the boundaries as they are at present.

In spite of the rudeness of the Minister I still object to the Local Government Act. It is far removed from the English Statute. In the United Kingdom the local government legislation was a curse to the country and the same applies to that legislation in this State.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 3 to 15 put and passed.

Clause 16: Section 410A added—

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I move an amendment—

Page 8, line 27—Insert after the word "half-yearly" the words "or monthly."

The Minister has indicated he will agree to the amendment. Even though there may be extra payment involved there are not many of these buildings to be erected, and the shire clerk has informed me that the shire would not have any objection to the amendment.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: As I indicated during the second reading stage, I have no objection to the amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 17: Section 532 amended—

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: At no time did I make any disparaging remarks about C.B.H. or deny that it had done a good job for Western Australia, or for the wheat farmers of the State in general.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: No one has said that you did.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The trend of the debate tonight led me to believe that someone was being critical of the C.B.H. I do not intend to criticise C.B.H.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: You were only performing your duty.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I criticise the Minister for introducing the amendment, and I think I can speak for the members of the Fremantle City Council, including members of that council who are politically opposed to me and who, I believe, led a deputation to the Minister.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: No.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I understand that somewhere along the line they took a deputation to the Minister in an endeavour to prevent the Bill coming before Parliament, but without success. When the Bill was discussed at a function several weeks ago, one of the members of the deputation said to me, "This Bill reeks of political bias." That person is prominent in another political party.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: It would not be the Country Party.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: No, it is not the Country Party. So one can realise the ill-feeling the Bill has created. I will say that the political parties active in Fre-

mantle are in harmony on the question that they do not want to see the ratepayers of Fremantle penalised to the tune of \$1.80 annually so that C.B.H. can be exempt from the payment of \$20,000 per year.

Co-operative Bulk Handling Limited has done a great deal for the farming community, because the company has an efficient organisation which has saved farmers millions of dollars over the years; ever since the pool was established in 1915. However, there are many other organisations which are efficient and which have done as much for Western Australia as C.B.H., but they are still subject to the payment of rates. This is the point which concerns the members of the Fremantle City Council.

Although it is only in the last few years that C.B.H. has been in the position to pay rates, I pointed out yesterday evening that, from 1952, when its major construction was completed at North Fremantle, the North Fremantle City Council attempted to rate the company, but because of some legal technicality it was unable to force the company to pay the rates charged against it.

Reference was made by Mr. Baxter to forestry land and Commonwealth land. The Fremantle City Council is of the opinion that local authority rating should be imposed on such land. This matter was brought up at a meeting in Collie, where a large amount of forestry land is exempted from rating.

The Bill before us includes a provision which seeks to increase the rating on leases of timber rights. On the one hand the Government is proposing to increase by 100 per cent. the rating on leases of forestry land, but on the other hand it seeks to exempt Co-operative Bulk Handling from local authority rating.

It is unfair to suggest that the Fremantle City Council does not provide services to Co-operative Bulk Handling, because one member in this Chamber who has interests in and around Fremantle realises that the council has gone out of its way to attract industry, and has done everything possible to ensure that industries will be able to operate satisfactorily. Would it be fair to suggest that the Fremantle Friendly Society, the Fremantle Fishermen's Co-operative, or other co-operatives in the district be exempted from local authority rates, in the same way as Co-operative Bulk Handling is to be exempted? All the profits of these co-operatives go back to the shareholders.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: There are no profits with Co-operative Bulk Handling.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: In the true sense of the word, neither are there profits made in the friendly society, or the fishermen's co-operative.

The Hon. E. C. House: No Government in Australia provides for the fishing industry, but some do for the agricultural industry.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The honourable member is incorrect. The Fremantle City Council has put up a case which I fully support. If Co-operative Bulk Handling is to be exempted then the ratepayers will each have to bear an extra \$1.80 a year. No-one who has spoken in this debate has denied that Co-operative Bulk Handling or the farming community cannot afford to pay the rates to the Fremantle City Council, and for that reason it should pay. The Minister said he was aware of two local authorities which did not support the move of the Fremantle City Council.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: I said they had not expressed an opinion.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I made a check this morning, and found that on two occasions when a vote was taken there was no dissentient voice. I refer to the minutes of the Local Government Association meeting of the 17th June, 1966, which states—

1085 City of Fremantle 2/2/6, seeking assistance of Association in resisting attempt to exempt Co-operative Bulk Handling from rates by legislation. (Letter attached.)

Mr. Griffiths implied, stating that rates £10,000 per year—had paid two years—if exempted, ordinary people must pay more.

Moved by Mr. Smith, seconded Mr. Harrison, and Resolved "that the Association emphatically opposes the proposal to exempt Co-operative Bulk Handling from the payment of rates."

The minutes of the Local Government Association meeting of the 15th July, 1966, contain the following:—

1114 Rating, Co-operative Bulk Handling 2/2/6. Minister for Local Government forwarding copy of letter sent to City of Fremantle. Resolved that the letter be circulated with the minutes, and that the Executive consider this and report.

The minutes of the meeting held on the 16th September, 1966, contain the following:—

1209 Rating of C.B.H. 2/2/6. The letter sent by the Fremantle City Council was considered and it was resolved to advise the Minister that, having considered the exchange of letters the Association is more fully convinced that it is not in the best interests of Local Government that C.B.H. should be exempt from rating.

On the motion of Messrs. Griffiths and Strickland, the recommendation of the committee was adopted.

Mr. Robinson said that he checked up on this matter, but I place just as much reliance on the advice that has been given to me as he places on the advice that has been given to him.

The Hon. H. R. Robinson: Did the Local Government Association refer that matter to member bodies?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The executive of that body would, or should, have sent it to member bodies. The provision in the clause under discussion is most unfair, in that it seeks to penalise one local authority for having within its district a large establishment which is liable for local authority rates.

The Hon. C. E. GRIFFITHS: I can assure Mr. Ron Thompson that the executive of the Local Government Association did not refer the matter to member bodies, because the local authority of which I am a member did not receive any communication. When the provision in the clause was first mooted I received letters from the Fremantle City Council and from local authorities in my electorate. In view of those letters I waited for the agenda of the Local Government Association meeting to arrive, as I wanted to say something on the exemption of Co-operative Bulk Handling.

I can assure Mr. Ron Thompson that the Local Government Association did not seek an opinion from any of the local authorities. If this matter has been discussed at the meetings, then any opinion given would be the personal opinion of the member delegate. That would not necessarily represent the view of his local authority.

There is no clear indication what the Local Government Association would have done had it adopted the correct procedure in asking member bodies to express an opinion on an important subject such as that, well in advance of the time when the legislation was contemplated. There was no excuse for thinking this would be rush legislation, and for that reason the local authorities should have been asked for their opinions.

Co-operative Bulk Handling has contributed millions to ensure that the economy of Western Australia remained sound, and thus relieved the Government from having to pay the money.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I cannot understand the statement made by Mr. Ron Thompson to the effect that the ratepayers of Fremantle would be penalised if this amendment were passed. The rate revenue of the Fremantle City Council is pretty healthy, it being \$929,404. The area is 6.8 square miles, the number of dwellings 6,820, and the population 24,200.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: What date was that?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: It is 1966. The area of the South Perth City Council is 7.6 square miles which is not quite a square mile bigger than the Fremantle City Council. The number of dwellings is 9,905, and the population is 32,400.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Half of them are living in flats.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: The number of residents per dwelling in Fremantle is 2.74, and the number in South Perth is

3.56. The revenue for South Perth is half that of the Fremantle City Council, it being \$508,956. Therefore the \$20,000 which the Fremantle City Council will get from C.B.H. at the end of this year is a windfall.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: And you say they will not miss it afterwards?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: No. The council received that amount for the financial year 1965-66, and will receive it for 1966-67. It is a windfall. The council did not budget for it in years gone by because it did not realise it had a claim on it. Now the council is using it as a threat—that is how I feel about it; I may be wrong—

The Hon. R. Thompson: I think you are a bit.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: —to get us not to agree to this exemption because if we do the council will raise the rates. It does not add up to me, considering the healthy state of the council's finances.

The Hon. R. Thompson: It is too honest a council to do anything like that.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I would like Mr. Ron Thompson to explain that.

The Hon. R. Thompson: What do you want me to explain?

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: It is true that the area of Fremantle is 6.8 square miles, but it is also true that 132 acres of that small area are occupied by non-ratable State Government instrumentalities. These include the John Curtin High School, the Fremantle Hospital, the technical school, Princess May Girls' School, Fremantle Boys' School, Alma Street Primary School, with the gaol thrown in.

The Hon. C. E. Griffiths: You can easily get thrown in!

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: If the council were receiving rates on all those properties, it would not require the \$20,000 which it is said C.B.H. is presenting as a gift to the council. I do not care how hostile members feel I am getting, I refuse to allow the Fremantle City Council to be degraded, even in the Legislative Council of Western Australia.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: No one did that.

The Hon. E. C. House: You are off the rails, I think.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: The Fremantle City Council has given good service to those in this State. It has provided the entrances to Fremantle wharf and thereby allows the produce of farmers, including those who are members here, to be exported. I do not intend to sit here and listen to the council being degraded in this way. I would prefer to walk out and not vote.

The Fremantle City Council would not attempt to threaten Parliament. It would not attempt to take an unfair advantage of the smallest or largest company in Western Australia. The council in Fremantle is probably the most democratic in the State.

Its members come from all walks of life. They are men of the highest calibre; some of them are retired pensioners. All decisions made are made in the most ethical manner possible. The Fremantle City Council has also been very kind to local government in many ways. It has been the focal centre of many great functions in connection with local government.

The Hon. H. R. Robinson: Don't you think the others have, too?

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I do not think anything Mr. Robinson says would be right after the tale he tried to put over us last night. I would prefer to leave it at that.

The Fremantle City Council believes it has a just right—as just a right as C.B.H. has—to present its case to Parliament. I have learned that the case was being presented by the Minister for and on behalf of that company. No-one denies this company has given good service to the community, but I deny that it is a poor company. If C.B.H. is \$2,000,000 in the red, why did it offer that \$1,000,000 last year to its shareholders?

Concerning the remarks made by Mr. Clive Griffiths, I am amazed that the Local Government Association would not send minutes to the South Perth City Council.

The Hon. C. E. Griffiths: I did not say that.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I have the minutes here right in front of me.

The Hon. C. E. Griffiths: I did not say anything about the minutes.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: Mr. Clive Griffiths said that his council had not been informed. It is amazing to believe that an organisation of the calibre of that one would not send its minutes to each local authority.

The Hon. C. E. Griffiths: I never said that.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: Also I would remind Mr. Clive Griffiths that a delegate speaks on behalf of his council.

The Hon. C. E. Griffiths: I would not disagree with that.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I feel very hot under the collar about this. As Mr. Heenan said last night, before he replied to the debate on his motion, the Government has the numbers. Surely to goodness even the Minister himself would agree that no reflection should be cast on the Fremantle City Council by making a suggestion that it is dishonest, as Mr. Baxter did. He said the council was threatening Parliament. I think that a man in his position—Chairman of Committees—should use better language. I am very disappointed in him.

The Hon. C. E. GRIFFITHS: I must defend myself against the attack of Mr. Lavery. I did not suggest that the South Perth City Council did not get a copy of the minutes. I said that the member

bodies of the Local Government Association were not asked to voice an opinion on this particular subject. I said nothing more and nothing less than that. I certainly would be crazy to suggest that the South Perth City Council did not receive a copy of the minutes.

The interpretation Mr. Lavery has put on what I said indicates to me that he possibly has not understood many other things that have been said in relation to this Bill.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: That could be.

The Hon. C. E. GRIFFITHS: I was merely trying to say that although a delegate, when he speaks, usually does so on behalf of his local authority, he may not necessarily be expressing the views of that local authority because the local authority concerned might not have discussed the matter.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: The delegate must report back.

The Hon. C. E. GRIFFITHS: Yes, but certain things were skipped and this was certainly never reported back.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You would think that after three meetings the matter would have been mentioned at least once.

The Hon. C. E. GRIFFITHS: I would think so, but this particular business was not.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Last week during a debate I asked for an explanation of the meaning of "implied consent." Here is an example of it tonight. Mr. Ron Thompson spoke at three meetings attended by a delegate from the South Perth City Council. I would say that by implied consent, the council agreed to this proposition. There is no way to excuse the council. If it did not want to agree, that is too bad. It gave implied consent to its delegate when it did not dissent after the first occasion, or the first two occasions.

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: We are not here to argue the merits or demerits of councils. I am the first one to admit that the Fremantle City Council will have to raise its rates in order to compensate itself for the loss of the \$20,000. However, I do not think it will be 4½ per cent.

I may be wrong, but I feel that no comparison can be made between the Fremantle Fishermen's Co-operative and C.B.H. One organisation handles purely grain, while the fishermen's co-op. is engaged in selling as well. It is not in the same category so we cannot use the fishermen's co-op. as a comparison.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I do not intend to reiterate what I said earlier. I based my discussion on the principle involved, and both Mr. Ron Thompson and Mr. Lavery reiterated and affirmed

that principle in 1962. It still applies today.

As far as the Fremantle City Council is concerned, I do not blame it one iota for endeavouring to get this money. If I were a city councillor, I would do the same thing. I do not blame the Fremantle City Council asking Mr. Ron Thompson to bring this to Parliament. That is the honourable member's job and the city council's privilege.

I have been arguing on the principle behind this legislation. I reiterate that if it is good enough to be exempted in one place, it is good enough to be exempted in another. I do not agree with Mr. Syd Thompson when he said that, because the city council is going to lose this \$20,000 in 1968, it will have to increase its rates. The Fremantle City Council has an income of \$945,000 and all it has to do is to reduce its expenditure by \$20,000 and it will not cost the ratepayers a cent.

I can say that personally I get along very well with the members of the Fremantle City Council. I have been on a personal friendly basis with them ever since I have been a Minister. I will be visiting Fremantle next week or the week after.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: And they will make you just as welcome!

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Yes, they will make me just as welcome.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: I thought the Minister was going to say that we would pick him out of the river.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I suggest the Minister had better learn to swim before he goes to Fremantle.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I do not think we need argue this any further; I have said all I need to say on this matter.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: At a calmer moment than when I was last on my feet, before this debate is closed, I would like the Minister to clarify a reference he made to clause 17 which contains the marginal note "S.532 amended." The Minister made some remarks and I would like him to clarify them a little for me. He said—

Section 532 of the Act is amended by clause 17 to provide for the exemption of rating of land used solely for the storage of grain by Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. where the company agrees to contribute to the cost of roads in the vicinity of the installations as is required by the council.

Could the Minister elaborate on these remarks?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: This covers the position that where maintenance is required, the council makes a charge on the company and, if this is excessive,

there is a right of appeal. Probably, I would have preferred to do this another way. I have not stated this previously but it is contained in correspondence which bears my signature. When the matter was first brought to me I realised that the sum of \$20,000 instead of a nil amount was wrong and I suggested to the Fremantle City Council that this particular area be rated on the unimproved capital value. Had the Fremantle City Council accepted that offer—and I could have given it the right to declare this area as rated on unimproved capital value—none of this trouble would have happened, and this Bill would not have been here today. However, unfortunately, the Fremantle City Council would not agree, and I had to find some other way out of the problem. I took this to Cabinet and this measure is in fact a Cabinet decision. This was the position I found myself in: I gave an offer which was not accepted and because of this the company and I had to take some alternative action and so we have the legislation which is before the House.

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

Ayes—17

Hon. C. R. Abbey	Hon. L. A. Logan
Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. G. C. MacKinnon
Hon. G. E. D. Brand	Hon. N. McNeill
Hon. V. J. Ferry	Hon. T. O. Perry
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. S. T. J. Thompson
Hon. C. E. Griffiths	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. J. Heltman	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. H. R. Robinson
Hon. E. C. House	(Teller)

Noes—9

Hon. J. Dolan	Hon. R. Thompson
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. F. J. S. Wise
Hon. F. R. H. Lavery	Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs
Hon. H. C. Strickland	(Teller)

Pair

Aye	No
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. J. J. Garrigan

Clause thus passed.

Clauses 18 to 21 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Bill reported with an amendment.

House adjourned at 10.39 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 26th October, 1966

CONTENTS

	Page
BILLS—	
Fire Brigades Act Amendment Bill—Returned	1730
Industrial Arbitration Act Amendment Bill—	
2r.	1730
Com.	1733
As to Report	1771
MOTIONS—	
Ord River Scheme—Condemnation of Federal Government for Refusing Financial Help	1724
State Forests—	
Revocation of Dedication	1728
Revocation of Inland Areas	1729
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE—	
Broome District Hospital: Commencement, Completion, and Official Opening	1719
District Registrar for Perth: Certificates and Extracts of Births, Marriages and Deaths Issued, and Staff Employed	1722
Fluoridation of Water Supplies: Effect on Plant Life	1720
Fluoride Tablets: Free Supply to Children	1723
Fire Brigades Act: Contributions by Local Authorities	1723
Foreshore Road, Albany—	
Construction: Approaches by Albany Harbour Board	1722
Construction: Approaches by Albany Town Council	1722
Housing—	
Programme for Current Financial Year	1720
Rental Homes—	
Eligibility of Applicants	1723
Interest Charges	1720
Potatoes—Board: Value Handled and Charges	1720
Railways—Lake Grace-Hyden and Burakin-Bonnie Rock: Operational Costs and Losses	1723
Roeboorne Hospital: Transfer of Doctor, and Replacement of Secretary	1721
Secondary Education subsidies: Interpretation of "Permanently Domiciled in Australia"	1723
Stock Road Freeway: Resumptions	1722
Superphosphate—Bulk Storage at Merredin: Supplies from Esperance	1721
Totalisator Agency Board—Erroneous Issue of Betting Tickets: Legal Opinion	1721
Water Supplies—Desalination: Article in <i>News Review</i>	1720
QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE—	
Dead Whale at Albany: Newspaper Report	1724

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

QUESTIONS (21): ON NOTICE**BROOME DISTRICT HOSPITAL****Commencement, Completion, and Official Opening**

- Mr. RHATIGAN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:
 - (1) When did construction of the new district hospital commence at Broome?
 - (2) When will the hospital be completed?
 - (3) Has a date yet been set for the official opening?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) January, 1965.
- (2) The 30th November, 1966.
- (3) Tentatively fixed for mid-December.

2. This question was postponed.