

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

Ayes—22

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

(Teller)

Noes—17

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

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes

Noes

Mr. Hart	Mr. Curran
Mr. O'Connor	Mr. Fletcher
Mr. Nalder	Mr. Rowberry
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. J. Hegney

Question thus passed.

House adjourned at 1.26 a.m. (Thursday)

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 27th October, 1966

CONTENTS

	Page
BILLS—	
Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies Bill—2r.	1774
Local Government Act Amendment Bill—Report	1774
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE—	
Agriculture and Horticulture in South-West : Research in High Rainfall Areas	1773
Dairying—	
Commonwealth Grant to Promote Efficiency	1773
Grant by Australian Dairy Produce Board for Research	1772
Mail to the Armed Forces in Vietnam : Unsatisfactory Delivery	1773
Standard Gauge Railway : Southern Cross-Coolgardie—Mail and Goods Services to Small Centres	1773
Superphosphate—Merredin : Supplies from Esperance and Metropolitan Area	1772

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

QUESTIONS (6): ON NOTICE

DAIRYING

Grant by Australian Dairy Produce Board for Research

1. The Hon. V. J. FERRY asked the Minister for Mines:

Will the Minister advise what purposes and related amounts comprised the total of \$18,591 expended from the 1965-66 grant of

\$24,946 made by the Australian Dairy Produce Board to the Research Trust Fund, for approved projects in connection with the dairying industry?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

The total grant of \$24,946 made by the Australian Dairy Produce Board during 1965-66 included \$4,663 related to projects for the year 1964-65, but which was not received until after the 1st July, 1965.

The expenditure of \$18,590 was made up as follows:—

	\$
Specialised training graduates (refund)	134
Nutrition of pasture and fodder crops	5,926
Grass driers	2,992
Dairy cattle infertility	7,688
Seasonal trends in live weight of dairy cattle	1,850
	\$18,590

Irrevocable commitments amounting to \$1,033 will be carried over to 1966-67.

SUPERPHOSPHATE

Merredin: Supplies from Esperance and Metropolitan Area

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

- (1) Is it a fact that 5,000 tons of superphosphate will be railed from Esperance to Merredin at the rate of five train loads per week, until the consignment is completed, in the next few weeks?
- (2) What is the freight rate per ton to Merredin from—
(a) Esperance; and
(b) metropolitan area?
- (3) What is the reason that superphosphate is to be supplied from Esperance when the usual flow of supply is the metropolitan area?
- (4) Will it mean more expensive superphosphate to users in the Merredin area?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) Railage to Merredin from Esperance works will commence on the 31st October. No decision has been made as to the total superphosphate to be delivered from Esperance but the whole of the 5,000 tons will not come from these works.
- (2) (a) \$6.36 per ton.
(b) \$4.16 per ton.
- (3) For this initial trial, stocks are available at Esperance for im-

mediate railage. Adequate stocks will be retained for the Esperance district.

(4) No.

DAIRYING

Commonwealth Grant to Promote Efficiency

3. The Hon. V. J. FERRY asked the Minister for Mines:

Will the Minister advise what purposes and related amounts comprised the total of \$44,909 expended from the allocation of \$50,000 made to Western Australia in the 1965-66 Commonwealth grant of \$700,000 to the States for the promotion of efficiency within the dairying industry?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

	\$
Grade herd testing	16,764
Herd recording sire survey	4,408
Pasture demonstrations	5,318
Films and visual aids	5,183
Publications	1,833
Milking machine survey	307
Radio broadcasting	896
Artificial breeding	1,310
Infra-red milk analyser	280
Equipment—pasture demonstration	343
Mastitis survey	4,866
Irrigation demonstrations	124
Half salary of journalist	2,966
Winter school, cheddar cheese technology	311
	<hr/>
	\$44,909

The balance of \$5,091 was irrevocably committed at the 30th June, 1966, and it is expected the Commonwealth will approve of this amount being carried over to 1966-67.

STANDARD GAUGE RAILWAY: SOUTHERN CROSS-COOLGARDIE

Mail and Goods Services to Small Centres

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

When the standard gauge railway is completed and in operation, what arrangements will be made for mail services, and the supply of perishables and other goods, to the small towns and pumping stations adjacent to the railway, between Southern Cross and Coolgardie?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

Consideration has been given to the matter but no definite decision has been made. Reasonable provisions will be made in good time.

AGRICULTURE AND HORTICULTURE IN SOUTH-WEST

Research in High Rainfall Areas

5. The Hon. V. J. FERRY asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) Further to my question on Wednesday, the 31st August, 1966, is the Government now in a position to make a decision for the purchase of a property situated between Manjimup and Pemberton for the purpose of carrying out agricultural research in the high rainfall area?

(2) If the answer to (1) is "Yes," what is the future of the existing research station at West Manjimup?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

(1) Arrangements for the purchase of the property are expected to be finalised shortly.

(2) This has not yet been decided.

MAIL TO THE ARMED FORCES IN VIETNAM

Unsatisfactory Delivery

6. The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE asked the Minister for Justice:

Has the Minister received any official reply to my request on Tuesday, the 4th October, 1966, to make representations to the Federal Government for a better mail delivery service to the Australian troops in Vietnam?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

The Minister for the Army has stated to me by letter, and I quote—

My Department and officers of the Postmaster General's Department are maintaining a constant watch over this service to ensure that the movement of mail to and from Vietnam is effected as expeditiously as possible. A further indication of the concern with which the Army holds this problem is that the Director of Postal Services for the Army has just completed a tour of duty in the area and has carried out intensive investigations with a view to effecting any improvements possible.

I am enclosing a copy of two press statements I have issued which set out how the different categories of mail are handled to and from Vietnam. If you have any specific case and will let me have the number, rank and full name of the

soldier concerned, I will have the matter investigated urgently.

I would like to table the Press statements referred to.

The statements were tabled.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Report

Report of Committee adopted.

FLUORIDATION OF PUBLIC WATER SUPPLIES BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 26th October.

THE HON. J. DOLAN (South-East Metropolitan) [2.41 p.m.]: Bearing in mind your comments yesterday when the Minister was moving the second reading of this Bill, Mr. President, may I assure you that, speaking personally, I will act as always and preserve the dignity of the House. I would like to start by discussing certain aspects of the Minister's second reading speech so that the House can measure up and see that I am in opposition to the Bill. I will refer to some of the matters in the same spirit as the Minister did yesterday when he wound up his second reading speech and said, "With absolute and complete confidence I commend the Bill to the House." I also say that with the utmost sincerity I oppose the Bill.

On page 7 of the Minister's notes he asks, "Is it safe?" He then goes on to say—

In this sense I know of no authoritative body which has not regarded fluoridation of one part per million in drinking water as perfectly safe.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: What was your reference to page 7?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I was referring to page 7 of the Minister's notes.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I think page 7 will not be distinguishable in *Hansard*, because a copy of the notes is given to you for convenience.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I would now like to refer to the finding by reputable Oxford investigators in 1963; particularly of two men and one woman. These three Oxford medical workers who carried out the research were Roger Berry and Dr. Fay Whitney, Fellows of Radiobiology, and Wilfred Trillwood, Director of Pharmaceutical Services at the Oxford United Hospitals. Their findings are published in the *British Medical Journal* of the 26th October, 1963. The experiments, which lasted two months, were carried out in the radiobiological laboratory at the Churchill Hospital, Oxford. They believe that some research is necessary into the

effect of fluoride, and in a joint statement they said—

This is probably the first indication of the toxicity of fluoride in high dilution to human and animal cells in a "test tube" environment.

The test tube conditions may not reproduce the conditions which exist in the human body, where cells may be protected from the protective organisms.

Commenting on the experiments Dr. Berry said—

We went into this expecting to find nothing in it.

So it will be seen that they went into this matter fully thinking their research would reveal nothing. He said he would like to see research carried out by institutions better suited to carry out research into fluoride toxicity in living animals than they were.

So I submit in the first place that this is one lot of evidence I can produce in answer to the Minister's question, "Is it safe?" The Minister also read a letter he received from Dr. Helge Berggren of Stockholm in which was disclosed the fact that Hugo Theorell and the Government had changed their minds about fluoridation. I would point out, in all modesty, that actually that information is second hand, in that it has come from somebody else.

I propose to read a copy of a cable that was sent to the honourable member for the Australian Capital Territory, Mr. Fraser, by Professor Theorell. It is dated the 13th May, 1966. This is what Hugo Theorell himself had to say—

Do not oppose or favour fluoridation outside Sweden. Agree with the Swedish Medical Board that results on further scientific investigations are necessary before taking final decision.

That, I think, is *prima facie* evidence that Hugo Theorell has not changed his mind, and that he feels further research is necessary.

The Minister also referred to the efforts of the Australian Dental Association (W.A. Branch), and said the dental authorities were making every effort to arrive at some sort of blue print for a dental health programme suitable to this State. I mention that because later I wish to give some examples which will show that so far as the dental authorities in this State are concerned, some of their activities disclose that there is a suitable alternative to what is proposed in the Bill.

The Minister then asked in the course of his speech, "Is fluoridation an infringement of civil liberties?" In that respect I would like to quote the opinion of a very well-known Liberal member of the Federal Parliament, Mr. Killen, who some members may recall was very kind to the present

Liberal Government when he was the last Liberal member elected in 1961, and gave the Liberals a majority of one in the House. He had this to say—

I have a right to maintain that this is a philosophical argument. I believe that if the responsibility for dental care is left with individuals, that is where it should properly be left. If the philosophical concept is going to be that we should have a totalitarian society in which matters such as the eating of sugar, the drinking of alcohol, the driving of cars, indeed the doing of all sorts of things that wreak havoc to the human body and to human society should be resolved and settled according to the establishment of the day, then, I say to those who support that concept that, on every possible occasion, I will savage it and give them no rest whatsoever. Right from Plato to Aquinas and Burke and Mill the basic proposition of all political endeavour has been the relationship of the individual to the State.

That concept is as real today as it was 1,000 or even 2,000 years ago. That is the opinion, not of a supporter of my party, but of a Liberal member in the Federal House and a man who has studied this matter very thoroughly.

The Hon. N. McNeill: That is debatable.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: That may be, but the honourable member will have his chance to do that later on. I do not want to say anything that would infringe anything the Minister said, but in his speech he stated—

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 would ask the Minister if he were referring to our party?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Yes.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I thought he was. I would like to tell members that so far as the members of the party to which the Minister refers are concerned, on this issue they are free to speak as they please, and vote as they please. I would be happy if I knew the same state of affairs existed with other members instead of their having been brainwashed to the extent that they will support this issue blindly. I am not prepared to accept a statement of the type I have just quoted, because our members are perfectly free to vote as they wish on this matter; and as the debate progresses, members will find there will be those on our side of the House who will have views entirely different from mine. I am sure they will be absolutely sincere in what they think, just as I am sincere in the arguments I am putting forward.

I notice, too, that the Government intends to make fluoride tablets available through local sources in districts where fluoridated water will not be available. I feel the Government could have done this long ago.

I next wish to refer to Mr. Bonney, the Dental Health Education Officer who, for the last few years, has attended to the care of dental health. I would like to make reference to a couple of findings of Mr. Bonney. In the first instance, he examined the teeth of 47 children attending the Alfred Cove kindergarten and had this to say—

Forty-seven children attending the Alfred Cove kindergarten had their teeth examined yesterday and 33 were found to be free of tooth decay.

These results, which represented 70 per cent. perfect mouths, were described by Mr. Bonney as being wonderful; and I would support his statement 100 per cent. That figure is in excess of the result expected to be achieved by the use of fluoride. Continuing with Mr. Bonney's remarks—

"From surveys made throughout Australia we would normally expect to find 315 decayed, missing or filled teeth in a group of 47 children," he said.

"We found only 46 teeth affected by decay in this group."

Mr. Bonney said most of the parents had given their children fluoride tablets since birth. Some mothers had told him they took fluoride tablets during pregnancy.

I would submit that that is also clear evidence there is a remedy for dental decay which rests in the hands of parents; and they should accept the responsibility. If they do the same as the mothers in the Alfred Cove area did with their young children, we can expect startling results as far as dental decay is concerned.

That was one case. Here is another from Mr. Bonney who, of course, is doing marvellous work, which I appreciate in every way. This is what he had to say—

An examination of the teeth of children at the Como kindergarten yesterday was claimed to give a startling example of the effect of fluoride, a good diet, and oral hygiene on children's teeth.

The head of the Department of Dental Health Education, Mr. C. H. Bonney, said that of the 51 children examined, 33 were free from any form of dental decay.

Thirty-six of these children had been taking fluoride tablets, some regularly, some off and on.

I would suggest that the three out of the 36 who were not completely free from dental decay were three who only took

the tablets off and on, and not regularly. Continuing—

Mr. Bonney said this marked improvement on the average dental health of children in the 4-5 age group showed that parents and children were becoming increasingly aware of the advantages of healthy teeth.

I could not agree more. The article goes on—

Mr. Bonney said the Como kindergarten was not in the area where free fluoride tablets were available.

I suggest that, if free fluoride tablets had been available, particularly for the poorer members of the community, instead of 33 out of 51 being free from any form of dental decay, the percentage would have been higher. I have quoted both of these instances to show there is a way in which dental decay can be arrested, without taking away from parents their right and prerogative to treat their children on an individual basis and in accordance with their beliefs.

While on that point, there is the question I raised a while ago about a safe dose. Dr. Polya took issue with an article in the *Weekend News* of the 15th October, and immediately wrote in rebuttal of it.

As no doubt other members have done, I have read dozens of publications and a number of books dealing with both sides of the question of fluoridation of water supplies; and it was following that that I eventually made up my mind, with a clear conscience, that I would exercise my privilege to express my opinion and oppose the Bill.

I would recommend to members that they read one of the books written by Dr. Polya entitled *Are We Safe?* in which he not only mentions this particular problem, but also problems of a like nature. He deals with them most objectively and I could not imagine anybody being fairer than he is. In his reply to the article to which I previously referred, he said that it is not true that the dosage recommended is safe.

For a moment I shall refer to some of the statements we have read over the years, and to references that have been made. I remember on one occasion I referred to the beliefs of Professor Amies of the University of Melbourne. I asked a member, whose opinion I regard most highly, whether he would subscribe to the fact that Professor Amies was an authority, and he said he could not go along with that. He said that Professor Amies was a bit silly, was mad, and was a bit of a crank. That seems to be the attitude of some people who support fluoridation towards those who oppose it. Most of the latter are placed in the crank class. Maybe I will be regarded as a crank, but I feel as normal as anybody else.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Just a normal crank.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Probably more so. I am reminded of a story I learned in history a long while ago about Pitt, the British Prime Minister. Pitt was looking for a general to lead an army into Canada and perhaps win Canada for the British Empire. He eventually selected General Wolfe, and Wolfe was put in charge. Pitt had the remarkable genius of being able to pick a man for a certain job, and those picked men usually made a success of the job. However, his chiefs-of-staff told him that he had selected a rat-bag and a crank. Pitt replied to his chiefs-of-staff and said that if Wolfe was mad he wished he would bite some of the other generals, and then better results might be achieved. My reply to people who refer to anti-fluoridationists as cranks would be the same.

I also take the view that with people with very strong views there might be times when their utterances show that they are so impassioned in their beliefs, they cannot see any other side of the question.

So that I can put this case in true perspective, I would refer to the opinions of two people who are in favour of fluoridation. They are people who hold positions where they can influence thousands. Under the heading, "May his teeth rot," one had this to say—

If a fluoridation bill is introduced in the next parliament I hope any Country Party member who opposes it swallows his false teeth.

And if he hasn't got to the false teeth stage, I hope all his fillings fall out.

Being Australian, he's sure to have plenty.

It seems quite wrong to oppose a proven health measure so obviously beneficial as fluoridation.

Doctors tell me they would be satisfied if they had one tenth the evidence that some drugs they prescribe daily were as safe.

The concluding paragraph reads—

The Country Party should alter their policy. Dental decay in children is a preventable tragedy.

It will be noticed, again, the intemperate statement. I will now quote another article headed, "I'm for fluoride," and the opening sentence conveys what I am trying to illustrate; that is, how unreasonable people can be. It is as follows:—

Watch the frantic anti-fluoride fanatics get back into the act again.

This shocking attempt to interfere with our civic liberty by improving our shocking dental health never fails to rouse a certain section of our sheep-like public.

Scientific investigation has proved—
Proved, mind you! To continue—

—that a ration of one part of fluoride to one million of water can effect in-

calculable benefits in strengthening children's teeth.

This statement has been made as though the particular person was the authority of the world, instead of just being an ordinary person. To continue—

It is a safe, effective and practical public health measure which nature has thoughtfully provided in some sections of the globe and unhappily overlooked in this section.

Further on it states—

The Country Party opposes fluoridation. The Labor Party wants a referendum

And the writer concludes the article with this paragraph—

This is one of the times I'm tempted by totalitarianism.

That is typical of fluoridationists, and as for being a totalitarian, I would say that the people on that particular side are totalitarian in their outlook. I now propose to deal with some of the evidence which I wish to submit. First of all, I will refer to some statements by Mr. Killen. Mr. Killen, like an honourable member in another place, has done more study on this subject than, I suppose, 90 per cent. of the chemists and doctors throughout the world. All his leisure time must have been occupied in studying this subject, so his views, at least, are worthy of attention.

A member: I would not think that is correct.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I do not care whether the honourable member thinks it is correct or not. The honourable member will have every opportunity to use whatever evidence he has to discount the opinion of Mr. Killen. Not one paragraph of what I am about to read repudiates the arguments put forward by Hugo Theorell, a Nobel prize winner—and he did not fluke it; he won it a second time. Yet people are not prepared to accept him as an authority. I would sooner accept his opinion than the opinion of many lay people who try to ram down our necks how good fluoride is. These people would probably try to ram the fluoride down as well!

When Mr. Killen moved a motion in the Federal House be referred to Professor Theorell and said—

The subcommittee forgot about him. There is not a word about the brilliant work of Oxford's Berry and Trillwood. There is not a word about the monograph produced by Dr. Sutton. There is not a reference to Professor Amies. There is not a reference to the dean of the faculty of dentistry in Rome, Professor Benagiano. Am I to understand that the intellects of those people have now become so utterly desiccated that they can be ignored as though they did not exist and that

argument is to be despised as though it did not exist?

I am amazed that no arguments of this nature have been put forward by any of the fluoridationists in the world who are in favour of fluoridation. One can read right through the Minister's second reading speech and not find one reference to any authority. There are only generalisations and general statements. When men like Professor Theorell and Professor Amies are quoted, and their names are given with their statements, those opinions are pushed off. We are told that they are the utterances of cranks. I find it difficult to go along with that statement, and that is why I feel it is my duty to point out to the House this side of the case. Mr. Killen goes on from the philosophical point of view and says—

The assumption of the right to determine what is good and what is bad in every respect for the individual is a philosophy I deeply despise and I will on every possible occasion attack it, attack it and attack it again.

He seems to be quite definite in his opinions. I will now read the last reference I am going to make from his speech which is as follows:—

Flouridation is a completely different approach to a medical problem from any that we have had before. It is unique.

And this applies here. Continuing—

Never before has the State said to individuals, "Here is something which you take not to protect the people around you from disease but because we the State consider this to be in your own good."

It is an amazing philosophy for the State to propound and one I cannot go along with. There are other problems, and I have never known of one case where anybody can point to the fact that fluoride has saved one person's life, or where the taking of fluoride has had any effect on general health.

I can give a real example of this. We regard league footballers, generally, as men who are in perfect health yet, two of the captain-coaches—two of the strongest men in the game today—are toothless. There is an instance of the possible lack of fluoride, but has that had any effect on the physical or mental development of those men?

A couple of weeks ago I saw a Swedish gymnastic group of girls appearing on the Ed Sullivan TV show. I suppose that never in the history of acrobatics or physical welfare could one have seen a better act or a more healthy group of people than those girls, and they come from a country which has not yet introduced fluoride into its water supplies.

What was responsible for the good health of that group of girls? Was it

good diet, or the excellent care shown by their parents to ensure that their teeth were well looked after, or has the lack of fluoride in the water supplies of Sweden had anything to do with their excellent health? That is one question I pose.

Sweden is a country which has developed a method of physical exercises which has been adopted throughout the world. When I, together with other teachers, used to conduct gymnastic classes in the schools, the exercises given were based on the Swedish system of physical training. That is a country which has made a fetish of physical fitness, but it is still prepared to state that fluoride should not be introduced into its water supply systems until further proof has been obtained as to its possible effects, not on children, but on older people.

At this stage let me state emphatically that I believe implicitly that the ingestion of fluoride by children is most beneficial. I accept that statement, and I accept the sincerity of all people who hold that view. I think the examples I gave have probably been confirmed by Mr. Bonney, following his investigations at Alfred Cove and Como, that there is evidence that those children who have their teeth properly cared for by their parents gain benefits superior to those which fluoridation of water supplies is supposed to give.

I will now proceed to quote the opinion expressed by a man whom I regard as an authority. I refer to the Federal member for Bowman, Dr. Gibbs. He is not a member of my party, so there is no political flavour in his view. Members should listen carefully to what he has said, because even if his opinion conflicts entirely with one's thinking, I think it does one good to listen to the opinions of a man who has strong views on this subject. In my opinion his views are well worth listening to. He stated—

I do favour the taking of fluorine tablets if they had been recommended, but this is a vastly different matter. I have now felt it my duty fully to study this matter.

I suggest to members that if they claim to have done the same, I will not move from my seat until every member has spoken, because I will listen carefully to every word that is said. Dr. Gibbs is a person whom I would say has the capacity for intense study, and I would think that anything he has to say would be of great significance. He went on—

In this study I have been greatly helped by the Library staff who have, almost unflinchingly, secured for me mountains of literature on both sides of this subject—

Here I emphasise the word, "both." Continuing—

—and many papers dealing with the fundamental aspects of fluorine metabolism, which were prepared with com-

plete scientific integrity and not for the purposes of controversy. I have studied all these papers as objectively as I could, and I shall now give as much of my interpretation of them as may be crammed into twenty minutes.

Let me say from the outset that when I make a statement it is backed by, at least, one scientific paper.

There is no nonsense or backing and filling; he guarantees that and I accept his word. Continuing—

Everything I say can be proved. If I do make a conjecture I shall identify it as such. Much remains to be known about the behaviour of fluoride in the body. Even the protagonists of fluoridation recognise this. Here are a few quotations—

- (1) There is uncertainty as to the full extent of the effects on man produced by the absorption of quantities of fluoride large enough to alter slightly the X-ray appearance of the bones, but too small to endanger life.
- (2) The editor has been struck by the fact that there seems to be no other ready source of precise information as to certain questions which remain to be answered.
- (3) It is hardly necessary to state that in regard to the fluoridation of public water supplies, it is impossible to give absolute guarantees of safety.
- (4) What is needed is a complete and profound knowledge of the metabolism of fluorine.
- (5) An area of research that has yet to be explored successfully is that of the mechanism of the toxic action of fluoride.

He is quite emphatic when he says—

It is my deeply rooted belief that no measure should be adopted in the name of public health unless there is complete certainty—

I emphasise the words "complete certainty." Continuing—

—that that measure is completely innocuous. There should be nothing comparative about this. There must be no possibility of damage even to one living human being.

Some of his further statements are rather technical and I will not weary the House with technical terms. Like myself, I suppose members have received many pieces of literature containing many highly technical terms which, I suppose, only one person in a thousand would understand. One would have to be a chemist or a biochemist to understand fully the import of many of the statements containing technical references. Further, I suppose nobody in the world could claim to have read all the literature which has

been published for and against the fluoridation of water supplies. Dr. Gibbs went on to say—

Let us consider the water supply as a source of fluorine.

That is the basis; that our water supply be fluoridated. Continuing—

The amount we absorb from a given water supply depends, first, upon the nature of the fluoride compound—almost all sodium fluoride would be absorbed, but a great deal of calcium fluoride would not—and, secondly, upon the amount of the water which is drunk.

I think we can all agree with that statement. The amount of water drunk by one person as compared with another varies tremendously. I know some people who drink an enormous quantity of water every day. I have often seen children at school around the drinking tap all the time with a glass or a mug, but I have also noticed many children whose desire for water is practically negligible. So there is no certainty that water containing fluoride will be equally beneficial for everyone who drinks it.

In continuing his statement, Dr. Gibbs said—

The amount of water drunk varies within enormous limits. Some of the factors involved are individual habit, climate and state of health.

A number of studies have been made of this.

I would remind members that Dr. Gibbs can produce authorities for every statement he makes, and I accept his word on that. Continuing—

All agreed that the variation in water intake as between individuals is, as I say, enormous. For this reason fluoridation of a public water supply is unscientific.

The doctor then goes on to talk about 1 part per million. A little further on he makes this definite statement—

It is incontrovertible that fluorides accumulate in the body.

He can quote authorities for this statement. Continuing—

I believe that they exert a toxic effect upon many of the tissues.

Some of the details are gruesome. Any member who wishes to read them can do so, but he would have to have the stomach of a qualified medical practitioner to take much of it. Dr. Gibbs went on to say—

Fluoridation fanciers can tell us that the kidneys are not poisoned by fluorides. To prove their point they have carried out tests upon some of the children who live in Newburg and other towns with fluorine containing water supplies. I have two points of criticism here. First, the kidney tests were crude and would show only gross kidney

damage; secondly, fluorides take 20 years or so to produce chronic toxic effects.

I turn now to the comments made by another member of the Federal House of Representatives, Mr. Gray, who did international research on a large scale so that he could convince himself, one way or the other, on this issue. This was one of his conclusions—

One of the most important documents that have come to our notice in recent times on this subject is from the National Research Council of Canada. This institution's views cannot be lightly brushed aside. It did not arrive at a decision in any great haste; it conducted a research programme into fluoridation under the direction of Dr. Dyson Rose and Dr. Marcel Boulet over a period of ten years.

This was no hasty decision, based on a cursory glance at records; it was made after a period of research covering 10 years.

He went on to say—

No one can accuse them of arriving at a conclusion without giving the matter due consideration. Let us admit that this report was not available to the present Minister for the Interior (Mr. Anthony) when he made his decision, and let us admit that it was not available to the Advisory Council. Also, of course, the Minister's predecessor did not have it at his disposal. So far as I know, the report arrived in Australia only in 1964. When we bear in mind that this scientific institution carried out its experiments over a period of ten years we must give its report some weight.

Having arrived at a decision, the two doctors submitted their findings to Dr. L. F. Belanger of the Department of Histology at the University of Ottawa; to Dr. B. B. Migicovsky of the Animal Research Institute, Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa; and to Dr. F. C. Lu of the Division of Pharmacology and Toxicology, Department of National Health and Welfare, Ottawa. These three scientists all supported fully the findings of the National Research Council of Canada. Still not being satisfied, the council sent the report to the United States of America, where it was submitted to the "Archives of Environmental Health", which is the official journal of the American Academy of Occupational Medicine and of the Association of Teachers of Preventive Medicine.

That was a highly authoritative body the opinions of which could be deeply respected. He went on to say—

The papers were read and criticised by nine different specialists, one by one, who took eighteen months to complete the work on behalf of these scientific organisations. After all this, no sufficient cause having been found

to reject the Canadian thesis as faulty or misleading in regard to fact, publication finally occurred in the "Archives" issue of May, 1963.

The following is something which sums up what these experts arrived at:—

According to the report the only undeniable and indisputable good that fluoride is known to confer on the human body is conferred in the mouth.

That is the only part of the human body where fluoride does any good. As regards its effect on other parts of the body these authorities say there has not been anything definite, and they estimate it will take 20 to 25 years before a decision can be reached.

Mr. Gray, the authority I am quoting—I class him as an authority, because he has done 1,000 times more work on this subject than I or probably any other member, with the exception of the Minister—had this to say about the position in France—

No matter what we may think of some of the activities of France, we must admit that the French are in the forefront of scientific thought and knowledge today. A reply from the Director of Public Health in Paris states—

The Ministry of Health, faced with the problem of the employment of this method as a means of preventing dental caries, has submitted the question to the consultative scientific assemblies . . .

The reply mentions that this occurred over a period of two years.

The Chief Adviser of Public Hygiene of France has estimated that the harmlessness of prolonged ingestion, particularly of artificially fluoridated water, even in rigorously controlled small doses, does not appear to be sufficiently demonstrated, and that in these circumstances it would be preferable that the administration of fluorine remain an individual matter on advice from physicians and dentists.

In other words, the authorities in France are approaching this problem in the way that the mothers of Alfred Cove and Como approached it in order to ensure that their children have good teeth. The method which has been suggested by the two authorities I have just mentioned should be adopted throughout Western Australia and the Commonwealth, until such time as figures and evidence are produced to show that the fluoridation of water supplies is superior.

Mr. Gray went on to say—

I refer next to Soviet Russia. Although we may disagree with its politics and with its general activities, we must admit that Soviet Russia

stands in the forefront of scientific accomplishment today. I have with me a letter from Russia, and any honourable member who understands Russian is quite welcome to read this for himself.

Evidently he obtained the services of a translator to translate the letter into English. He went on—

One passage in that letter states—

Mass fluoridation by means of adding sodium fluoride to the town water supply is not practised anywhere in our country.

I suggest this a conclusive rebuttal of the claim of some people that every forward-thinking nation of the world has accepted fluoridation of water supplies as absolutely necessary. Here I have just mentioned two countries—France and Russia—which stand in the forefront in the approach to scientific problems, and which do not advocate fluoridation of water supplies.

Mr. Gray went on to say—

I have also a letter from Dr. Alfred Taylor, a research scientist at the University of Texas . . .

Texas is noted for many things, but more recently it has become noted as being the State from which the present President of the U.S.A. comes. The letter of Dr. Taylor is as follows:—

Our laboratory results demonstrated that even though fluoride is given in trace quantities, its toxic qualities become evident in susceptible mice, which receive this drug in their drinking water for most of their life span.

The reference to experiments being carried out on mice is nothing unusual. This is a procedure adopted by scientists all over the world, even in Australia. Experiments are always carried out on animals before they are tried out on humans. I will not read any more of that now because it starts to get technical and I was determined, when I commenced to speak, that I would not at any stage read technical opinions and advice because members would be unable to follow it. We are more easily able to accept opinions couched in simple terms.

Mr. Gray gave a quotation from publication No. 825 of 1962 issued by the Public Health Service of the United States of America. This again is an authoritative body. The following is to be found under the heading, "Fluoridated Drinking Waters," and I might add that this publication was issued by an organisation which is a proponent of the fluoridation of water supplies—

Adequate presumptive evidence from epidemiological studies and laboratory experimentation suggests that dental caries can be partially controlled by fluoridation of domestic water supplies.

It may be concluded in the light of present knowledge that such a procedure will not be associated with adverse physiological effects.

That was the finding which is in favour of fluoridation. I read it purposely because I do not want to exclude a quotation which presents the other side of the case a little. I ask members to pay particular attention to the next sentence which reads—

The full evaluation of the benefits of employing this method of caries control must await the final results of experimental studies now in progress.

In other words, the United States Public Health Department is not sure as to the ultimate effect on humans. What I am about to relate now will be interesting to members who might even laugh a little, as I did when I read it first. If the Federal member concerned had not guaranteed that this information was authentic, I would have thought he was drawing the long bow a little. In America, in towns like Pittsburgh, are water companies which supply people with non-fluoridated water. If a person has an objection to drinking fluoridated water, he buys non-fluoridated water from one of these companies. I feel that many of the things which exist there could exist only in America. Of course, in this regard we may have to have such companies here some day.

Mr. Gray received a letter from the Polar Water Company of Pittsburgh, and that town has had fluoridated water supplies for a lengthy period. Mr. Gray states that those who do not wish to drink water from the public supply, which has been fluoridated, can buy water supplied by this company. I wonder if members can guess the name of one of those who buy water from this company. He is one of the chief proponents of fluoridation, and the name will ring a bell in the minds of those who have made any study of the subject. He is Professor G. J. Cox, Professor of Dental Research at the University of Pittsburgh, who was largely responsible for fluoridation of public water supplies being adopted by the city council on the 26th November, 1951. Yet he will not drink it himself. He buys water from the Polar Water Company, and drinks non-fluoridated water.

This company supplied a list of some of its best-known customers and the one at the top of the list was Professor Cox. Mr. Gray comments that Professor Cox is prepared to introduce fluoride into the public water supplies, but is not prepared to drink it himself. I have a lot of respect for the engineer who recently stated that the treated sewage which is desired to deposit in the Swan River, was pure. In order to substantiate his statement he drank a glass of this water after it had been treated, to prove that the water was harmless. It has a great admiration for a person like that. I am afraid that no

matter how much faith I have in such a thing, I would not drink the water.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You accept the statements, which are third hand? You accept them as absolutely true?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: It is the official record of the proceedings of the House of Representatives, and the man whose opinions I have quoted guaranteed in the House that they were true. If we cannot accept such statements, what can we accept? I have given the names of the authorities and I also gave the word of Dr. Gibbs, who said that he could produce authority for every statement he made. He was honest enough to say so, if anything he said he was unable to substantiate.

If we cannot accept these definite statements, we certainly cannot accept the generalisation we find in the Minister's speech. He quoted no authority but used expressions such as "all authorities." He did not name one. I have named some and have quoted Dr. Gibbs who I would say is a reputable member of our Federal Parliament.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: So you do accept this absolutely and implicitly?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Not implicitly. I am telling the members of this House what he had to say. It rests with each member to decide whether he accepts what was said. I do so because I trust these men. They are public men; men of responsibility, and with no axe to grind. They are speaking as their conscience guides them, and what they say should be listened to. I do not ask members to do anything else but listen, and if possible make up their own minds—not be brainwashed and have their minds made up beforehand.

That is why I referred back to the statement of the Minister. So far as our party is concerned each member is free to speak and vote as he sees fit. I wish every member in the House were in the same boat. I have vivid recollections of another matter concerning which pressure was brought to bear on one member who expressed opposition to it. I feel that in a democracy pressure of that nature should not be exercised in a question like this which affects all people, not only the children whom it will benefit but also the elder folk who are likely to suffer injurious effects.

—All the arguments in the world might be submitted to indicate that these injurious effects will not arise, and I am prepared to listen to every word which is said by those who support fluoridation of water supplies. Although I am now speaking against fluoridation, if those in favour of it can convince me that they are right, I will vote with them. However, I would like them to study the authorities I have quoted and to say straightout that they do not accept the words of these public men in Parliament—our national Parliament. If we cannot accept their word,

and the authorities and documents they have presented, well it is a pretty poor old show.

Even the former Prime Minister (Sir Robert Menzies) joined in. Evidently he came to the rescue of a couple of his members who were finding it pretty heavy weather, and when he started in the following vein I put his comments aside. The first thing he said was—

I do not speak as an expert on this matter. I am the least of God's creatures in this field and still have a few of my own teeth.

I do not want to continue just for the sake of talking. When I rose to my feet I said that the Minister concluded his speech by saying that with absolute sincerity and complete confidence he commended the Bill to the House. I would accept the integrity and judgment of the Minister. I accept the fact that when he made that statement he was completely sincere.

I say that I oppose this Bill for the reasons I have given. It is an infringement of human liberties. Alternative remedies are available for the prevention of dental decay, and I feel there are other problems which I could refer to. I could refer, for example, to the question of smoking. So far as I am concerned, it is a matter for the individual to decide whether or not he wishes to smoke. People could look like the chimney at the East Perth power station all day long and it would not worry me, because it is their business.

Also, one can pick up reports at any time of the toll on the roads and read what is said to be the reason for it. If people like to drink, that is their business so far as I am concerned.

Only about a week ago, a cancer authority passed through Fremantle by boat and stated it was undeniable that lung cancer was caused to a large extent through excessive smoking.

The Hon. R. Thompson: The tobacco companies would disagree with that.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Of course the tobacco companies would disagree with that. I would say the question is the same with other of our social problems; we have social problems and we leave it to individuals to decide for themselves.

In this particular matter, I feel that if there were a proper programme of education for the mothers, with the same amount of publicity which has been given to fluoridation, we would get somewhere. I will be perfectly sincere and candid; I read practically every publication on this question that is in the magazine room and in the library, as well as everything that has appeared in articles in newspapers and so on, before I reached a decision.

We in this Chamber were invited to another place to hear the case for fluoridation, but we heard only one side and not the other. Probably this was when I became a rebel because nothing upsets me

more. I believe that if only one of my constituents were opposed to fluoridation and he said to me, "Mr. Dolan, I would like you to present my views, as one of your constituents and a member of the public, to the House," I would agree to present them. I would agree to do this whether I believed his point of view to be correct or not; even if I did not believe his views to be true I would still present them, because I feel people are entitled to be heard.

Although I have presented my views, it is not for that reason. I have presented them because I believe there is no necessity for fluoridation to be introduced, and because I believe there are other remedies which could be applied and which would benefit the teeth of the children. So far as the health of our children is concerned, in that respect I bow to none. I have spent almost a lifetime looking after the mental and physical welfare of children and I would do anything to ensure that not only they, but also all people, are safe when they drink fluoridated water. I oppose the Bill.

THE HON. V. J. FERRY (South-West) [3.43 p.m.]: The Bill before the House is one which has generated a great deal of public interest and we, as members of Parliament, have had a lot of opportunity to make our own assessment by weighing all the facts as they have been presented, or by weighing the facts which have been discovered through our own personal research on the subject.

Whilst we can quote at length from many experts in many fields if we wish, it reverts to the situation that we, as members of Parliament, are obliged at some point of time to make up our minds as to what our views are on a particular measure. Therefore, it is our responsibility, in our own humble way, to reach the point where we do make an assessment and decide to go one way or the other. I am quite sure in my own mind that I thoroughly agree with this Bill and I will support that statement with a few reasons as I proceed through the course of my address.

Might I say at the outset, as it has been said already during this debate, that people may be physically fit, although they have no teeth, or perhaps they have many caries, which are more commonly expressed as many decayed teeth. This may be true, but no one will convince me that caries improve health—far from it! In my personal experience, I realise that caries cause a great deal of suffering to the lives of many people from time to time.

I realise, too, that this measure is primarily directed towards the health of our younger generation, particularly the children. As adults, I am sure each and every one of us in some measure has felt during his lifetime—perhaps some

more than others—that it is his duty to make sacrifices for the younger citizens—for the children. In most cases we gladly do this, whether or not it is in fact infringing our personal liberty in some way or another. This is an endless field of sacrifice, particularly for parents. Even if one is not a parent, one still has a responsibility in this direction.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Then, apparently the honourable member considers that drinking fluoridated water represents a sacrifice.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.3 p.m.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: Prior to the afternoon tea suspension I was making some introductory remarks in regard to the Bill, and I shall now proceed to the more meaty part of my address. The first step in the discussion of the fluoridation of public water supplies is to clarify the issues. I have given the question a lot of thought and I have tried to answer six questions that seem to me to cover the main issues. Those questions are—

- (1) Is fluoridation an appropriate measure for a Government to introduce?
- (2) Is fluoridation necessary?
- (3) Is it safe?
- (4) Is it effective?
- (5) Can the engineers do it?
- (6) Can this measure be justified, legally and morally.

To all of these six questions I feel the answer is "Yes"—

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: I don't.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: —and this assumption can be supported by the resume I propose to advance.

I should now like to say something about public health patterns. The public health organisation, as a clear responsibility of government, emerged from the squalor and degradation of the industrial revolution. The industrial cities were built to the standards of the middle ages; there was no understanding of public health, the importance of proper drainage and sewage disposal, housing, ventilation, pure water, and other environmental factors. There was, until late in the 19th century, no understanding of the cause of the enormous disease problems perpetuated, if not created, by environmental conditions that the people of Western Australia cannot possibly conceive. In the absence of knowledge there can be no standards as we understand the term.

Nevertheless, government became a factor in public health during the last half of the 19th century, concentrating for the most part on laws for pure food and on the development of water supplies and on measures to improve social conditions. There was nothing much that could be done about disease problems

that had been the normal pattern of living for long and gloomy centuries.

Smallpox was still a huge problem. The plague had not returned to England and Europe after the disasters of the 17th century, and some outbreaks during the 18th century; but cholera was one of the more obvious problems of 19th century England—if I remember rightly, the last outbreak of cholera in London was as recent as 1892. The "normal" diseases—if one can call diseases "normal"—such as tuberculosis, whooping cough, typhoid, diphtheria, and gastro-enteritis, were accepted as inevitable.

Except for the existence of vast slums, this was also the public health pattern in Western Australia, and in other communities like it, towards the end of the 19th century. Cholera had come to Australia. Plague, the never-to-be-forgotten terror of public health history, had come to Australia, in the 1890s and would come to Western Australia in the 20th century. Typhoid had become an enormous problem in the 1890s—I think there were 1,395 deaths in the five-year period from 1896 to 1900, and that would be the equivalent today, if it were continued on a population basis, of 1,400 a year.

There were annual epidemics of diphtheria, whooping cough, and gastro-enteritis; a high rate of tuberculosis amounting to a permanent epidemic; an infant mortality rate of about 180 per 1,000 live births; and, worst of all, in many ways, there was an acceptance of the inevitability of disease problems that today cannot be understood by the parents of young children, and would not be tolerated anyway.

All this has changed. Why has it changed? There should be no need to tell the members of this House the reasons for the change. Typhoid has virtually disappeared, as have diphtheria, whooping cough, and gastro-enteritis, and other diseases causing death.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: What has this to do with fluoridation?

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: Tuberculosis is substantially under control. In recent years polio has virtually disappeared. The "headline" diseases of history—smallpox, the plague, and cholera—have all occurred in Australia, but they were never allowed to become serious problems.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: What has this to do with fluoridation?

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: The change in the public health pattern might well be summarised in the simple statement that the word "epidemic" has virtually disappeared from the vocabulary of the people of Western Australia. However, not a great number of people stop to consider how the changes came about. They did not just happen. Infectious diseases were brought under very real control by a com-

bination of government action, in the application of medical discoveries and advances, and with the people making their own immense contributions as the 20th century advanced.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: What has this to do with fluoride?

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: If the honourable member cares to wait for a moment she may realise what I am driving at.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: But what has it got to do with fluoride?

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: Consider typhoid. Medical science provided the understanding of bacteria, and engineers and chemists produced a method of killing harmful bacteria in water. Governments accepted the recommendations of their public health and engineering services, and the chlorination of public water supplies became a standard procedure. This has removed Western Australia's complex water supply system as a source of disease spread.

Medical science pointed to milk supplies as a means of spreading typhoid. Chemists and technicians produced the pasteurisation method to kill the harmful bacteria in milk. Governments required milk to be pasteurised under rigid standards that seldom break down, and milk has been removed as a threat to public health as a result of the system in operation today. The people still need to keep milk protected after the bottles have been delivered, and the pasteurisation of milk supplies does not remove the final responsibility for milk cleanliness from the individual person.

It is realised that we as citizens who use milk in our homes have to exercise care in keeping milk in refrigerators and the like. However, basically, there has been an improvement in health through the pasteurisation of milk and the people play their part, as I have already indicated. This is a fine example of how the average citizen can carry public health methods further by taking care in his own home.

Typhoid, as I said earlier, is practically a non-existent disease today. Over a 10-year period from 1956 to 1965, there were only three deaths in Western Australia. There were two deaths in 1958 and one in 1959. In years gone by typhoid, cholera, and other diseases were responsible for the deaths of large numbers of people.

Let us consider polio and whooping cough and diphtheria. Medical science produced a good vaccine. This was tested by government agencies and a service was provided to take the vaccine to the people. The people used the service provided by the Government, and the vaccine, and polio disappeared. For practical purposes, the others I mentioned—whooping cough and diphtheria—have disappeared, and for the

same reasons. This is because of the acceptance by the people of the treatment available and, as a result of the treatment, there is virtually no polio in our community today.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Dr. Salk is an anti-fluoridationist.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: That is what I was wondering about.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: That could well be.

The Hon. R. Thompson: It is true.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I am not Dr. Salk, and I am making the speech at the moment. We tend to think of public health at government level in terms of public health departments, but government responsibility in public health extends beyond a central health department. The Agricultural Department, with its herd-testing programme—I mentioned the question of milk a moment or two ago—has made, and is still making extremely important contributions to the control of bovine tuberculosis. The Education Department—and I think Mr. Dolan would agree with me that the Education Department must continue to be in the very front rank in this connection—has steadily increased the health knowledge of the community, and must move into the front rank of public health agencies if we are to make the same kind of advances in the future as we have made in the past 60 years.

I turn now from the country because I have already discussed the question of agricultural research leading to improved food supplies and this, in itself, is an essential public health work. As regards the cities, the departments concerned with town planning, housing, child welfare, and police, have a great deal to do with the question of public health today, because public health extends beyond the relatively narrow concept of the prevention of infectious diseases.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: But this is not a public health measure. It is a controversial opinion.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: Sixty years ago this would have been heresy, because disease had whole societies by the throat. This measure, I believe, will be the means of stopping the epidemic of tooth decay, and what I have just said about government departments is an illustration of the depth and breadth in Government involvement in the health of the whole community. As regards dental caries, or tooth decay as it is commonly known, we are very much at a disadvantage, particularly in Western Australia. Statistics prove this horrible fact and it appears that the people of this community must play their part. Parliament itself has made immense contributions and, after all, the departments work under the authority of Parliament. It is upon Parliament that the progress of public health, by enlightened legislation, has depended.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: That depends upon who is who, and upon which side one sits.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: All this means—and only the periphery of this huge subject has been touched—is that the responsibility of government in the development of public health standards, and the application of proven methods of control of disease and other problems has been firmly established—profitably established—for over 100 years. When I say “profitably” I mean for the good of the community in which we live.

It means that the responsibility of government is to keep public health perspectives; that we should move with the times, and keep abreast with what is going on. This means, clearly, that the Government has a responsibility to keep public health patterns and perspectives under constant review. Let us not go back to the dark ages. We should extend the range of proven systems of prevention to problems that would once have seemed unimportant when compared with disease producing heavy mortality in all age groups.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: Because we have a big company with a by-product which it wishes to sell.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: Against typhoid, diphtheria, whooping cough, tuberculosis, and polio, dental caries was insignificant. It is something we have accepted, more or less; though toothache I can never accept completely. Against the blank space created by the virtual elimination of some, and the effective control of others, dental caries emerges as the last of the great disease problems affecting children to be brought under control.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: What about the common cold?

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I hope it will not be long before we can also nail that in its coffin. Any Government would be failing in its responsibility to the community if it were to neglect this problem by refusing to use the public health system that has been built up in such a relatively short time, and which has achieved so much. This, none of us can deny; not even Mrs. Hutchison.

Fluoridation of water supplies is an appropriate measure for any Government to introduce. This Bill, for the extension of proven public health methods to the control of dental disease, stands securely on a solid foundation of public health achievement that has been growing stronger for over a century. This system of public health protection is one that the people trust; it has delivered the goods. I support the Bill.

THE HON. R. F. HUTCHISON (North-East Metropolitan) [4.20 p.m.]: I do not know what Mr. Perry was trying to tell the House, and I certainly could not come to a conclusion as to what he meant. Some parts of his speech sounded very learned,

though many of them had nothing to do with fluoride or with tooth decay.

I am completely and utterly opposed to having fluoride inflicted on me. Other members can think for themselves in this matter. I do not wish to drink fluoridated water. A lot has been said about the teeth of the children in Cue. I would point out, however, that I spent all my childhood in Cue, and I now have a set of false teeth. The children there have as many decayed teeth as they do anywhere else. The water in Cue, which is supposed to be fluoridated, did not do any public good that I could see; and nobody has proved that it did.

When I started my family, with every child of mine I lost a number of teeth. I was told by the doctors that this was a condition which was brought about by my own health. I began to lose my teeth when I was 20.

The Hon. C. E. Griffiths: You would not lose them these days.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: People are still losing their teeth. We never heard about fluoride until the Alcoa company came to this State. I have been to America, and I have heard all the arguments advanced there. What we are discussing is nothing but a by-product which a big company seeks to turn to its own advantage.

The Hon. C. E. Griffiths: That is not right.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: Fluoride is a poison. How does anybody know whether it protects the teeth of children? We all know that mothers can obtain tablets which can be given to their children if they so desire. What is wrong with that? Why should we expose the rest of the community to the ills associated with fluoridated water?

I am afraid I do not have too much confidence in the public men who will be responsible for fluoridating the water supplies. I have seen them make so many blunders and mistakes that it would take a brave person to say that he would implicitly rely on the fact that these men knew what they were about. I say that with some truth.

I have children with perfect teeth, but I also have two children who have dentures, as I do myself. It evidently depends on something more than the water one drinks. As members know, my children are not teenagers now; my eldest son is in his 50s, and he has really good teeth. The arguments that have been presented to us are so much a contradiction of the truth, that I am afraid I cannot accept them.

We have a Government which seeks to impose on us anything which will benefit big business. That is the Government's Bible.

The Hon. H. R. Robinson: It is a pretty good Government.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: This legislation is due to come into force in 1957.

The Hon. C. E. Griffiths: You seem to be going back a bit.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: I am aging and I can be excused for the error. Ten years means nothing to me now! All I can say is that if a Labor Government is returned the legislation certainly will not be promulgated.

The Hon. R. Thompson: There will be a referendum of the people.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: I would rather not see it promulgated at all. The papers I have in my hand comprise about half the correspondence that has been sent to me. They are very voluminous and I would not attempt to read all of them, though I would very much like to do so. I have only one letter and a little booklet which supports the case for fluoride; all the others are against it.

The Hon. E. C. House: Read the letter we got this morning.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: I have a copy of the *Daily News* which contains an article on the subject and a very nice photograph of the Minister.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Which Minister?

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: The Minister looks very confident, but I hope that this is one occasion on which his confidence will not be justified. The Government should be ashamed to take the risk of imposing something on people which will do them more harm than good; particularly when they are over the teething stage, and in view of the effect it is likely to have on older people. There is a possibility of their developing all kinds of diseases and pains associated with fluoride. I will never stand for the introduction of fluoride. I have here an article from a French paper, and I will read one paragraph from it—

It would appear to me that perhaps financial interests have played a major role in sponsoring the one-sided story communicated through the major news media. This, and perhaps the trend for these agencies to jump on any "bandwagon" may have been instigating factors . . .

On a small personal survey, out of about fifty medical practitioners who supported fluoridation actively, signed petitions, etc., none of these were able to justify their position. At least half of these admitted that they were not really well-enough informed to take any stand. About half of the fifty reversed their opinions after having read the editorial. It is quite frightening to note that there were the so-called experts who endorsed the "fluoridation experiment."

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Who wrote that article?

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: The Editor-in-Chief, University of Ottawa Medical Journal. Here is a most stirring letter which I received this morning.

This industry cannot bury this waste product for that would destroy plant life in the surroundings; they cannot dump it in the sea for that would destroy all sea life. What would be more convenient and more profitable than to sell it for big money and add it to the drinking water of human beings? Sincere proponents have been confused by sales promoters of sodium fluoride into thinking this synthetic chemical, made from aluminium filing tailing, is the same as natural, calcium type, fluoride, which is beneficial when found in the diet. This, however, is completely untrue: Sodium Fluoride is not a natural product and it is not found naturally in any part of the world, it is not a constituent part of our teeth or bones. It must be artificially manufactured. It is absolutely foreign to the human system. The aluminium industry is forcing tax payers to pay over fifteen million dollars a year for this waste product. The only use for it heretofore has been (a) As a rat poison; (b) by cattlemen to partially de-sex their bulls so they will be more tractable; (c) by the Russian and Nazi secret police to make their prisoners stupid so they can be more easily brainwashed. The standard label for Sodium Fluoride from the factory reads: "Corrosive Liquid." When in contact with the skin it can cause painful and slow healing burns. Exposure to more than 50 parts of the fumes per million of air is known to be fatal in 30 to 60 minutes. You are dealing with a substance so corrosive that it will eat through a quarter inch steel plate in a few minutes.

I would now like to quote a paragraph from a paper by the Anti-Fluoridation Council of Australia and New Zealand. It reads—

- (2) Also, there is now sufficient evidence to justify a presumption of medical hazard due to long term toxic effects of artificially fluoridated water.

Professor Amies has since reaffirmed this pronouncement.

Dr. G. L. Waldbott, an American specialist in allergies, of world repute, has just published a book of documented evidence entitled, "A Struggle with Titans—Forces behind Fluoridation", which reveals that:

- (1) There are scientific records of serious harm and death

from drinking fluoridated water.

- (2) Fluoridation does not reduce dental decay as claimed.
- (3) Fluoridation was originally promoted by industry.
- (4) Scientific evidence against fluoridation has been suppressed.
- (5) There has been very serious intimidation of medical and dental scientists who have opposed fluoridation, and
- (6) Because there has been so little scientific research into the harmful side effects of fluoridation, it could ultimately be a major disaster to mankind.

If we are expected to take notice of the article in the paper in which the Minister's photograph appears, why should we not take notice of all these other articles which I have read? They have just as much claim to be regarded as being correct as has the Minister's article. In the *Daily News* the Minister said—

The Government's proposed fluoridation Bill will come before the State Parliament soon. If it is passed the water supply engineers will have a problem on their hands.

I stop at that point, but there is a lot more of it. What the public does not know is that in this House the Liberal-Country Party Government has absolute power with its majority either to pass or defeat whatever it likes. There has never been a Labor Party majority in the Legislative Council. The boundaries are so gerrymandered that it is impossible for Labor to have a majority.

The Hon. H. R. Robinson: What has that got to do with fluoridation?

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: It is the reason why the Minister can, with confidence, write things like I have just quoted. We could not stop this Bill from being passed unless the Liberal Party or the Country Party voted with us. The present position is nothing to smile about; and it is one of the reasons why I endeavoured to enter this House in the first place. I refer to my fight against the undemocratic Legislative Council in Western Australia.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member cannot reflect upon this Chamber.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: I did not think that telling the truth would be a reflection.

The PRESIDENT: Standing Orders forbid it.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: That is something else against the Upper House. The following is a letter I received from

I. Skipworth, President of the Pure Water Association:—

Please find enclosed literature containing evidence against Fluoridation. I am forwarding several copies of each publication just in case there may be other members who may be interested enough in the subject to read them.

We are appreciative of the support you gave us in the last struggle and look forward to your continued support in the future.

I say it is a wicked thing that this Bill can go through simply because we have not the power to stop it.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: Mr. Dolan said you are free to vote as you like.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: So we are.

The Hon. C. E. Griffiths: So are we.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: The following appeared in the *Daily News* of the 6th September, under the heading "Fluoride and basic rights":—

Fluoridation of public water supplies represents compulsory mass medication without precedent in what we claim is a democratic community. Further, the compulsory medication of a whole populace, variable in individual response, regardless of individual age, —

Now we see the crocodile tears that sometimes flow here. The aged people are causing me concern.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: No doubt you are a good judge of crocodile tears.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: Continuing—

— state of teeth, general health, rate of consumption of water and so on, is both unscientific and unethical. The protection of our basic rights is, or should be, the first duty of our elected representatives. We should be able to rely on them to understand the nature of democracy well enough to keep politics out of our private lives and not try to extend their powers of collective decision to those intimate details where freedom of personal choice is essential.

Their role should not be to force me to drink what I freely choose not to drink, which, in effect, they are doing if public water supplies are fluoridated. The passion to regulate the lives of others is deep-seated in many individuals. When this is based on political expedience it is bad enough, but when it is inspired by an idealism which wishes to impose benefits on others, it can become dangerous.

Passive acceptance of the right of any government or local authority to implement compulsory medication is to sacrifice a fundamental principle of democracy. Once the principle of personal responsibility is abandoned,

the way is wide open for Big Brother to take over in a big way. I have entered the lists on the assumption that there still exist in this State others besides myself who desire to preserve some of the small amount of personal freedom and responsibility still remaining to us.—The Rev. B. R. Adderley, Nannup.

I could go on quoting for hours, as I have received so many personal expressions of opinion. People do not write of their personal opinions unless they are in earnest. If they are not in earnest they just do not bother.

I have here a cutting from an American paper headed, "Alcoa Now Sells Fluoride 'Direct.'" I am now getting close to my real objection. The article reads as follows:—

One of the most extraordinary features of fluoride promotion has been Alcoa's persistent denials that they were its first champion. In a letter to Mr. C. A. Barden, 5-12-57, H. P. Bonebrake, Chemical Sales Manager, stated:

"Alcoa in no way promotes the sale of fluorides for water fluoridation and the Company does not sell Sodium Fluoride directly to any municipality."

This shows that my reference to Alcoa is sound common sense. What I have read was contained in an American paper and it was about Alcoa and fluoride.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That was answered in a reply to a question asked by Mr. Tonkin some weeks ago. Did you read the date of that paper?

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: It is an American paper, dated August, 1957.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You contend the Alcoa plant is there so that we can fluoridate the water supplies?

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: No, I do not contend that. I am not as silly as the Minister would try to make out.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You are the best judge of that.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: It is the practice of big business to turn whatever it can into a profit.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The honourable member—

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Minister will have an opportunity to reply at a later stage of the debate.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: There are many more quotes I could make, but I would be simply talking for the sake of talking. I do not want to read all of these personal letters; I have read enough to convince members that public feeling is very real, and there is an amount of revulsion in connection with this matter. To me the whole thing is abhorrent. I am a free citizen and I will not be compelled to take anything into my body which I do not want to take; and nobody can tell me that

fluoride is not a poison. Therefore it should not be given wholesale to the public in drinking water, especially as some people drink more than others. I drink a lot of water and perhaps may drink three to six pints per day, while another person may drink two, and another perhaps 10. Where is the levelling out? What is safe and what is not safe? There is no answer. It is simply a question of the Government saying, "We will impose this on you." I have already pointed out to members that this will be the case, because we cannot stop the Government.

However, if there is a change of Government I am assured by our leaders that fluoride will not be used. The town of Cue has been mentioned over and over again; and what has been said about it is a lot of rot. Such a lot of nonsense has been said that people believe there is something in it. I was bred on Cue water, but lost my teeth when I was having my family and now have dentures. I have children with good teeth but two have false teeth. So where is the sense in it?

Before I finish, I wish to state that I rebel at being forced to drink fluoridated water; and I am in sympathy with the people who are putting up a fight against it. This is a situation which would not have come about if big business were not interested in the profit motive. I do not think the Minister knows enough about the subject to be as definite as he is. If he were able to examine the position scientifically, I am sure he would be found wanting. I am against the Bill.

I know the measure will be passed, but I hope a spanner will be thrown in the works. If there is a change of Government we will be able to do something about it, because we would have a majority in another place and fluoridation would be defeated there; the matter would not come to this House. This precious Upper House would not have a say in it. We will soon see the result of might against right.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: What a terrible time you would have if Labor were in office. You would have nothing to complain about.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: This Bill will be passed because the Liberal-Country Party Government wants it passed and can impose its will upon the country.

THE HON. G. E. D. BRAND (Lower North) [4.41 p.m.]: I wish to support this Bill. This subject has been a favourite of mine for a long time. Before I entered Parliament, I attended a few lectures given by Mr. Bonney and a dental team in Kalgoorlie. At that time, they were lecturing throughout the country and making the general public *au fait* in regard to fluoridation. People were invited to ask questions so they could find

out what they wanted to know. This is a popular Bill.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Did you say it was a popular Bill?

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: I mean popular in the sense that everybody is speaking to it.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: That would have been the understatement of 1966.

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: It is popular because everybody is speaking to it. I listened to Mr. Ferry speak of medical history from the earliest times—in the 19th Century—when specialists in Europe and other places made new discoveries.

The Hon. R. Thompson: They were modern times.

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: People who made discoveries in early times were scoffed at and were not recognised until many years afterwards. In those days the causes of a great deal of sickness and death were the touching of patients with unclean hands and uncleanliness generally. The fluoridation of water supplies will help children right from conception. They will be protected from dental caries or tooth decay.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Why not give them tablets?

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: I will come to that in about an hour. It is interesting to read in *Hansard* what Dr. Henn had to say about fluoridation. It is possible for us to gain quite a deal of knowledge from what we read. A dentist in Kalgoorlie gave me a booklet on the fluoridation of water supplies which was reprinted by permission of the British Dental Association. It consists of questions and answers, and the opinions expressed are unbiased. Mr. Dolan said the Minister did not give sufficient proof that the fluoridation of water supplies was beneficial, so I shall read the first question and answer from this booklet—

1. Q. Has it been proved conclusively that fluoride in drinking water really does reduce the incidence of dental decay?

A. Yes. This is no longer in doubt. Studies by H. Trendley Dean and his collaborators (1942) of 7,257 white children, aged 12 to 14 years, in 21 cities in four States in U.S.A., showed an inverse relationship between the fluoride content of the drinking water and the incidence of dental caries. In the low-fluoride areas dental caries rates were high, but dropped rapidly as the fluoride concentration in the water rose until about one part per million (1 p.p.m.) was reached, after which there was little further improvement. A study by Miss J. R. Forrest (1956) in this country, though on a smaller scale, gave similar results. The references of further con-

firmatory studies in this and other countries are given below—

1. Dean, H. T.
2. Forrest, J. R.
3. Ainsworth, N. J.
4. Clarke, J. H. Chalmers
5. Cowan, K.
6. Dirks, O. Backer
7. Hornung, H.
8. James, P. M. C.
9. Ockerse, T.
10. Weaver, R.

He has been quoted as being an anti-fluoridationist—

11. Report on the Conduct of the Fluoridation Studies in the United Kingdom (H.M.S.O.), July, 1962.

There are many questions answered in this booklet, and it is completely unbiased. I think Mrs. Hutchison mentioned fish, and there is a reference to fish in this book.

Another question is, "Is fluoridated water harmful to fish?" The answer is as follows:—

In Indianapolis the Water Company has placed an aquarium in the entrance lobby of their offices showing healthy goldfish living in fluoridated town water. As regards salt water fish, sea water already contains approximately 1 p.p.m. of fluoride.

That is our fishy story for today. We know that Mrs. Hutchison is one who loves children and loves to help them in her own particular sphere.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: I like other people, too.

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: I am sure that Mrs. Hutchison would like to help everybody. I am positive that by adding fluoride to the water, children will be saved a lot of the awful pain of toothache, from the time of their birth.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: How are you positive?

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: I am positive.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: How can you possibly be positive?

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: I am positive; and I have lost my place in my notes.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Order!

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: I cannot make out why Mrs. Hutchison is against this measure when it will be so beneficial to children.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Mr. Dolan is against it too. What about him?

The PRESIDENT: Order! Order! Will Mrs. Hutchison desist from interjecting. She has made one speech and I request that she allow Mr. Brand to make his speech.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: I was pointing out that Mr. Dolan had spoken, too.

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: I have endeavoured to point out the good things done by Mrs. Hutchison for children, but I think the children should be helped further. I do not think that any honourable member goes to a dentist with love in his heart. Many of us who have to go to the dentist require a stimulant.

The Hon. R. Thompson: What would your favourite stimulant be?

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: I do not have false teeth so I do require a stimulant. If I had received fluoride when I was a child I would not have had to go to the dentist as frequently as I did.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: How do you know? I know mothers who have given their children fluoride for six years, and those children still go to the dentist.

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: I do not know; my mother did not give me fluoride. She did not talk very much, either.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Order!

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: My mother was very careful about allowing me to eat lollies, and such things. Until about the age of 12 years, my teeth were a healthy shade of green. My father was—

The Hon. J. Dolan: Irish!

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: No, he was not. It must have been because of my mother's care, and because of a good diet, which prevented me from having much trouble with my teeth when I was young. It was mentioned in another place, in 1963, that Cue was well noted because of the fluoride content of the water.

The Hon. R. Thompson: What sort of fluoride? Sodium fluoride?

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: It is all fluoride. The latest figure from Cue shows that the water contains 1.2 parts of fluoride per million.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Calcium, natural, or sodium fluoride?

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: It is fluoride.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: There you are; you know nothing about it.

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: That is what I said; both of us know nothing about it!

The PRESIDENT: Order! Order!

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: A survey was taken in the Murchison area, and I will quote the remarks of the member for Murchison, made in another place in 1963. They are as follows:—

Let us now return to the town of Cue. When the water supply was established it was also taken to the town of Day Dawn, where there were approximately 10,000 people. The numbers have of course declined tremendously since then. Recently, however, it was decided by the Faculty of Dental Science to carry out a survey in the Cue and Meekatharra

districts; and I quote Mr. D. G. Kailis, who was responsible for this survey, and who states—

The Cue and Meekatharra survey was carefully conducted and only children conforming to the following criteria were included:—

- (1) Only children whose mothers were resident in the area during confinement, were selected.
- (2) Children not in continuous residence from the age of birth to five years were excluded.
- (3) Only children who drank naturally fluoridated water were included.
- (4) Children absent from the area for more than three months were excluded.
- (5) Children who had been on fluoride tablets were excluded.

He went on to say—

I would like to stress that the questionnaire was supervised by two Public Health sisters a month prior to the survey.

Dr. Silva and I then analysed the questionnaires and selected the sample. The same criteria were used for the selection of the Meekatharra sample of school children, but of course in Meekatharra the exclusion of children on fluoride tablets was most important.

The following are the results of those investigations:—

Aim of Investigations:

To compare the caries life experience of pre-school and school age children in Cue and Meekatharra.

Choice of Towns:

These two towns were chosen for the following reasons:—

- (1) Cue has a naturally fluoridated bore water supply containing 1.25 p.p.m. F. This concentration of fluoride has been proved in many countries to be the optimal concentration of fluoride in water which ingested from birth, decreases caries incidence between 50 per cent. and 60 per cent.
- (2) Meekatharra was used as a control area, and its bore water supply contained 0.4 p.p.m. F. which is considered suboptimal.
- (3) Both towns are in the same geographic area, experiencing the same climatic conditions, socio-economic status and have similar industries.

Personnel Examined:

- (1) A total of 90 children were examined for caries, 38 in Cue and

52 in Meekatharra. Their ages ranged from one to 15 years.

- (2) Only children who had been born and raised in Meekatharra and Cue were selected for the investigation.
- (3) Of these, only those children who had drunk the town's water supply from birth and who had not been given any fluoride tablets were chosen.

	Pre-School	School	Total
Cue	22	16	38
Meekatharra	12	40	52
	34	56	90

Records Obtained:

The following table shows the caries life experience (teeth that have been affected by decay from birth) in Cue and Meekatharra children per 100 teeth . . .

I shall not read all the statistics, except to point out that in Cue among pre-school age children 4.14 per 100 teeth were decayed, or else were extracted early in life, or were filled. In Meekatharra the number per 100 teeth was 12.5 in the same category. The total percentage of teeth affected by caries in the case of Cue was approximately 12 per cent.; and 94 out of 784 teeth were so affected. In the case of Meekatharra 382 out of 1,181 teeth were affected by caries, or approximately 32 per cent.

Regarding the proportion of pre-school children affected by caries, in Cue 17 out of 22 pre-school children were completely free from caries; while in Meekatharra six out of 12 pre-school children were similarly placed. Turning to the proportion of school children affected by caries, in the case of Cue two out of 16 children were free from caries, while in Meekatharra no school children were free from caries.

On the proportion of decayed tooth surfaces, in Cue 15 surfaces were affected per 100 teeth, while in Meekatharra 47 surfaces were affected per 100 teeth.

I draw attention to the general conclusions contained in that survey. They are as follows:—

General Conclusions.

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

- (3) Using Meekatharra as a base line, which can be done as it has similar climatic, socio-economic and industrial conditions to Cue, the overall caries experience of the children examined shows a reduction in Cue of approximately 62 per cent.

- (4) This investigation has been rewarding and merits further work, especially in those towns in the area with less or no natural occurring fluoride in the water supplies.

There is a lot more, but I will not go further. I will now read to the House a letter received by me. The person who wrote it not only blamed the Government and myself, but he also blamed Mrs. Brand for introducing fluoride. The letter is as follows:—

10 Balwarra Avenue,
Dianella.
4th September, 1966.

Mr. and Mrs. George Brand,

Your intention to Fluoridate our water supply is a sad disappointment to me. Have you considered that whereas this Fluoridation may help some, there is a wealth of evidence to indicate that many people in the older groups who have ailments will be seriously affected.

It has been proven that Fluorides can damage Brain Cells, Kidneys, Reproduction, Thyroid Glands and last but not least the Liver.

In my case I am so concerned, that I will have to install rainwater tanks for my own water supply, although this is very inconvenient to me and will cost money which I can ill afford. There are many others who are against drinking this water who cannot possibly afford to install their own water supply.

After all, people who are in favour of Fluoride can give their young children tablets and these are the only section of the community which can possibly benefit from Fluoride. The danger in adding Fluorides to our water is that some people drink perhaps five or six times more water than others and can therefore get a dangerous dosage.

Why have 170 communities around the world discontinued Fluoridation after trying it?

The Hon. J. M. Thomson: How many communities discontinued?

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: The number to discontinue was 170, but we do not know how true that is. With some assistance, I was able to reply to that letter as follows:—

Thank you for your letters and the information regarding views on fluoridation.

dation. At the outset, let me reassure you on the safety of fluoridation. I am impressed with the weight of evidence presented by health authorities, particularly the World Health Organisation which has stated "there has never been a public health measure which has had so much testing in time and extent before being introduced to the public as has fluoridation".

There has been some grievous harm perpetrated on some old people, not by fluoridation, but by the fear-mongering of anti-fluoridation literature. There is currently a case in Perth who last month smelled and tasted fluoride in the water supply and went ill with kidney trouble which he claims was caused by fluoride poisoning. When he began drinking tank water the symptoms disappeared. No fluoride has been added to our water but this man had read anti-fluoridation pamphlets and had read of the Government's intention to seek permission to fluoridate. The anti-fluoridationists must accept some blame for this man's condition.

The safety of the measure has been well and truly investigated before being recommended by the National Health and Medical Research Council to the Australian States. If there is any harm occasioned by fluoridation you can rest assured that I will work to have it discontinued. So far there has been no authenticated case of harm in Tasmania from which the Bruce H. Brown article appears to have emanated in spite of fluoridation having been in operation there for many years at Beaconsfield and more recently at Hobart. This safety is in keeping with the safety demonstrated in New South Wales and in 30 other countries including America where more than 60 million people are drinking water either naturally or artificially fluoridated.

The Bruce H. Brown article is a new one to me but quotes some old names whose views on fluoridation have been investigated by competent authorities and, having been scientifically evaluated, been discounted for want of evidence. This applies also to Dr. Waldbott. The report of the hearings of the American House of Representatives presents no new evidence which has not been investigated by the United States Public Health Department which still advocates fluoridation. It is interesting to note that Detroit, where Waldbott lives, is fluoridated.

It is disheartening to hear you have been scared to such an extent that you contemplate the expense of installing a private water supply when such is completely unnecessary. There

will be no damage to brain, kidney, reproduction, thyroid and liver, nor to any other tissue. It will, however, improve teeth and bone and, in fact, the advantages to the bones of old people and in preventing the bone changes occurring during the menopause has not been publicised enough. There is no question of a dangerous effect from drinking fluoridated waters no matter how much a person drinks because the body has a physiological control and he could not possibly drink enough water to accumulate enough fluoride to harm him.

I have not checked to see if your figure of 170 is correct for places having once started and discontinued fluoridation. The number doesn't matter; the reason does! It has never been discontinued because it is not safe. These cases you mention have occurred mainly in U.S.A. where local government often controls education and water supply and as local governments change so do their policies. It is interesting to note in this context that, in 1964, nine U.S. water supplies discontinued fluoridation but nine which had discontinued restarted fluoridating.

It is not my intention to knock all anti-fluoridationists as cranks and in the lunatic fringe, but I must admit I get very cross with the fear-mongering, with its definite relation to psycho-somatic disturbances, which has been associated with some anti-propaganda. I hope this letter will reassure you on the question of safety and that you have no cause for concern; but do not hesitate to write if there are any particular points on which you may need more reassurance.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Who wrote that?

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: I did, but I did get some help with it.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: The important thing is: Did you sign it?

The Hon. R. Thompson: What degrees do you hold to compile a statement such as that?

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: For some weeks I have been collecting newspaper cuttings from articles on fluoride, but I am not going to read all of them to the House.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Have you asked any of your constituents what they think of fluoridation?

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: In one or two of the newspaper cuttings I have collected, statements have been made that fluoridation is of no benefit to the community, and reasons are given. Other people are reported as having asked: "Why not issue fluoride tablets, because we do

not agree with the principle of compulsion?"

The Hon. R. Thompson: I wonder whether you could send a copy of them to the 7,101 people who have signed the petition which I have here.

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: Some people desire fluoride tablets to be issued to the community free of charge, but some do not. Others want to know whether the children will get enough fluoride. Others have also mentioned thalidomide, but they do not actually say that fluoridation of water supplies is not beneficial. Other people state quite clearly that they are wholeheartedly in favour of fluoridation, but they do not give any reasons. A letter from Mr. Taylor, the President of the Australian Dental Association (W.A. Branch), which appeared in *The West Australian*, makes interesting reading. I believe fluoridation would be beneficial for children, and I hope members will vote according to their conscience, and will be governed by their hearts and not their heads.

THE HON. C. R. ABBEY (West) [5.5 p.m.]: I support the measure, because I believe I should do so in the interests of all people in this State, particularly children. If we accept our positions in Parliament as the representatives of the people we have to support this Bill—

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Speak for yourself!

The Hon. C. R. ABBEY: —and that is the reason why I intend to vote for this measure. Responsibility is something which some people find hard to accept, but I do not find it difficult. There has been a great mass of literature published setting out arguments for and against the fluoridation of water supplies, and many of these publications have been quoted by members in this Chamber. In addition, the Press has published many articles on the subject, and I am absolutely convinced that the weight of evidence is in favour of fluoridation.

The Hon. J. M. Thomson: Of water supplies?

The Hon. C. R. ABBEY: Yes, fluoridation of water supplies. The taking of fluoride by other means undermines the benefit of facility of fluoridation of water supplies. Most people freely admit that fluoride can be of great benefit to children, but many quibble only over the methods by which fluoride should be ingested. It is clear to me that there are methods which can be used by those who resent, or who are not in favour of fluoridation of water supplies. One member suggested that a water tank could be used for storing unfluoridated water. The initial cost of purchasing a rainwater tank, of course, would be rather expensive for the purpose of having unfluoridated water, but for those who consider that general fluorida-

tion of water supplies is wrong, that is one method which they can use to suit their own convenience.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Why should we do that? Why should not those who are in favour of the fluoridation of water supplies purchase water tanks for themselves and add fluoride to the water?

The PRESIDENT: There are far too many interjections and I ask that they cease.

The Hon. C. R. ABBEY: I agree with you, Mr. President. Every member can make his speech at the proper time. Those who express their fears of fluoridation of water supplies have my sympathy, but they have every right to express their opinion, and I have every right to express mine in favour of fluoridation of water supplies. It is well for people to listen to the arguments advanced both for and against the fluoridation of water supplies.

In the interim, from the time the first Bill to provide for the fluoridation of water supplies was first introduced and the introduction of this measure which is now before us, all members have given this subject a great deal of thought, and have collected much information on it. Although the Minister generalised a little, when he introduced the Bill I thought he gave a clear explanation of the reasons advanced by the Government for bringing the Bill before Parliament. Those in government are responsible for bringing forward measures which they consider will be for the good of the community, and on some occasions it takes real fortitude to do this.

Those people who do not desire to install a rainwater tank in which to store unfluoridated water, and who are fearful of drinking water that is fluoridated, can adopt a simple method of their own to extract fluoride from the water. However, I very much doubt, when the Bill is passed, that they will bother about it. The antagonism that has been shown against this measure has developed into a kind of crusade by the people who are objecting, because they are intent on the defeat of the Bill.

The Health Education Council of Western Australia has available methods which can be used to remove fluoride from the water supply, and any interested person can obtain from the council a copy of an article taken from *The Medical Officer*, volume 110, dated the 6th September, 1963. This article reads as follows:—

"DO-IT-YOURSELF" DEFLUORIDATOR

The GUARDIAN of 26th August publishes instructions for a cheap "do-it-yourself" method of defluoridating water based on a full version drawn up by Dr. J. H. Fremlin, reader in physics at Birmingham University, who, whilst himself in favour of fluoridation, thinks it may be worth while to make available for the time

being a means by which fluoride can be removed from water "so that the peace of mind of the small disturbed minority can be protected."

The GUARDIAN'S reporter writes:

"All you need is two pounds of bonemeal, a gravy strainer, a cocoa tin, a plastic funnel, and a jam jar.

"Any handyman who learns the principles (scientific as distinct from ethical) of taking fluoride from water could devise his own equipment, but Dr. Fremlin has worked out for the rest of us a set of simple instructions.

"The first step, as stated, is to heat two pounds of bonemeal, which can be purchased for 9d. a pound from any gardening shop. (In a preliminary experiment, Dr. Fremlin took the bone of a Sunday joint and smashed it up with a hammer—a troublesome procedure which he does not recommend.)

"Before heating, however, the bonemeal should be sifted vigorously in a gravy strainer or flour sieve to remove all the dust. The meal must then be heated sufficiently 'to carbonize its organic content' (to turn it black). This can be done by placing it in a cocoa tin and burying it in the domestic fire, preferably overnight in a slow combustion stove.

The Hon. C. E. Griffiths: One would die of thirst by the time one did all that.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. C. R. ABBEY: The article continues—

"The tin, it is emphasised, 'should have a lid to keep out ash, etc., but if the lid is close fitting, as in a vacuum-packed coffee tin, one or two fine holes should be made in it to allow hot gases to escape. A drawing pin will do this effectively.'

"Having thus prepared the meal, the next stage is to fill three-quarters of a jam jar with it, and insert the funnel. The water is then poured into the jar and allowed to spill over the brim into a jug or basin. It is recommended that 'for full efficiency, water from the tap should be run into the funnel at a rate not more than a pint in five minutes, little more than a half-drip.'

LONG LIFE

"A more sophisticated method is to use, instead of a jam jar, a plastic bottle with holes bored at each end and fitted with a nylon gauze filter. ('Part of an old nylon stocking will do admirably, though two or three layers of the finer gauzes may be desirable.') The bottle can then be hung from the tap. The 'recipe' concludes:

"The limit to the capacity of such devices has not yet been found, but either of those described should give enough drinking water for a family of

four for at least six months before a fresh change of bonemeal is required."

Dr. Fremlin has sent copies of his instructions to opponents of fluoridation, and the GUARDIAN states that he has other copies available.

Of course, de-ionisers—a mechanical device to take fluoride out of water—can be used by those who reject fluoridation. Although what I have said has raised some mirth, to the Health Education Council and the doctors concerned it is a serious matter, because this device enables those who are opposed to fluoridation to take fluoride out of the water by an easy and cheap method. The trouble that is caused to those who desire to take the fluoride out of the water is more than matched by the inconvenience that is caused to parents who are required to give fluoride tablets to their children for 10 or 12 years. I should point out that the opponents of fluoridation say that the taking of fluoride tablets by children is a good thing, and that parents should supply their children with them; but why should the children of this State and their parents be put to this inconvenience?

(Sustained outburst from the gallery.)

The PRESIDENT: Order!

(Outburst continued from the gallery.)

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. C. R. ABBEY: The outburst we have just heard emphasises the irrational opposition to the measure before us. I said when I started off that I do not regard those who oppose this measure as cranks, and I consider they are entitled to their opinion and they should be able to say what they think. However, outbursts such as the one we have just heard are most regrettable.

In the country we have been concerned for a long time with the dental health of the population, particularly the children. We have been heartened by the efforts of this Government in providing dental services to the country. In co-operation with local authorities we have been able to engage dentists for quite a few centres, by guaranteeing them a minimum income. This has been a very successful move.

Often when a dentist has been established in a fairly large country centre he finds it impossible to cope with all the dental work offering; and in such cases, where the parents can afford it, the children requiring urgent dental treatment are often sent to the metropolitan area. If the incidence of dental decay among children can be reduced by fluoridation then it will be possible for the limited number of dentists in Western Australia to cope with the treatment that is required by the population.

I pay a tribute to the Minister for Health and to his predecessor for having the courage to introduce a very controversial measure. They must have known it would raise a certain amount of

opposition, but they have gone forward, and I admire them for the steadfast stand which they have taken to face up to their responsibility.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery.

House adjourned at 5.20 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 27th October, 1966

CONTENTS

	Page
ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1966-67—	
Committee of Supply: General Debate—	
Speakers on Financial Policy—	
Mr. Evans	1803
Mr. Norton	1808
Votes and Items Discussed	1811

BILLS—	
Industrial Arbitration Act Amendment Bill—Report	1800
Medical Act Amendment Bill—	
2r.	1800
Com.; Report	1802
Pensioners (Rates Exemption) Bill—2r.	1802

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE—	
Child Minding Centres: Provision by Government	1798
Child Welfare: Illegal Fostering and Adoptions	1797
Claremont Mental Hospital—S. J. Morris: Tabling of Personal File	1799
Fishing Boats—	
Number Operating: Onslow-South Passage	1795
Teggs Channel: Safety of Anchorage	1795
Fishing—Sperm Whales: Radioactive Contamination	1797
High School Students—Commercial Education: Permission to Attend Outside Courses	1799
Mining—	
Iron Ore—Reserve No. 2323 at Muccan: Details of Application	1795
Payne's Find State Battery: Reconditioning	1797
Temporary Reserves: Regulations under Act	1796
Oil—Esperance: Permit Areas and Exploratory Work	1796
Pastoral Leases—Vestey's Holdings: Agreement on Regeneration	1799
Railways—	
Standard Gauge Railway—	
Damage to Sleepers	1798
Locomotives: Orders and Deliveries	1798
Rolling Stock: Major Overhauls	1798
Roads—Marble Bar and Nullagine Areas: Allocations by Main Roads Department	1796
Transport—Wayne Report: Consideration and Implementation	1797
Wildflowers—Illegal Picking: Prosecutions	1797

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE—	
Totalisator Agency Board—Winning Ticket Issued to Mr. Nettle: Legal Action	1800

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (19): ON NOTICE

FISHING BOATS

Teggs Channel: Safety of Anchorage

1. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Works:

Is Teggs Channel at Carnarvon considered a safe anchorage for

all classes of boats engaged in fishing north of Geraldton?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

Teggs Channel is a safe anchorage providing boats' gear is in good order. It is the only anchorage in that area and was used by the Nor' West Whaling Company for its prawning vessels in bad weather.

Number Operating: Onslow-South Passage

2. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna:

How many—

- (a) fishing boats;
 - (b) trawlers;
 - (c) freezer boats;
 - (d) factory boats,
- were operating north of South Passage and south of Onslow during the past six months?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

Precise information is not available, but approximately—

- (a) information not available.
- (b) 45 (including 18 freezer boats).
- (c) 25.
- (d) 1.

IRON ORE

Reserve No. 2323 at Muccan: Details of Application

3. Mr. KELLY asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

- (1) What was the number of the grant which covered part of application No. 2323 issued at Muccan in the Pilbara goldfield to Consolidated Gold Fields (Australia) Pty. Ltd., Cyprus Mines Corporation and Utah Construction & Mining Company?
- (2) What was the date of the application for this area, made by the above companies?
- (3) What number of square miles were contained in the portion granted—
 - (a) to the companies;
 - (b) to Messrs. E. J. Reck and D. A. H. Shilling?
- (4) What additional reserves were granted to the companies adjacent to No. 2323, and what was the number of square miles contained in the reserves?
- (5) Reference to his answer to part (7) of question 13 on the 20th October, 1966, what were the "Relative Merits" which decided the granting of the part reserve No. 2323 to the companies?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) Temporary Reserve 2330H.
- (2) The 21st August, 1964