

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 8th October, 1963
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The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE BRIDGE AT ROEOURNE

Transport of Materials

1. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister for Works:
 - (1) Is it a fact that a large quantity of the materials required for the construction of the new bridge over the river at Roebourne, built by the Main Roads Department, was transported by road?

- (2) If so, what was the type and quantity of the material, and why was the State Shipping Service not used as the method of transport?
- (3) What was the cost per ton by road for the materials concerned?
- (4) What was the name of the carrier or carriers?

Mr. WILD replied:

- (1) Some cement and all reinforcement was carted by road. Orders in lots of 25 tons were required to meet job usage rate and avoid open storage during the wet season with consequent risk of damage, and in order to fit this programme 50 tons were delivered by road and 100 tons by ship. Only where sea freight could not be arranged to meet these requirements was road freight used. The cost of freight from Perth to job site for cement was £19 per ton.

With regard to the reinforcement, all arc mesh and mild steel rods were transported by road direct from factory to job site at £21 per ton to avoid damage (i.e. bending) which has been the case when using sea freight in the past. All rails for reinforcement were transported by road from Carnarvon stocks. Cost by road was £9 per ton (quotes were called).

- (2) and (3) Answered by No. (1).
- (4) V. J. & B. E. Jolly; Bees Transport (Consolidated Freight Lines); R. C. Sadler Ltd.; Chapman Transport; Gascoyne Trading Co.

WHIM CREEK MINE

Presence of Japanese

2. Mr. MOIR asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:
 - (1) Will he supply the respective dates on which he approved of the presence of the Japanese Inoue, Daimura, Yoshida, Suzuki, and Nagino at the copper mine situated at Whim Creek?
 - (2) For what period in each case was this approval granted?
 - (3) Did he approve of these men being employed to perform mining work? If so, in what capacity?
 - (4) Were these men required to comply with the provisions of regulations 250 and 251 of the Mines Regulation Act?
 - (5) Were any in possession of the initial certificate form No. 2 as required by the regulations? If not, why not?

- (6) Were any in possession of an authorised mine surveyor's certificate as per regulations 224, 226, and 227 of the Mines Regulation Act?
- (7) Were plans of the Whim Creek mine provided as required by section 47 of the Mines Regulation Act? If so, by whom were they supplied?
- (8) Were any of these men the holder of a certificate as provided by regulations 30 and 31?

Registered Managers

- (9) Will he state the name of the person or persons who were the registered managers of the mine during the period of ownership of the Depuch Mining Co.?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) and (2) A letter dated the 30th November, 1962, was written to the Depuch Shipping & Mining Co. Pty. Ltd. as follows:—

Whim Creek Copper

I am directed by the Hon. Minister for Mines to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 14th instant and to advise you that, after giving careful consideration to your request, he is agreeable to the four men referred to by you remaining as expert advisers during the plant erection at Whim Creek, and that thereafter two men not employed in any way by the Depuch Company, but purely Dowra Company employees and representatives, might be permitted to stay subject to annual review.

- (3) No.
- (4) No.
- (5) No.
- (6) No.
- (7) Lodgment of certified copies of plans under section 47 (2) has not yet been required.
- (8) Answered by No. (7).
- (9) A. G. Swan.
P. R. Lingard.
A. M. Boyd.

PRODUCTION OF ELECTRICITY

Use of Oil and Coal By Commission

3. Mr. H. MAY asked the Minister for Electricity:

- (1) What was the quantity of oil used by the State Electricity Commission for the financial years 1960, 1961, 1962, and 1963?

- (2) For the same years what was the quantity used to produce electricity including all State Electricity Commission power stations?
- (3) What percentage of such oil could have been excluded by using Collie coal?
- (4) What was the average price per ton of oil used by the State Electricity Commission for years 1960, 1961, 1962 and 1963?
- (5) What was the average price per ton of Collie coal during the same years?
- (6) What is the estimated economic value of oil per ton as against Collie coal per ton in the production of electrical current?

Mr. NALDER replied:

(1)	1959-60	12,172 tons
	1960-61	85,060 "
	1961-62	43,971 "
	1962-63	40,201 "
(2)	1959-60	5,662 tons
	1960-61	76,936 "
	1961-62	35,675 "
	1962-63	31,270 "
(3)	1959-60	nil
	1960-61	nil
	1961-62	79%
	1962-63	90%

	£	s.	d.
(4)	21	4	3
	1960-61	9	18
	1961-62	8	10
	1962-63	7	19

- (5) The average price of Collie coal into bunkers was:

	East Perth and South Fremantle	Bunbury
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1959-60	4 13 4	4 3 1
1960-61	4 13 4	4 3 1
1961-62	4 3 5	3 13 2
1962-63	4 4 9	3 14 6

- (6) On a heating basis alone, one ton of oil is equal to 2.17 tons of Collie coal.

KENT STREET SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Sporting Facilities

4. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) How much money has been spent on improving sporting facilities at the Kent Street Senior High School for each of the last five years?
- (2) What improvements were made in each of these years?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) 1958-59 Nil.
1959-60 £150.
1960-61 £435.
1961-62 Nil.
1962-63 Nil.
- (2) Water reticulation to new oval and to turf cricket pitch in 1960. I think that must be for the two years 1959-60 and 1960-61.

RAILWAY BUSES: PERTH-MERREDIN RUN

Journeys and Arrival Times

5. Mr. D. G. MAY asked the Minister for Railways:

Since the inauguration of the Perth-Norham-Merredin railway bus service will he indicate—

- (a) the number of journeys in both directions;
- (b) the number of journeys when buses arrived late and on time at—
 - (i) Merredin;
 - (ii) Perth;
- (c) the time in minutes on each occasion buses arrived late?

Mr. COURT replied:

I supplied this information to the honourable member as arranged; but to complete the record, the information is as follows:—

- (a) Perth to Merredin—15.
Merredin to Perth—14.
- (b) Buses arrived Merredin late 11 times; on time, six times. Buses arrived Perth late six times; on time, eight times.
- (c) Late arrivals at Merredin in minutes were: 65, 30, 22, 35, 60, 30, 30, 35, 50, 20, 25. Late arrivals at Perth in minutes were: 28, 20, 10, 10, 37, 15.

These figures are up to the 26th September, 1963, when the question was originally listed.

The reasons for initial service difficulties have been explained in a letter to the honourable member.

PROPERTY LAW

English and Western Australian Provisions

6. Mr. EVANS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:
- (1) Are there any provisions in Western Australian legislation similar to sections 61 (1) (iii) and 78 (1) of the English Law of Property Act, 1925?
 - (2) If so, in what Statute are these to be found?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) and (2) It is understood that the first reference was intended to be to section 56. No similar legislation in this State is known, but the Transfer of Land Act, section 81, has an effect similar in part to that of section 78 (1) of the English Act.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Day-labour Force

7. Mr. HEAL asked the Minister for Works:

What is the number of employees the Government has maintained in the day-labour force of the Public Works Department?

Mr. WILD replied:

The total number of wages employees maintained in the day-labour force of the Public Works Department Architectural Division as at the 24th September 1963 was—

Maintenance	....	....	....	351
Construction	....	....	....	395
				--- 746 ---

COLOURED CHILDREN

Attendance at Albany Agricultural Area High Schools

8. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many coloured children are attending high schools in the Albany agricultural area?
- (2) What is the anticipated number of coloured children who will enter five-year high schools next school year?

Boarding Allowance

- (3) Will coloured children desiring five-year-high-school education receive any assistance for boarding allowance when living away from home?

Admission to High School Hostels

- (4) Will they be assured of accommodation at high school hostels when in existence?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) The Albany agricultural area includes Mt. Barker and Denmark. The number of coloured children enrolled at high schools in this area is—
 - Albany 1
 - Mt. Barker 4.
- (2) The number of coloured children expected to enter fourth year in 1964 is—
 - Albany 1
 - Mt. Barker 1.

- (3) The same conditions regarding Education Department living allowances apply both to coloured and white children. Where a native child undertakes a course of study recommended by the District Superintendent of Education, the Native Welfare Department will make up the difference between the Education Department allowance and his total expenses.
- (4) The department requires that children shall be admitted to the Government hostels without discrimination as to colour, religion, or any other matter. However, applications are dealt with strictly in order of receipt, and if there are more applicants than accommodation there can be no "assurance".

X-RAY FACILITIES

Provision in Outback

9. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Health:

- (1) Are facilities for X-raying people in the outback in operation in this State?
- (2) If not, when is it anticipated that such a service will be introduced?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Yes; all our country hospitals have X-ray equipment.
- (2) Answered by No. (1).

VETERINARIANS IN PRIVATE PRACTICE

Number and Location

10. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) How many private veterinarians are operating in this State and at what centres are they operating?

Establishment in Country Towns

- (2) What has the Government done to assist the setting up of private veterinarians at country centres?
- (3) Has any comprehensive plan been brought forward to assist in the establishing of private veterinarians in country centres in this State?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) There are 18 private veterinary practitioners in Western Australia operating at the following centres:—

Metropolitan Area	....	9
Pinjarra	....	1
Harvey	....	1
Bunbury	....	2
Busselton	....	1
Margaret River	....	1
Boyup Brook	....	1
Katanning	....	1
Geraldton	....	1

- (2) and (3) An amendment to the Local Government Act was approved by Parliament in 1962 to enable local government authorities to subsidise veterinary practitioners. Local government authorities are thus able to arrange contracts with veterinary surgeons and guarantee a net income—at present £3,000—for any specified period. The Government has agreed to subsidise local government authorities who arrange such contracts up to £1,000 in any one year on a pound for pound basis, where the net income of the veterinary surgeon is below £3,000. The practitioners at Katanning and Boyup Brook have contracts with the local government authorities; and it is anticipated that an additional contract will be arranged by the Albany, Denmark, and Plantagenet shires, acting in conjunction, either this year or early in 1964. Several other districts are also considering the matter.

Additional assistance has been given by the Government in the dairying districts where contract T.B. testing has been operating since 1958. The practitioners at Pinjarra, Harvey, Bunbury, Busselton, Margaret River, and Boyup Brook all have such contracts with the Department of Agriculture.

KINDERGARTENS

Government Financial Assistance

11. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) Have representations been made to him by any local authorities recently seeking Government financial assistance for kindergartens?
- (2) If so, has he made a decision and what is its nature?
- (3) If no decision has been made, when can one be expected?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) On the 22nd August representations were made by the Perth Shire Council for an increase in the Government subsidy towards the erection of new kindergarten buildings.
- (2) and (3) The council was informed that its request will be considered when a review of the scale of Government subsidy to the Kindergarten Union is undertaken following the decision of the State Arbitration Court on the kindergarten teachers' claim for increased salaries.

ALBANY POWER HOUSES*Wage Bill Discrepancy*

12. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Electricity:

Can he explain the large discrepancy in the wage bill paid to Albany power house employees for the year 1961-62—£17,521 13s. 10d., as against £5,742 3s. 8d. for the year 1962-63?

Mr. NALDER replied:

The Albany power stations ceased operating during the early part of the year 1962-63.

POWER FOR INDUSTRY*Supersession of Coal by Oil*

13. Mr. H. MAY asked the Minister for Electricity:

(1) Will he inform the House whether the State Electricity Commission has a record of industrial establishments and other private consumers that have switched to oil from coal since January, 1961?

(2) If he has, will he be good enough to advise the House accordingly?

Mr. NALDER replied:

(1) and (2) The commission does not keep official records of coal consumers who have switched to oil. However, the commission understands that since 1961 annual sales of about 50,000 tons of coal have been taken over by oil. The consumers concerned include the Kalgoorlie Power Corporation which has closed down and the load transferred to diesels, the Colonial Sugar Refinery, and some brickworks.

SCHOOL LEAVERS*Numbers*

14. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Education:

(1) How many children left school during each of the last five years?

(2) Are reliable estimates available as to the number of school leavers during the next five years?

(3) If so, what are the figures?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

(1) These numbers are based on the departmental census returns of the 1st August each year. They refer to the number who leave between census dates. The figures include students from Government and non-Government schools.

Numbers who left during past five years:

	Boys	Girls	Total
1957-58	4,931	5,052	9,983
1958-59	5,212	6,270	10,482
1959-60	5,876	5,587	11,463
1960-61	5,840	5,943	11,783
1961-62	8,429	6,293	12,722

(2) and (3) Estimates have been made for the next four years. The effect of the increased school-leaving age has not been determined definitely as yet since the 1963 census figures are not yet available. These estimates will be revised when the 1963 returns are finalised.

	Boys	Girls	Total
1962-63	7,000	6,800	13,800
1963-64	7,400	7,100	14,500
1964-65	7,800	7,500	15,300
1965-66	8,100	7,700	15,800

CROWN LAW DEPARTMENT*Extension of Office and Court Accommodation*

- 15A. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

Is it proposed in the near future to extend office and court accommodation required for use by the Crown Law Department?

Mr. COURT replied:

It is assumed that the honourable member's question has reference to the Supreme Court building. Substantial additions and alterations to the Supreme Court have been carried out in recent years. Two additional courtrooms have been constructed, together with judges' chambers, new jury rooms, facilities for the public and the Press, and accommodation for the Law Society's legal aid service. No further extensions are contemplated at present, but some courts will be renovated and re-fitted progressively.

ARBITRATION COURT*Provision of New Building*

- 15B. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

In view of the fact that public accommodation at the Arbitration Court is frequently overtaxed and the building itself is very old, will consideration be given to the building of a new court?

Mr. COURT replied:

It is recognised that accommodation at the Arbitration Court is at times overtaxed and, at some time in the future, consideration will need to be given to providing accommodation for the Arbitration Court away from the Supreme

Court building. This must necessarily depend on the availability of loan funds.

FLUORIDATION OF PUBLIC WATER SUPPLIES BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed, from the 24th September, on the following motion by Mr. Ross Hutchinson (Minister for Health):—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

MR. CROMMELIN (Claremont) [4.51 p.m.]: The question of the fluoridation of public water supplies is, as the Leader of the Opposition said, somewhat contentious; and to a large extent it is one which, I think, must be given a lot of consideration. Our thinking will be guided by the reading of a vast amount of literature which has been made available. Indeed, when listening to the Leader of the Opposition the other day, I noticed he quoted more from records than I have ever heard him do before. It behoves every member of the House who is taking a genuine interest in this suggestion to make a study of this literature.

Over the last few months every member has received a great deal of propaganda. Most of it, of course, has been in favour of the case against the fluoridation of water, and has been of a somewhat alarming character, and some of it one had to give very serious thought to before one could agree with the conclusions that were printed. The Leader of the Opposition informed the House the other day that it was the policy of the A.L.P. in this State to press for a referendum before allowing the Government to proceed with its intention of fluoridating public water supplies.

I take it that when he said that, he was speaking of a directive of the State Executive of the A.L.P. I understand that organisation comprises about 120 men, and they draw up the policy of the A.L.P. in this State. However, I do not think that all the Labor members of Parliament are members of the State Executive, so consequently they have to abide by the decision of that body whether they are in favour of fluoridation or not.

Mr. Norton: You should be sure of your facts before making that statement.

MR. CROMMELIN: The Leader of the Opposition suggested that a referendum was the only correct way to ascertain the feelings of the people in regard to fluoridation. However, in Tasmania there is a Labor Government, and it has been in office for some time. Yet fluoride is being used in some of the town water supplies in that State. It was not necessary to have

a referendum there. It was not even necessary to pass a special Act, because the power was already there. Only recently we saw in the Press that the capital city of Hobart had decided to go ahead with the fluoridation of its water supplies.

The Labor Government in New South Wales has agreed to fluoridation, and no referendum was necessary there. However, only recently the Water Board in Sydney decided by a majority decision that it would not put fluoride in the Sydney water supply. It was rather interesting to read in the 13th July issue of *Nation* that this water board includes two members who were Government nominees. One, Mr. W. G. Mathieson, was the permanent secretary of the Treasury, and the other was a former top civil servant in Mr. S. Haviland who was appointed by the Government as the present chairman of the board.

Mr. Mathieson, who was appointed by the Government, voted against the fluoridation proposal; and the chairman of the board, who had also been appointed by the Government, refrained from voting. In this way, the two Government nominees to the board were able to stop the fluoridation of the Sydney water supplies. Last week we read in the Press that the members of the board had been asked to reconsider their decision; and we await with interest an announcement, within the next few days, as to whether they have changed their opinions or not.

The Minister for Health in the New South Wales Government, Mr. Sheahan, was quite upset when the Water Board turned down the proposal. One of the members of the board was a Mr. de Burgh, who was 74 years of age. He said of his own teeth that he only had a few stumps, so it did not matter very much to him. Mr. Sheahan came forth the next day with a very derisive statement; and I quote from the *Sun* of Thursday, the 30th May as follows:—

In an angry attack on the Water Board decision against fluoridating Sydney's water supply, Minister for Health Mr. Sheahan said:

I thank Providence that in my ministerial career I have been spared the indignity of having within my jurisdiction such an antediluvian authority as the Metropolitan Water Board.

The board's thinking is so retrogressive it accepts the opinions of four individuals against the weight of all the scientific and medical authorities, the findings of Royal Commissions, exhaustive surveys and practical experience.

I believe that the great bulk of the citizens of this State will regard with contempt the majority decision of the Board as being

inimical to the future dental welfare of the children of this community.

Silence now on my part might indicate that I have withdrawn support of fluoridation. The attitude of the Board only makes my attitude all the stronger.

This is because it is clear that the majority decision of the board has been influenced by a puff of propaganda wind, Mr. Sheahan added.

It is so inconsistent with the board's previous decision that I think the public should be made aware of it."

Mr. Sheahan said the Premier, Mr. Heffron, early in 1961 advised him that the Water Board had fully reviewed the question of fluoridation.

Mr. Sheahan said Water Board president, Mr. Haviland, had then said in a report to the Premier that the Board's own Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Flynn, had assured it no objection could be taken on the grounds of its efficacy and desirability or its safety.

Mr. Haviland had added:

If the Department of Public Health desires the Board to fluoridate its water supplies, in accordance with principles laid down in the Act, the Board has no objection to doing so, subject to the question of cost being satisfactorily resolved.

Mr. Sheahan said since then the Premier had advised him as a matter of policy that the Government would bear half the cost of installing the equipment.

"Mr. Haviland is not sincere in either educating public opinion, in accordance with the Board's previous policy decision, or with the considered scientific and medical knowledge available to anybody who likes to study the problem closely," Mr. Sheahan declared.

"My later reading on information from the United Kingdom, with practical experience in Yass, have confirmed the view that the hope of the younger generation lies in the fluoridation of water supplies. Why Mr. Haviland has adopted an attitude of frustration and objection, since the declaration of policy conveyed to me by the Premier is difficult to understand.

"Dr. Flynn, the Board's medical officer, is a member of the Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies Advisory Committee set up under the Act passed unanimously by Parliament in 1957."

This Advisory Committee of experts was appointed to give scientific advice, Mr. Sheahan added.

He said Mr. Haviland had rejected the request made by the Premier or the grounds that it would embarrass the Water Board.

Mr. Sheahan then said that Mr. Haviland had rejected the request for two experts to talk to the Newcastle and Grafton City Councils on the ground that it would embarrass the Water Board. Mr. Sheahan concluded his remarks by saying—

"I am at a loss to understand how the dissemination of knowledge, scientific and expert, can in any way embarrass anybody, the principle of which had already been accepted by the Board.

"I informed the Premier as far back as May, 1962, it was my opinion that Mr. Haviland's attitude was such that he did not want to co-operate either with the Government nor the Health Department."

Mr. Sheahan then referred to a statement by Mr. T. H. M. De Burgh, a Board member for nine years and a water board engineer for 34 years.

Mr. De Burgh opposes fluoridation on the ground of "Fears for elderly people". Mr. Sheahan said Mr. De Burgh's fears for the elderly were "just poppycock".

In Yass, elderly people are living as long and as healthily as they did several years ago before fluoridation. This is the experience in all parts of the world where fluoridation has been adopted, Mr. Sheahan said. The A.L.P. State Conference next week is expected to instruct the State Government to legislate for fluoridated water supplies.

So there we have the policy of the New South Wales Government in a nutshell and it will be most interesting to see what happens when the Water Board reconsiders its decision, as it has been asked to do by the Deputy Premier.

Mr. Oldfield: Premier Playford won't have a bar of it.

Mr. CROMMELIN: The policy in Victoria—

Mr. Oldfield: You can't answer that one.

Mr. CROMMELIN: There is no need to answer it. The policy of the A.L.P. in Victoria is in favour of the fluoridation of water supplies, and information to this effect was published in *The West Australian* two months ago. This means that the A.L.P. in this State appears to be the only branch of the Labor Party in the Commonwealth which is against it.

In his remarks on this Bill the other day the Leader of the Opposition pointed out that he did not like compulsion. If he does not like compulsion, are the members of his party to be given the right to vote how they like and say what they want to say on this measure?

I have with me a report of the Seventh Australian Area Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association for the Commonwealth of Australia held at Parliament House, Canberra, on the 26th, 27th, and 28th June of this year. One item which was brought forward for discussion was the question of the fluoridation of drinking water. The question was raised by a Mr. D. G. May who, as we all know, is the present member for Canning in our State Parliament. He said—

Scientific support for fluoridation as the most convenient means of combating dental decay is growing stronger. Fluoridation is now being introduced in certain areas of the world, and such august bodies as the World Health Organization, the British Medical Research Council, the Australian National Health and Medical Research Council, and the Australian Medical and Dental Associations all are in accord on the need to fluoridate water supplies.

He went on—

I do not say that every parent today is remiss in his duty to bring up his children in the best way, but it would be very difficult for parents to administer fluoride tablets to children. It may be said that children are required to clean their teeth, but how much supervision is there when it comes to children cleaning their teeth before they go to school, or even after each meal, which is necessary to keep teeth healthy? Because of the difficulty involved in the supervision by parents of the administering of fluoride tablets, the investigation committees in both America and the United Kingdom were unanimous that the correct method to adopt, and the only method which would provide for complete supervision, was to fluoridate water supplies.

The most convincing evidence of the safety of fluoridation of water supplies has come from the results obtained with numerous population groups, covering 3,000,000 people in America and approximately 500,000 in England. These people drank naturally fluoridated water containing one part of fluoride to one million parts of water. As I pointed out previously, in both those countries there has been no substantiation of the claim that ill health may result from the fluoridation of water supplies. Most of the opponents of fluoridation have based their opposition mainly on the ethical objection that to make everybody drink fluoridated water would be a breach of individual liberties. The same attitude was taken in the campaigns against typhoid and poliomyelitis in years gone by. These campaigns raised certain prejudices

with people being reluctant to accept measures which were designed to improve the health of the community generally.

I am very favourably disposed towards fluoridation . . .

Mr. Davies: What did he say before that?

Mr. CROMMELIN: The paragraph before that reads—

Mr. Davies: Read the opening paragraph where he says that efforts should be made to see whether or not the community want it. He might say that he feels it is okay.

Mr. CROMMELIN: I have quoted what the honourable member said, and I am only interested in quoting his opinion as a member of this Parliament. His remarks were addressed to delegates from all over Australia.

Mr. Davies: You have taken it out of context.

Mr. CROMMELIN: That was his expressed opinion.

Mr. Toms: Quote all the passages.

Mr. Hall: Does the honourable member believe in giving fluoride tablets to his own children?

Mr. CROMMELIN: I have attended lectures given by the Public Health Department and I also listened to speakers from the Pure Water Association who attended here for that purpose. All members of Parliament have had the same opportunity. In Dalkeith there was a big attendance at a meeting held by the Rotary Club, the Apex Club, the Nedlands Council, and the Parents and Citizens' Association of the Dalkeith School. I realised when I got there that among those present were also some who were against fluoridation. One of the leading lights was a Mr. V. James who, I understand, lives in Subiaco. He interjected when Dr. Lewis was speaking and said, "Well, of course, this is Communistic. They would not do this to you in Russia". But he was informed that they did; and the other day in the corridor here I spoke to Mrs. Glidden—

Mr. Tonkin: Who informed him of that?

Mr. CROMMELIN: —who is the Secretary of the Pure Water Association. I asked her whether they were experimenting with the fluoridation of water supplies in Russia and she said, "Yes, that is correct. They are experimenting along those lines." One of the other leaders of anti-fluoridation is a Mr. T. McGillick. We have all heard of him.

Mr. Hawke: Another good supporter of the Liberal Party.

Mr. CROMMELIN: He may be a good supporter sometimes, but he is not this time. He was a very difficult person about five or six years ago when the present Agent-General vacated the Warren seat and we all went down campaigning in that electorate. I thought he was very difficult and against the Labor Party when we were all on the hustings.

Mr. Hawke: Sure! And paid to do it.

Mr. CROMMELIN: I thought speakers from the Pure Water Association were very fair. They put forward their case but they only quoted from journals and from what other people had told them. Personally I have yet to hear of a solitary man—a doctor, a dentist, or a scientist—who has got up on any platform here to say that he is against the fluoridation of water supplies. Not one has done so.

Mr. Moir: We have not got them all here.

Mr. CROMMELIN: We have not! Not one single medical man has stood up on a public platform and said there is any danger from fluoridation.

Mr. Bickerton: In that case the referendum should be carried.

Mr. CROMMELIN: One body in Fremantle wrote us a lot of letters and a Dr. Moffin sent out a small number of questionnaires to medical practitioners in the West Province, and the answers that came back were very good. If a man has enough interest to circularise doctors in his own district at least I think he should be given credit for it; and I am prepared to accept some of the facts that were stated.

Mr. J. Hegney: Why not all of them?

Mr. CROMMELIN: I am not prepared to accept all of them because from my experience of them one could say that they are not scientists.

Mr. Norton: Were any of them against it?

Mr. CROMMELIN: Yes, two. As a result of questions asked we find that there are 32 towns in this State which have naturally fluoridated water supplies. Some will say that that is different from putting fluoride in the drinking water, but I have been assured that there is no difference. It is a milder form of fluoride, so that fact does not carry a great deal of weight.

Now we come to the question of what has happened about this matter in the different electorates. I do not suppose there is any member who has not received some cards in regard to this subject. Some of us have had letters as well as cards, and I have received a total of 58 or 59 cards and three letters. I called on some of the people who signed these cards to find out whether they knew what they were signing. Some of them said that they had not read the cards but had signed them to get rid of the woman who had

called. In any case, the most important thing about these cards is the fact that some of them are nothing else but forgeries. They were not signed by the people who were supposed to have signed their names to them.

Mr. Nimmo: Hear, hear!

Mr. CROMMELIN: That is factual.

Mr. J. Hegney: That is a serious statement.

Mr. CROMMELIN: It is a true statement.

Mr. J. Hegney: Will you say it outside?

Mr. CROMMELIN: Of the 59 cards I suppose 19 were delivered in an extraordinary manner around this Chamber by the member for Victoria Park. To me it is quite wrong when a member of Parliament in this House, or in another place, will act as a carrier of cards from a high-pressure group and haphazardly put those cards in members' boxes, or on one's desk, or hand them to one. I have a typical one here which was put on my desk. It is not addressed to anybody; but it is signed on the "address" line; and the address of the person—6 Alexander Avenue, Claremont—appears on the "signature" line! It was delivered by the member for Victoria Park.

I think it is quite wrong; and in fact I gave serious thought to making an approach to you, Mr. Speaker, to ask if we could prevent such practices. I have never seen any other member of Parliament do such a thing in my life.

Mr. J. Hegney: You have not seen them do it, but they do.

Mr. CROMMELIN: No.

Mr. J. Hegney: It is a question of being found out.

Mr. CROMMELIN: Most of the city members have approximately 10,000 people living in their electorates. From those 10,000 people I have had approximately 59 cards. They should carry some weight, and I suppose they do. At the same time, however, I have a number of schools in my electorate; and I have letters from those schools indicating there have been meetings of their associations, and asking me if I would support the Bill before the House.

In that respect. I well remember that when the Leader of the Opposition was speaking he greatly respected the opinion of laymen. I should imagine that most of the parents to whom I have referred are laymen. But although they are laymen, and not scientists or medicos, they have at least given some thought to the matter before attending their meetings and carrying the resolutions to which I have referred. I would estimate that approximately 6,000 parents, from the parents and citizens' associations to which I referred, have asked me to support fluoridation.

So if there are 6,000 parents in my district there would be 6,000 parents in every other member's district. But I do not think any member here has had more than 100 cards of protest. I daresay we would have all received about the same number of cards. Are members of Parliament going to take notice of 60 cards of protest, as against the opinions of people from the various parents' and citizens' associations who ask us to support this legislation, in order that their children might gain some relief? I certainly will not take any notice of these cards of protest. I will support the opinions of the parents; because, as the Leader of the Opposition has said, we must listen to the views expressed by laymen. That is what I propose to do.

Some years ago a friend of mine, Dr. Snook—I think he is overseas at the present moment—started giving his children fluoride. He did so in rather a different manner from that which is proposed in the Bill. His practice was to put the fluoride in the salt. He tells me it still constitutes fluoride. I have seen Dr. Snook's children grow up over the last nine or 10 years, and I must say that so far as their teeth are concerned they are a credit to him. They have not had any trouble up till now.

One hears that one of the great opponents of fluoridation is Sir Arthur Amies, Dean of the Faculty of Dental Science in Melbourne. Having heard of this eminent gentleman, I thought he might answer a letter if I wrote to him. Accordingly I wrote to him on the 24th July asking if he could give me some advice as to whether I should support a Bill such as this. To my astonishment I received a reply from his secretary five days later—Sir Arthur Amies was, and still is, overseas. He also sent me a copy of a letter which he had sent to the President of the Australian Dental Association. In that letter he said—

I wish to make it clear to your committee—

that is, to the Australian Dental Association—

that I am neither for nor against the proposition to fluoridate public water supplies.

We all know that this gentleman is held up as one of the strong opponents of fluoridation; yet he states categorically that he is neither for nor against it. At the present time he is overseas, and it will be interesting to see, when he returns, whether he has changed his opinion; and whether he is against it fully, or is for it fully.

In *The West Australian* of the 31st August, there was a heading, "Experts Back Fluoridation". The article then went on to give the names of some of the State's leading medical and dental experts. It mentioned such people as Professor King, Professor Sutherland, Professor Saint, Professor Macdonald, Dr. R. H. Crisp, Mr. A.

L. Dawkins, Dr. Cyril Fortune, Dr. J. T. Irvine, Dr. R. C. Godfrey, and Dr. R. N. Peeverill.

Surely we must take notice of the opinions of these people; surely they are people who could give us an expert answer to the best of their ability—and they must have some ability, possessing the qualifications they do, and teaching where they do. These people would surely give us their expert opinions if we asked for them.

On the other hand, one cannot go to the Pure Water Association and say, "Well, Professor So-and-so, what do you think?" because all we would get in reply would be quotations from letters. I have no doubt that some of the letters are authentic; but I prefer living evidence, from a man to whom I can talk—not from somebody who writes down the answer for me.

I was rather interested to read a letter in *The West Australian* signed "K. Michael" about three weeks ago, which said—

Few would disagree with Mr. Hawke and the Labor Party policy of not accepting Public Health Department advice blindly, but the claim that experts disagree indicates that other State and national health authority findings have not been consulted.

The weight of scientific support for adjusting the fluoride content of our water leaves no doubt as to safety and effectiveness.

The National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia, on the advice of its dental health committee, has on three occasions re-affirmed its support for fluoridation.

If the Labor Party still remains unconvinced it could approach the Australian medical and dental associations. If it really wanted to be sure it could obtain the findings of the New Zealand Royal Commission and for good measure those of the American and English medical and dental associations and research councils.

After receiving these assurances plus those of his own health department, if Mr. Hawke still asks "who are we to follow" one can only conclude that political and not public health benefits determine Labor Party health policy.

I think that is very fair comment. Let us agree that giving children fluoride tablets would be a great help; but if we gave these tablets to some people, unfortunately they would never be given to the children. You would know the types of people to whom I refer, Mr. Speaker. They are those who are not prepared to go to any trouble to look after their children, not even to that small extent. That being the case, I think there is only one way in which to do this, and that is to put fluoride in the water.

In connection with this fear of fluoridation about which one reads, I would like to quote an article by Hugh Laming written in a Toronto paper. The article reads as follows:—

After years of acrimonious debate, fluoridation of the water supply in the Toronto area has started.

Whether or not fluorides should be put in the water to prevent tooth decay was subject to a referendum at the last municipal election—and the ayes had an overwhelming majority.

Even more abstained from voting on the issue which aroused every crank in Ontario.

The dental and medical professions, the majority of city councillors and all the newspapers favoured fluoridation, but a constant running battle against it was fought—and is still being fought—by the antis, some of whom brand it a Communist brain-washing plot.

The Toronto Star, in an ironical editorial entitled "Day of Doom," welcomed the onset of fluoridation this way:

By now, we suppose, half the population of Toronto is dead and the other half writhing on the kitchen floor while Russian parachutists take over the city . . . If, as the opponents of fluoridation have claimed so vociferously, the fluoride salts used are really rat poison and the whole thing is a Communist plot, we are doubtless doomed . . . But the sun is shining, we seem as healthy as ever and most people are glad the experiment has got under way at last.

The anti-fluoridationists ruined their own case in the eyes of the voters by the vehemence of their protestations and by the extreme Right-wing political slant with which they were presented.

To accuse the far-from-socialist mayor and city fathers of being, as one pamphlet did, "slit-eyed Mongolian Communists and the dupes of Mao and Krushchev" raises either a grin or public anger.

Such lunatic-fringe opposition to fluoridation undermined its strength and persuaded the electorate that they would rather have fluorides in the water than cranks on the council.

The same thing applies here. In referring to the *Nation* of the 13th July, 1963, it will be seen that even here in Western Australia we have threats made. Mr. V. James, of the Subiaco Anti-fluoridation Committee, threatens to run a candidate against the sitting Liberal member for Subiaco if the Liberal Party yields to the supporters of fluoridation. I am sorry the member for Subiaco is not in his seat,

because I am sure he would be very concerned. I cannot understand why Mr. James wants to run a candidate for Subiaco; and why he cannot, himself, stand at the next election.

Mr. Hawke: Why don't you ask him?

Mr. CROMMELIN: Most of this propaganda is built on fear. But all the young people with children want fluoridation. They realise the great advantage they will derive not only financially, but in the health of their children. Unless he is very foolish, I do not think any member here who has given any thought to the question would dare to go against the advice given him; nor would he suggest for one minute that if there were any elements of risk he would agree to put fluoride in water. Not one of us here with children would be prepared to take that chance.

Mr. Kelly: Don't be so sure about that!

Mr. Tonkin: Who protested here against thalidomide?

Mr. CROMMELIN: I did not.

Mr. Tonkin: Nor did anybody else.

Mr. CROMMELIN: However, I think that is a little different. This matter of fluoridation has been tested for many years. Last Sunday week we saw the third session of *Four Corners*. I listened to the man from the Pure Water Association who was interviewed; and I also listened to what was said by a young teacher. She said she had been teaching for ten years, and there was not one child in her class who required dental attention over that period.

Surely that young teacher is able to speak with some authority! After all, the proof of the pudding is in the eating of it. I wonder what my friend the member for Canning is going to say. I wonder whether he will speak against fluoridation.

Mr. Brady: At least he will tell the whole story.

Mr. CROMMELIN: After he has read the speech he has prepared, I wonder whether the member for Canning will support the second reading of the Bill in the event of a division; because there is no doubt that he favours fluoridation.

Mr. Bickerton: Tell us what you have against a referendum.

Mr. CROMMELIN: I can see no advantage in it at all. If the Government of the day brings down a public health matter, it should have investigated it thoroughly before doing so. Once its mind is made up, it should stick to its decision, and not ask the people.

Mr. Bickerton: What about Tom Playford?

Mr. CROMMELIN: I am not interested in Tom Playford.

Mr. Hawke: That is mutual.

Mr. CROMMELIN: If he does not want to move in this direction that is his concern.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): The honourable member has another five minutes.

Mr. Jamieson: Too long!

Mr. CROMMELIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not require much more time. In conclusion, I would point out that I have read reams on the subject—all that I could find against it and all that I could find for it—and my mind is made up.

Mr. Hawke: A long time ago.

Mr. CROMMELIN: My mind was not made up four months ago before I started to read; but the mind of the leader of the Opposition was made up—for a referendum.

Mr. Hawke: Yes it was.

Mr. CROMMELIN: He told us definitely it was the policy of the Western Australian branch of the A.L.P.

Mr. Hawke: Yes; that is, for a referendum.

Mr. CROMMELIN: Yes; and my mind is made up that we do not need a referendum.

Mr. Hawke: It is too democratic for you.

Mr. Oldfield: A real Fascist outlook.

Mr. CROMMELIN: I support the Bill because I think it is in the interests of the children—the present children, and the children to come. For that reason it is something we should support.

DR. HENN (Wembley) [5.31 p.m.]: Before I forget, I must tell the Leader of the Opposition that I did not make up my mind on this matter until about four months ago and was quite equivocal about it until I received the last report from the World Health Organisation; and it was at that moment I came down on the side of fluoridation of public drinking water. I would like to say that when I refer to fluoridation in this address I am making, I refer to fluoridation of public water supplies. For the sake of brevity I will refer to it as fluoridation.

I listened to the speech of the Leader of the Opposition the other evening, and I have read it since, but I do not want to spend any time on it, because I have not all that amount of time to say what I want to say. I would refer to his speech as having very little merit in it, and as containing very little logic; and if it were not for his innate histrionic ability, I think the Leader of the Opposition would have cut a very pathetic figure that evening. However, as it was, I feel he put up a very feeble case.

Mr. Hawke: Thank you.

Dr. HENN: I will leave his speech at that and get on with what I want to say.

Mr. Oldfield: What did you think of the Minister's speech?

Dr. HENN: There have always been emotional reactions to new medical discoveries over the last couple of hundred years. One of those was when Jenner introduced vaccination against smallpox. We had Dr. Simpson with the introduction of a new anaesthetic—chloroform; Pasteur with the pasteurisation of milk; diphtheria immunisation; blood transfusions; and so on. There has not only been opposition to those new measures, but there have been accidents, and unfortunate tragedies in the pursuit of medical knowledge.

Here, I would like to refer briefly to the thalidomide disasters that have occurred. My own opinion is that in some countries in many instances not sufficient research is done before the work is published. The work is published before adequate inquiries and research have been made. When people tell me they condemn the medical profession because of the thalidomide tragedy I do not think they are humble people who are talking. I think their sentiments are base and ignoble. I do not think they are worth very much consideration.

In addressing myself to this Bill, I feel I should make frequent quotations; but I will make them as short as possible, because no one of us in this Chamber has done any research into this question. Therefore, it would be quite ridiculous for anyone to get up and air his own views. I was glad to notice the Leader of the Opposition had some reports from which he quoted; and that was the first time I had ever seen him do such a thing in the four years I have been in this House. I feel we have to look at the evidence and the research that has been made in order to arrive at a conclusion on this matter. I will make my quotations as short as possible, but I want to bring my points home.

The first point I want to demonstrate is that the authorities quoted by the antagonists of fluoridation are in some cases not reliable. I would go further and say that in most cases they are not reliable. The propaganda they put forward is misleading.

Mr. Davies: All of them?

Dr. HENN: I said, "in some cases", and changed that to "most cases". I have been able to discover only one with what I would call recognised degrees. I refer to Dr. George L. Waldbott. I will say more about him later on. Most of the others have letters after their names, but they do not mean very much in regard to scientific recognition. I will also explain some of these diplomas or letters after their names. In addition, I will select at random some of the statements by opponents of fluoridation most quoted by authorities.

One of the most quoted is Dr. Charles Betts, and I have here some of his comments, which show he is very much anti-fluoridation. I quote from, *The Journal of*

the American Medical Association. Oliver Field is director of the Bureau of Investigation, and he says—

Dr. Betts has for many years been engaged in the business of selling pamphlets on unscientific medical subjects. He has set himself up as an authority on the alleged poisonous characteristics of aluminium cooking utensils.

In some of his printed material, Betts claims "fellowship" in the "American Association for Medico-Physical Research." This is an organisation . . . devoted to the Abrams idea (healing with electrons) and several other unscientific but apparently profitable methods . . .

Then I would like to quote from the *Milwaukee Journal*, of the 31st March, 1953—

Dr. Betts is president of an organisation he calls the "Anti-Cancer Club of America." The principal idea of the club is that food cooked in aluminium pans causes cancer—a theory without backing from reputable scientists.

Dr. Betts received his license in Ohio in 1900 when some licenses were being granted without dental school training. Dr. Betts admits he did not go to dental school.

That is most amazing. Continuing—

Dr. Betts is a member of a group called "American Association for Medico-Physical Research," which the A.M.A.—

that is the medical association—

—has called "another society catering to the twilight zone of professionalism."

Dr. Betts is known for his opposition to vaccination and other accepted public practices, such as pasteurization.

I would like to quote Mrs. Lillian Van DeVere. It must be said that women take a prominent part in the anti-fluoridation campaign, particularly in America. I quote from an American paper *The Hartford (Conn.) Courant*, of the 13th February, 1955, as follows:—

Miss Lillian Van DeVere, a self-appointed expert in various fields of science, is at it again—this time in New Haven . . .

Health directors and select men have already received copies of Miss Van DeVere's literature alleging that sodium fluoride is "rat poison" and injurious to humans when used in water. To back her claims, the Hartford woman includes a biography of herself listing her qualifications . . .

In the printed biography, Miss Van DeVere states that she is a "medical research scientist who has performed scientific medical research experiments with sodium fluoride at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, using laboratory animals but not human beings."

The truth of the matter, according to Dean Willard C. Rappleye, M.D., of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University, is that Miss Van deVere took only two short courses at the college, neither of which qualify her as an expert.

In a letter to *The Courant*, Dean Rappleye said she—

That is, Miss Van DeVere—

—"registered in 1918-19 under the name of Miss Lillian D. Vilkomerson for two short courses in bacteriology. These were courses open to laymen and would give no one any knowledge to permit them to pose as an expert in the field of bacteriology."

To further her claim as an authority on fluoridation Miss Van DeVere states she did "post graduate" work at Harvard University.

Records now in the files of the State Health Department show she took a two-week course on how to take blood counts at the Thorndyke Memorial Hospital, Boston. The course was designed for technicians and the hospital says, could in no manner be interpreted as "post graduate" study . . .

An investigation has failed to produce evidence that Miss Van deVere was ever graduated from a high school or college . . .

In the biography . . . Miss Van deVere states that she has had varied training and experience as a bacteriologist, serologist, biochemist, hematologist, clinical pathologist and pathologist.

Here are the facts: She was employed by the State Health Department from March 17, 1941, to June 30, 1942, successively as a temporary junior serologist, junior microbiologist, assistant microbiologist and microbiologist.

Her service ratings during the period, according to the State Health Department, were "below average." The various titles she held were not the result of promotions, but simply of job reclassification, the department reports. At no time did she do any research work . . .

The only evidence produced thus far of her work in hematology is the two weeks' course she took at Thorndyke Memorial Hospital. No record of her work in pathology has ever been produced although she has claimed to be a pathologist ever since 1921.

That was the year she married Harold Schwarm, a New Britain dishwasher posing as "Dr. Reginald Van deVere." Schwarm, after their marriage masqueraded as the Prince de Chateroux de Bussigny de Bourbon in New York society with Miss Van deVere enacting the role of the "princess" until the hoax was discovered in 1923

Mr. Graham: Have you got your pronunciation right?

Dr. HENN: Continuing—

When she applied for a position with the State Health Department in 1941, Miss Van deVere stated in her written application that she did research in the department of pathology of the College of Physicians and Surgeons between 1914 and 1915. She was 14 years old at the time . . .

There are two other quotes I wish to make from a letter from The Bureau of Investigation of the American Medical Association, dated the 26th May, 1955, in connection with S. Edgar Bond and Adolph E. Schneider, who have been quoted by anti-fluoridationists. This letter reads—

. . . The biographic records indicate that S. Edgar Bond of Webster, Ind., was born there in 1876. He obtained a diploma from the Physio-Medical College of Indiana in 1904 and was licensed to practice medicine in Indiana that same year. He is not a member of his local medical society . .

Bond is known to us, also, as having used for a good many years the Koch treatment, another piece of cancer quackery. His name appears, also, as a member of the Board of Trustees of the "American Association for Medico-Physical Research," on a 1952 letterhead. This is a group of quacks and faddists, devoted originally to the Abrams technique, but later to other weird medical schemes and treatments

With respect to Adolph E. Schneider, we find his name listed among those who are officers of the "American Association for Medico-Physical Research." . . .

Our principal information concerning Schneider is in connection with his "Oxygen Therapy" apparatus. This had had various names, but is principally known as "Modified Oxygen." He has also operated what he calls the "Oscillo-Therapy Research Institute" in Chicago. There is also indication that an Adolph E. Schneider of Chicago had a rather questionable connection with one George C. Erickson. Erickson was selling the "Vrilium Tube," an inert therapeutic bauble, to the gullible, at rather high prices. The Federal Food and Drug Administration caused the prosecution of Erickson

and his partner for misbranding the Vrilium Tube. The hook-up as between Erickson and Schneider is not clear, but apparently some of the customers of Erickson were referred to Schneider for "Oxygen Therapy." This occurred along about 1941.

My final reference is to E. H. Bronner, who is often quoted by the anti-fluoridationists. I propose to quote a letter to the editor which was written by Dr. Dale G. Parker, D.D.S., M.S., and published in the *Capital Journal* on the 28th October, 1954. It reads as follows:—

I have before me an article printed in the October 23 issue of the *Capital Journal* in which a Dr. E. H. Bronner of Los Angeles is quoted at length as saying: "As a Research Chemist . . . based on years of practical experience in health food and chemical field, I wish to state 'fluoridation of drinking water is pure insanity!' . . . For some so-called 'doctors' to be able to persuade a civilized nation to add—voluntarily—a deadly poison to its drinking water is unbelievable and is the very height of criminal insanity."

Recently I moved to Salem from the State of Iowa and the name of Dr. E. H. Bronner recalled a town meeting in the city of Clinton, Iowa, January 30, 1962, called to decide whether or not to fluoridate the water supply there. Dr. Bronner spoke vehemently against fluoridation at this meeting.

Two days later, on February 1, 1952, the news staff of the *Clinton Herald* exposed with indisputable evidence that Dr. Bronner was:

1. An escaped inmate of the Elgin, Illinois State Hospital for the mentally ill.
2. He had been committed to this hospital on March 27, 1946, as mentally ill and had escaped in 1947.

As proof of that, I now propose to quote from a letter dated the 9th May, 1955, written by a Dr. Daniel Haffron, which reads—

Emil Bronner was received here by commitment from Cook County on March 27, 1946. He was considered here to be mentally ill. On July 7, 1947, he left without proper authorization and was considered to be on escape. As a result of a regulation issued by the Department of Welfare recently, patients on unauthorised absence for a period of more than five years were ordered absolutely discharged. Such a discharge was issued in the case of Mr. Bronner on March 10, 1955.

I have plenty of information about other authorities, and particularly concerning Dr. Waldbott, about whom I will have

something to say later on. In quoting these various authorities I have said enough to show that they are not to be relied upon in most instances.

I now wish to turn to the second part of my task, which is to show that the propaganda which is distributed by the anti-fluoridation society of Western Australia in particular is misleading. I draw members' attention to a pamphlet which has been circulated in people's homes. The pamphlet depicts a drum of sodium fluoride and shows a man dressed in protective clothing. He is wearing large rubber gloves; he has a mask over his face; and he looks as though he is about to take off into space.

The purpose of this pamphlet is to frighten housewives. It is placed in letter-boxes. Housewives see the pamphlet, pick it up, look at it, and say, "It is frightening." Industrial workers use protective clothing today in many industries. As the member for Claremont said, the purpose of the pamphlet is to frighten elderly and lonely people, and those who have nothing in particular to think about.

Mr. Graham: It is like Liberal-Party propaganda at election time.

Dr. HENN: It is quite unlike that. On the back of this particular photograph is a reference to Dr. Waldbott. It says as follows:—

No One Can Guarantee Its Safety

This is what one of the many medical scientists has to say:

Dr. Waldbott is one of the few qualified persons quoted by the anti-fluoridationists. He is quoted as saying—

Damage to the brain is one of the adverse effects of drinking fluoridated water. Patients afflicted with chronic fluoride intoxication suffer loss of memory and inability to concentrate. Neurological manifestations of the kind encountered in acute fluoride poisoning, spastic paralysis and convulsions, migraine-like headaches and loss of co-ordination of muscular power in arms and legs have been described likewise in chronic poisoning.

I shall not go on, Sir, or you may begin to get nervous and shake in your chair. Dr. Waldbott is highly qualified, and that is what he is reported to have said.

I should like to refer to a statement by Dr. J. Roy Doty, Secretary of the Council on Dental Therapeutics of the American Dental Association. It refers to a circular by Dr. George L. Waldbott entitled, "Medical Evidence Against Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies." It reads as follows:—

It may be noted that a serious charge can be directed at the circular because of the inaccuracy with which it reports the context of medical literature and that relating to physiology. The errors are so profound that

it is difficult to believe that the writer, a physician, could have had the original articles before him for examination at the time of writing the circular. The following examples may be verified by direct comparison of the circular and the original publications:

(1) *Assertion in the circular* (page 6): "In a twenty-two year old soldier reported by Linsman and McMurray, whose death was due to naturally fluoridated drinking water . . ."

Original Publication: A careful examination of the article reveals that the authors do not ascribe the patient's death to fluoride. Death was attributed to the result of severe kidney disease caused in part by an infection.

"The pyonephrosis probably followed the local infection at the sternal biopsy site which provided a portal of entry."

"The fluorine may have played some role in the anaemia but it must be concluded on the basis of the pathological findings that the anaemia and its lack of response to therapy was primarily on the basis of the uraemia present."

I do not propose to read any more because it would take up too much time.

Mr. Tonkin: Is that soldier a Texan? Did he come from Spur, Texas?

Mr. Hawke: What action did the A.M.A. take against the doctor?

Dr. HENN: Action for what?

Mr. Hawke: For writing misleading material.

Dr. HENN: The doctor can do what he likes, so long as he does not perform a criminal act. Doctors are not directed by any association.

Mr. Hawke: What about the ethics of the matter?

Dr. HENN: It does not apply to Australia any more than it does to America. We can join the Australian Medical Association if we wish, but we do not have to.

I have one other example of misrepresentation, of propaganda. Some time ago I received a pamphlet. It showed a very poor reproduction of a set of teeth. It depicted the effect which fluorosis had on teeth. By the time there had been several reproductions made of the pamphlet, one would not know what the picture on it represented.

The heading on the front of the pamphlet says, "Fluoridation. Final Submissions to Dunedin City Council, by D. M. Robinson, M.R.S.H., F.N.Z.I.M., M.A.A.N., Hon. M. Inst. S.P." I propose to read out what those letters represent. They are as follows:—Member, Royal Society of Health; Fellow, New Zealand Institute of Management; Member, American Academy of Nutrition; Hon. Member of the Institute of Sewage Purification. Mr. Robinson is also shown as being Member, Auckland

City Council; Member, Auckland Metropolitan Council; Member, Auckland University Council; Chairman, Auckland Metropolitan Road Safety Council; President, Auckland Anti-Fluoridation Society Incorporated; and Dominion President, New Zealand Anti-Fluoridation Association.

The pamphlet is by D. M. Robinson and it is written on behalf of the Dunedin Anti-Fluoridation Society. The picture on the front page refers to the effects of excess fluorides and it says, "The above photograph is from the *Dental Delineator* Winter, 1957. It was published by permission of Professor H. G. Radden, D.D.Sc., (Melb.), F.D.S.R.C.S. (Ed.), Dean of the Turner Dental School, Manchester. The illustration demonstrates the dental effects of excessive fluoride ions in drinking water."

When I read that I thought that Professor Radden was against fluoridation of water supplies. I worked very closely with him when he was a professor at the Dental School here some time ago. I was engaged as honorary anaesthetist, and I though I knew him well enough to find out what was the score. I defy anyone looking at this pamphlet to reach any conclusion but that Professor Radden was against fluoridation of water supplies.

However, I find that Professor Radden wrote a letter and had it published in the *British Dental Journal*, the *Dental Delineator*, and the *Australian Dental Journal*. His letter reads—

Dear Sir,

Information has reached me that a clinical photograph depicting the effects of excessive fluoride ion in the drinking water, which I permitted the "Dental Delineator" to publish in 1957 has appeared in a brochure issued under auspices of the Dunedin Anti-Fluoridation Society. I wish it to be known that the publication in the latter brochure was quite unauthorised and I desire my name to be dissociated from it.

H. G. Radden, Etc.

Mr. Davies interjected.

Dr. HENN: If the honourable member interjects 50 times he will not convince me that this is not meant to deceive people into thinking that Professor Radden is associated with that picture and those remarks.

Mr. Davies: He just dissociates himself from it.

Dr. HENN: The honourable member may think differently from the way I think. I will now leave this group of little people who cater to the twilight zone of professionalism and turn my attention to the overwhelming number of reputable medical and dental scientists in the great institutions of the world—the universities—who

are renowned for the truth of their researches. Here again one can quote from these authorities because they are, after all, researchers and trained in the matter of research. They have high degrees, and they are not practising clinical medicine or pathology, but are trained to be researchers; and that is a specialty all of its own.

I would like to take some of the main questions that are asked, or things that are thrown in our faces, shall I say, by the anti-fluoridationists, and quote the answers given by the various authorities to which I shall refer.

In the first instance we hear much about fluoride being a cumulative poison. On this point I would like to quote from the British Ministry of Health brochure of 1963. The Leader of the Opposition did mention, I think, that he felt quite sure fluoride taken in water over a long period of time would eventually become poisonous. I do not know the actual words he used, but I am quite sure he referred to this matter, and it is a question that many people have referred to. The following is the opinion given by the British Ministry of Health:—

The human body stores a portion of its fluoride intake and excretes the remainder. But this is one of the normal physiological processes which goes on throughout life. With a fluoride level in the water of 1 ppm. the amount of fluoride retained by the body causes no harmful effects.

I also have with me a long article written by an American expert on the methods by which fluorides are excreted in excessive, temperate, and cold climates; and I think it proves conclusively that the body does not permit more than a certain amount of fluoride to remain in it, but gets rid of the fluoride just as it gets rid of many other salts, both organic and inorganic.

The next question that is often asked is: Does the addition of fluoride affect the purity of water? The answer given by the same authority is—

Water in nature is never pure: it contains mineral salts in solution, it is often coloured and turbid, it may be bacterially unsafe, it may be acidic and dissolve metal piping. All these properties must be corrected by chemical treatment before a water is deemed suitable for public supply. Treatment varies according to the character of the water, and altogether about 30 chemicals are in normal use at water-works. The addition of 1 ppm. fluoride does not affect the normal or industrial use of the water; it is tasteless, colourless and odourless and cannot be detected except by chemical analysis.

The next question I wish to answer is: Can fluorides cause or accelerate the growth of cancer? This question has been discussed at great length, and it is one of the most

frightening questions. The answer I propose to read is given by the American Dental Association, dated March, 1960. The following is the statement which the association dealt with:—

Fluorides cause or accelerate the growth of cancer.

I shall read briefly from the reply given—

Dr. Charles S. Cameron, President of the American Cancer Society, stated in a letter to Dr. Tom M. Oliver of Waco, Texas: "No valid scientific evidence known to the society supports causative relationship of fluorine (specifically in amounts used in water fluoridation for the purpose of dental caries prophylaxies) to cancer. On the contrary such epidemiological and laboratory experimental data as are available indicate no such relationship.

There is more in that vein, but I will leave the quotation there. Another statement is: Fluorides are by-products of aluminium, a harmful material used for cooking utensils. Here again I quote from the *American Dental Association Journal*—

It has long been demonstrated that the use of aluminum cooking utensils has no bearing on health. Moreover, fluoride compounds used for water fluoridation are not a by-product of aluminum plants. The Aluminum Company of America does produce sodium fluoride, but in a special plant, in the same manner as it is produced by others not in the aluminum industry.

People often say that fluoridation benefits only children. I think I heard the Leader of the Opposition say that, and we will probably hear the Deputy Leader of the Opposition say it as well!

Mr. Fletcher: Don't guess!

Dr. HENN: No. To continue—

It is true that in the beginning of a fluoridation programme, the greatest benefits will accrue to the younger children; however, as these children become adults, they will continue to benefit and eventually the entire continuous-resident population of the community will be enjoying the full benefits from fluoridation. Studies conducted among adults in fluoride areas show that the dental benefits continue throughout life.

Mr. Tonkin: Who said that?

Dr. HENN: I have just read from the American Dental Association brochure. The references in the brochure will show exactly who made that statement, but I have not time to go into that now. I will show the brochure to the honourable member later.

Another statement that is made is that fluoridation is compulsory medication and everybody is compelled to drink it. The statement here is—

Fluoridation is not medication. Fluoridation does not mean compulsion on the part of individuals any more than does the use of other community resources, including chlorinated water. People form communities so that they can share such common public services as schools, fire departments, water supplies and libraries. If a separate group in the community wants a school that is different from that chosen by the majority, then it establishes its own. The same principle applies equally to the water and milk supplies. If a community wants its water fluoridated and its milk pasteurized, then fluoride-free water and unpasteurized milk can be obtained outside the community.

The last paragraph appeals to me quite a lot—

It may be pointed out in addition that it would be a travesty of the democratic process of free choice if a minority of misguided but militant partisans were to be permitted to prevent the majority of the population from choosing to obtain relief from dental disease by the simplest, cheapest and most effective method available.

I have quoted possibly at too great a length from these authorities; but I feel that none of us has anything to contribute to this debate apart from these opinions, whether they be opinions of an anti-nature or a pro-nature. We can all get on to the question of natural fluorides and give our views of constipation and sweating, and one thing and another; but I do not think it gets us anywhere with regard to the matter we are discussing.

I have quoted at some length on purpose; because it cannot be stated too often that so much work has been done for so many years in connection with this subject that it is quite ridiculous, and almost criminal, to overlook it.

We have heard of the letter that was written to *The West Australian*, the *Daily News*, and the Australian Broadcasting Commission by a number of eminent medical men in this State. I am going to read the letter in full because I think it is of great importance to this Parliament—

Dear Sir,

We, the undersigned, support the action of the Minister for Health, the Honourable Ross Hutchinson, in introducing legislation into the Parliament of Western Australia to enable local authorities to fluoridate their water supplies. We consider this to be a public health measure of the first importance.

In making this decision we have taken into account the recommendations of recognised expert committees of the World Health Organisation, the Central Health Services Council of the

Ministry of Health in the United Kingdom and the National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia.

We note that the proposals have the support of the Australian and British Medical Associations and the Australian and British Dental Associations.

Yours faithfully,

and the letter is signed by Gordon King, Kenneth Sutherland, Eric G. Saint, W. B. Macdonald, Ralph H. Crisp, A. L. Dawkins, Cyril Fortune, J. T. Irvine, Robert Godfrey, and Noel Feverill. We have, in those men, the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine in the University of Western Australia and Chairman, W.A. Branch, Australian Regional Council of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order! The honourable member has another five minutes.

Dr. HENN: Thank you. We also have the Dean of the Faculty of Dental Science and Professor of Dental Science in the University of Western Australia; the Professor of Medicine in the University of Western Australia; the Professor of Child Health in the University of Western Australia; the Immediate Past President, Australian Paediatric Association; the Chairman, State Committee, Royal Australasian College of Surgeons; the Chairman, State Committee, Royal Australasian College of Physicians; the Chairman, W.A. Faculty Board, Australian College of General Practitioners; the Medical Superintendent, Princess Margaret Hospital for Children; and the Superintendent, Perth Dental Hospital.

What I want to know from the other side of the House is this: How can the Leader of the Opposition get up in his place and virtually disagree with what these eminent medical authorities say; and how can he lead the members on the other side of the House into doing something which virtually amounts to their repudiating the position of these medical men and their entitlement to hold the positions they do hold? Might I say here that there would not be a bigger or brighter galaxy of stars in any capital city in the whole of Australia than those men who have subscribed their names to this letter.

Mr. Tonkin: How do we know that they know any more about fluoride than they did about thalidomide?

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: They were not asked to assess that.

Dr. HENN: I expected the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to make such an interjection, which is absolutely illogical.

Mr. Tonkin: How do we know?

Dr. HENN: I will tell the honourable member if he will give me an opportunity.

Mr. Hawke: Certainly; we will give you an extension of time.

Dr. HENN: That is exactly what I will need. It seems extraordinary to me that the Leader of the Opposition can get up and deny what these gentlemen say; and that he can lead his party, including members on the other side of the House, into repudiating what these gentlemen and doctors say. In fact, the honourable member is saying that they should not hold their positions; that they are not fit to advise the Government of the State, or to advise individuals in the State.

Mr. Hawke: You are saying all this.

Dr. HENN: To come back to what the Deputy Leader of the Opposition suggested in regard to thalidomide, I point out that when I commenced my speech I made reference to the thalidomide tragedies, and I did not belittle them for one moment; but I say that those gentlemen who subscribed to this letter are far more qualified to give an opinion than is the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Hawke: What does that prove?

Mr. Tonkin: That is not an answer to my question.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: They were able to assess the merits of the case; they have the qualifications to do so.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Dr. HENN: I was about to answer an interjection by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition before we suspended for tea. The interjection was to the effect, "What about thalidomide?" By his question I think he was indicating that a mistake was made with the use of thalidomide and so a mistake would be made by using fluoride in drinking water. That is how I interpreted his question.

In reply, I believe the two substances are quite different. On the one hand, we have fluoride which is a salt or ion found naturally in water in certain parts and which varies in certain places; and on the other hand, we have thalidomide which is a potent biological substance of quite a different nature.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): The honourable member's time has expired.

Extension of Time

Mr. O'NEIL: I move—

That the honourable member's time be extended.

Motion (extension of time) put and passed.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): The honourable member may proceed.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

Dr. HENN: I thank you, Mr. Speaker, and the House for the opportunity given me to continue my speech, and I promise I will not be much longer. I was saying that the two substances are quite different; and I feel that I, for one, would not deny that tragedies and accidents have occurred in the past and will occur in the future as we progress towards an improvement in medical, dental, and other sciences. I am sorry that such accidents and tragedies have occurred in the past, but I think they will occur again from time to time in the future. Nevertheless, for the reasons I have given, I do not think that thalidomide and fluoride can be bracketed. As I have said before, I think it would be base and ignoble for anyone to say he is going to wipe out the whole of the past brilliant history of medical development by refusing to accept new scientific developments in the future.

I would now like to refer to a pamphlet published by the Ministry of Health in Great Britain in 1963, which gives its views on the question of the safety of fluoridation of public water supplies. I do not think anybody would disagree with me when I say that the Ministry of Health of Great Britain is a very conservative body. Like any other body of that nature, it is non-political; but it has been well known for many years for its conservative approach to scientific and medical problems. Its 1963 report on fluoridation reads—

The Minister's expert medical and dental advisory committees have strongly endorsed the report on the studies carried out in this country, and have advised the general adoption of fluoridation which they are satisfied carries no hazard. The committees comprise leading members of the dental and medical professions in this country, people with long experience of the careful and critical assessment of the results of medical research. Details of their advice are given in the appendix to this booklet. All these favourable endorsements are in line with the conclusion reached by the World Health Organisation Expert Committee on Water Fluoridation in 1958 that 'The effectiveness, safety and practicability of fluoridation as a caries—preventative measure has been established'.

The following professional and local authority organisations in this country also support fluoridation without reservations:—

- General Dental Council.
- British Dental Association.
- British Medical Association.
- Society of Medical Officers of Health.
- County Councils Association.

Association of Municipal Corporations.

Royal Society of Health.

Just to wind that up, I certainly want to endorse what was said by the Standing Dental Advisory Committee of England and Wales. I will not read all of the endorsements that were contained in the appendix mentioned in my last quotation; but I would like to read the last part of it, which is as follows:—

There has not yet been time for results to be achieved on the permanent teeth in the British studies, but there is good reason to suppose that these will be in line with American experience in view of the similarity of the findings in natural fluoride areas in both countries. This improved condition of the deciduous dentition should also have a beneficial effect on permanent teeth.

I do not think anybody could say that that was an irrational statement or one that is anything but conservative. It goes on—

In view of the reduced incidence of dental caries in the deciduous teeth resulting from fluoridation in the study areas and the good results in both deciduous and permanent teeth obtained elsewhere, the Committee advise the Minister to take action to promote the general adoption of fluoridation in England and Wales as soon as possible.

It would be possible for me to read similar statements that were made in Scotland. In fact, in Great Britain, England and Wales have one Ministry of Health, and Scotland has one of its own, so there are two independent bodies. That is the advice that has been given to the Minister for Health by the Ministry of Health in Great Britain, and the Minister is taking action on it.

I now come back to Perth, Western Australia, where our Minister for Health has been advised by the Public Health Department that, in its opinion, fluoridation of water supplies should be commenced. The first reaction I had when the Leader of the Opposition opposed this motion was that he had no confidence in the Department of Public Health.

Mr. Oldfield: He never said that.

Dr. HENN: I merely said that was my reaction to what the Leader of the Opposition said; and I think it will be the reaction of many members in this House, and certainly of thousands of people in Western Australia. I, for one, have confidence in the Public Health Department of Western Australia, which has led the way for Australia in many fields. The first one was the eradication of pulmonary tuberculosis. Another one was the reduction of the maternal mortality rate to the lowest of any among all the States

in her teens. Simply because her teeth had decayed she would suffer as a consequence serious psychological troubles.

in the Commonwealth; and it took further action only last year, or the year before, to reduce that rate still further through its Minister introducing another Bill.

Mr. Rowberry: Could you give figures on that?

Dr. HENN: Yes. I do not have them here, but I would be quite happy to do so. The department now recommends the introduction of a Bill to reduce dental caries which, it must not be forgotten, not only causes cavities and infection in the teeth, but also has quite a marked bearing on the health of the individual as a whole.

So I find it extremely hard to agree with the Leader of the Opposition when he says that because the Australian Labor Party says this measure should not be introduced, we should oppose it. On the contrary, I say that because such bodies as the Ministry of Health in Great Britain, and similar bodies in the United States of America—such as the American Dental Association—are in favour of it, we should agree to the legislation. Further, both our own medical and dental associations in this State are of the same opinion, and I am quite prepared to vote in favour of the Bill because I have not found any evidence against it which can be taken with the evidence for it, but I find the scales weighing very heavily in favour of fluoridation of water supplies. For that reason I support the Bill.

MR. TONKIN (Melville—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [7.42 p.m.]: This subject is one of the most important this Assembly has had to consider for many sessions. It should be borne in mind that on this question there are no experts in this House, and I make no exceptions in saying that. As a matter of fact, we are all scientifically illiterate—every one of us. Therefore, the only argument which we can use is the one known as argument from authority. The Minister for Health sought to deprive me of that argument the other evening by saying in advance that I would quote authorities of a greater or lesser repute, but they did not amount to much.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: That is not right.

Mr. TONKIN: Well, let us see what the Minister did say. Let us get it right. I am unable to find the Minister's speech amongst these proofs for the moment, so I will not waste any more time but I will pick it up in a minute and read it to the Minister.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You can read it later.

Mr. TONKIN: I was about to say that the only argument which any member in this House can use in connection with this matter is argument from authority. There

are many brilliant minds opposed to this proposal, and when I say "brilliant minds" I say it emphatically. I refer to Nobel prize winners, outstanding research chemists, and doctors who, despite the pressure upon them, have nevertheless stood up to what they honestly believe is right.

On this question it is necessary to present as well as one can a balanced view of the position. I am afraid the member for Wembley departed from that line by deliberately distorting the position, and selecting from names which are supposed to be opposed to fluoridation ones which I have never heard of. In an endeavour to fit myself to have a proper appreciation of this matter I have read for more than 100 hours everything which has come my way, irrespective of the side which the literature supported. I did that in an endeavour to form an opinion as to the facts and as to the correct thing to do.

During the course of my reading I came across what I thought was a very apt statement by Mark Twain. He said—

The fascinating thing about statistics is that you can get such wholesale returns in conjecture from such trifling investment in fact.

That seems to be the line taken by many people in connection with this question.

The view of the Labor Party is not the view which has been expressed by the member for Claremont, or by the member for Wembley. The view of the Labor Party on this question is that no Minister should be placed in the position of being able to say, "You are going to have fluoride in the water supply whether or not you like it." The Labor Party believes that if fluoridation is such a good thing as it is supposed to be then the people will be keen to put it into operation. The people are the ones to say so, and fluoridation should not be forced down their throats, irrespective of what they think about it.

As a matter of fact, there are very few places in the world where fluoridation has been adopted in the way in which the Minister wants it to be adopted in Western Australia. Recently the Minister was asked a question with regard to the position in Sweden. Some correspondent wrote to *The West Australian*, and the Minister said that the Government in Sweden last year decided to fluoridate water supplies.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Didn't I say that Sweden had passed legislation?

Mr. TONKIN: Yes, passed legislation to enable that country to fluoridate water supplies, or to bring in fluoridation. It is as well to know what is the position in Sweden, so I obtained it from the place where we can be assured the information is right; that is, from the Swedish Legation in Canberra. In Sweden the position

is that there was one town which fluoridated the water supply and that was the town of Norrköping; but a court action was taken to prove that it was unlawful, and the courts decided fluoridation could not continue. The Government then introduced a Bill, not to make it compulsory upon communities to fluoridate—

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I did not say that.

Mr. TONKIN: —but to enable communities which wanted to fluoridate water supplies to do so. Despite the fact we were told there was no division of authoritative opinion, there was such a protracted discussion in Parliament that the Minister for Health only got the Bill through on giving an undertaking that permission to fluoridate water supplies in Sweden would be restricted for a period of five years to one town, and that period was to run from the time when the town commenced to fluoridate. My information is that up to April of this year this town of Norrköping, which had put into operation fluoridation of water supplies for a number of years previously, had not yet applied once again for the right to fluoridate. So, up to April of this year the situation in Sweden was no fluoridation at all, and for five years from the time that Norrköping makes application to fluoridate no other community in Sweden will be given permission.

What an entirely different situation is that from the impression given by the Minister in his statement to *The West Australian*! No person in Western Australia—who did not know the facts—could have any idea that the situation in Sweden was as it is. He would come to the conclusion that Sweden was following other places which have decided to fluoridate.

It is necessary in a discussion of this kind to have regard for the ideas of brilliant people, in order to put the matter into proper perspective. One brilliant person was recently in Western Australia; he is C. P. Snow, a person of very great repute. He appeared on television, and I watched and listened to him with very great interest. It may be as well to read what such a person of science had to say about scientific questions, so I obtained his book entitled *The Science of Government* and also the one entitled *Postscript to Science of Government*. These books were well worth reading. Mr. Snow had this to say—

One of the most bizarre features of any advanced industrial society in our time is that the cardinal choices have to be made by a handful of men in secret, and at least in legal form by men who cannot have a first-hand knowledge of what those choices depend upon, and what their results may be.

He went on to say further—

Some of the most intelligent people in the world cannot really comprehend the nature and fallibility of scientific judgment.

He finished up by saying—

Of course, it is not always easy to know which scientists to trust.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I agree.

Mr. TONKIN: I repeat what Mr. Snow had to say—

Of course, it is not always easy to know which scientists to trust.

Therefore, when we approach this question, we have to try and analyse the situation so that we can sincerely form an opinion as to which scientist to trust, and which scientist not to trust.

Mr. Dunn: If there were a referendum how many people would go to that trouble?

Mr. TONKIN: I am not now discussing whether or not this question should be decided by a referendum; I am discussing the point as to whether or not fluoridation should be adopted compulsorily. Both the Minister and the member for Wembley supported their arguments by quoting experts. However, the doctors in Western Australia, to their credit, did not claim they were experts when they wrote the letter in support of fluoridation.

In this respect I am reminded of a story I heard 40 years ago, and I vouch for its authenticity. There was an eminent surgeon then living called Lawson Tait. At that time he was president of a society to which the surgeons belonged. Some surgeon, whose name I have forgotten, thought he had discovered a new corpuscle in the blood. He wrote a paper on the subject, and a meeting of these experts was arranged to hear this doctor, who claimed he had discovered the new corpuscle. He was to explain all about it to his educated assembly.

After he had gone to some pains to explain all about the matter - - and he was heartily applauded by the experts present - - a clergyman in the audience questioned the logic of the conclusion, and pointed out a possible source of error. Just imagine this: Here were the learned doctors who swallowed the thing holus-bolus but a clergyman had the temerity to suggest a mistake had been made!

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Who said the doctors swallowed the thing? Do you say that, or did the doctors really accept it?

Mr. TONKIN: The father of the person concerned told me the story. The persons at that meeting pooh-poohed the idea that a clergyman could be right and that the eminent doctors themselves could be wrong. That clergyman was Oswald St Claire. The remarkable thing is that nothing has been heard of that corpuscle since. The clergyman exploded the theory

Dr. Henn: What corpuscle was that?

Mr. TONKIN: It was non-existent. Let us see if we can get down to a balanced consideration of the subject before us with fully documented opinions of people who ought to know, so that we can see where the conflict of views comes in; and let us as reasonable men determine what is the right view; because, make no mistake about it, many untruths and inaccuracies are being told about this matter.

On Saturday last in *The West Australian* there appeared a letter under the name of Philippa Hall, of Mt. Lawley. It states—

Fluoridation of Water

Philippa Hall, Mt. Lawley: In view of the various arguments for and against fluoridation of our water supply, I was interested in some information published in an English periodical, the *Lady*.

It said that a circular from the Ministry of Health was sent early this year to local medical officers of health in Britain. In this circular it is recommended that fluoridated water should only just be brought to the boil before making tea.

It also warned that fluoridated water used to boil vegetables must not be used to make gravies, soups or stocks, and preserves or porridge should not be made with boiling fluoridated water.

If the information given in this magazine be correct and such circulars with such warnings are issued in Britain, do our own health authorities know about it?

I had read about this statement which purported to come from the Ministry of Health and I was somewhat surprised at the Minister's reply, which was as follows:—

Health Minister Hutchinson said that it was difficult to understand why people believed misrepresentation and sometimes straight-out untruths about the beneficial reform of fluoridation of water supplies.

Regarding the above letter, an inquiry from the British Ministry of Health had brought the following reply: "The Ministry of Health never has issued a warning about boiling fluoridated water. Although boiling increases the concentration of fluoride to some extent, harmful levels cannot be reached."

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: What is the matter with that?

Mr. TONKIN: Just wait a minute!

Mr. Graham: Be patient!

Mr. TONKIN: I have here what purports to be a copy of *The Kingston Whig-Standard*, 304-310 King Street, Kingston, Ontario,

dated Saturday, the 30th March, 1963. The leading article, headed "The Battle Begins in Britain", reads—

For some reason, the campaign to force whole populations to drink water containing sodium fluoride has not yet really got under way in Britain. We have followed the battles in this country, all of us, as citizens either in favour of or opposed to this measure. The arguments for and against have been many and confusing and this newspaper has embraced that of the violation of civil rights involved in compulsory fluoridation in opposing its application.

In Britain the Ministry of Health is at present in the strange position of trying to convince people that they should accept fluoridation and at the same time being forced to give damning answers to certain questions which have been asked publicly. *The New Statesman*, an organ noted for its extremely informed and hard-headed attitudes, has recently published an article dealing with this series of questions. In reprinting the article, the *Vancouver Sun* said this by way of introduction: "Opponents of fluoridation are often dismissed as cranks and faddists . . ."

I interpolate to say how true that is. We heard it tonight from the member for Wembley. To continue—

. . . . But in Britain, where the fluoridation battle is just beginning, a writer in *The New Statesman* offers some uncranklike reasons for keeping sodium fluoride out of the water supply."

The Ministry questionnaire, sent to all local authorities in Britain, admits, first of all, that fluoridation of the water supply raises certain difficulties. Dosage is one of them; 1 part per million is the accepted percentage. Some people drink more water than others (nursing mothers, for instance); boiling water concentrates the dose; and when the intake approaches 3 p.p.m., the Ministry admits, it is potentially dangerous.

Mr. Graham: No comments?

Mr. TONKIN: The article continues—

Cow's milk, we learn, is not much affected by fluoride in the water but production of milk drops and the cow "can suffer ill health" if the dosage is too large. This is not very reassuring for nursing mothers; nor for doctors and nurses who (in Britain) try to encourage breast feeding. As for the boiling of fluoridated water, the implications, as revealed by the Ministry, are far-reaching. The Ministry implies, that to avoid trouble, fluoridated water should not be left boiling for any length of time; that stews and broth should never be made, nor marmalade and other long-cooking preparations.

That is the very point about which Philippa Hall wrote to *The West Australian*. Now it seems an extraordinary thing that if this is a genuine copy of the paper—and I have, of course, no way of finding out whether it is or not, but I have to accept it at its face value; I do not think anyone dare misrepresent the paper to that extent—

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Of all the biased leading articles!

Mr. TONKIN: Now it is biased! It is the leading article, anyhow.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Do you believe that; and do you think I was wrong in saying what I did?

Mr. TONKIN: What I am saying is that the information contained in this is contrary to the information which the Minister—

Mr. Dunn: You are not sure of it.

Mr. TONKIN:—gave the Western Australian public.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I am asking which you believe—what I said or what you just read?

Mr. TONKIN: I do not believe either. It is not much good believing what the Minister says.

Mr. Bovell: Here he is again!

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister said that a considerable quantity of chemicals are contained in water.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: That is true.

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister gave—

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I will give them again, so you had better be careful what you say there!

Mr. TONKIN: There is no need for me to be careful. All I am saying about this is that the information contained in this gives substance to the questions asked by the correspondent to *The West Australian*, and it is completely at variance with the information the Minister himself supplied.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You remind me to answer this more fully when I reply.

Mr. TONKIN: That is the Minister's job.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I will produce a cable from the British Ministry of Health.

Mr. TONKIN: Let us get the history of this. It was about 1952 that the fluoridation programme was launched in America; and, when it was launched, very respected authorities gave it their blessing. Firstly there was the report of the Ad Hoc Committee Publication 214, National Academy of Sciences, and it referred to the fact that several artificial fluoridation projects had completed ten years of experimental study. The proponents of fluoridation claimed that these statistical studies proved the truth

of their contention. They said their findings proved conclusively the safety of the projected lifelong extraordinary ingestion of fluoride.

Now, the array of information I say, without hesitation, is most impressive to the uninitiated. More impressive still is the array of the people and organisations which endorsed it. For example, there is the United States Public Health Service, the American Dental Association, the World Health Organisation, the British Medical Council, the National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia, and the Medical and Dental Associations of Britain, America, and Australia—a very impressive list without any doubt whatever. In addition to the names I have just read, there were many other highly-placed professional organisations; and, as well, many lay clubs such as parents and citizens' associations, chambers of commerce, and the like.

Despite these impressive names; despite this strong support; despite the availability of large sums of money, with all the active support that that organisation entails, fluoridation has met great resistance. One has only to refer back to that article I read, "The Battle Begins in Britain"—the battle! All the strength and the money on the side of this supposedly sound case; yet despite that it has met very, very great resistance.

It seems true that initially very few persons, especially at the top, were critical of the programme. Most of the resistance stemmed from the reputed toxicity which was identified with fluoride; and, of course, the natural instinct of people for self-preservation. However, it is a fact that the number of critics capable of examining the fluoridation programme, on the basis of its scientific and statistical claims, has greatly increased; and so today we find many importantly-placed individuals seriously questioning almost every aspect of the fluoridation programme.

I received a letter, as did the Leader of the Opposition, from a person in Western Australia who was practising dentistry here; and he not only has qualifications from Western Australia, but has English credentials as well. In his letter, in which he deplored the fact that I was opposing fluoridation—I do not know how he came to that conclusion, because he had never heard me say anything on the subject—he made two statements. The first one was that there was no division of authoritative opinion on any aspect of fluoridation in any country. Well, having regard to the array of outstanding scientific men who have expressed opposition to fluoridation, and having regard to what has happened in Sweden, how could anyone seriously say that there was no division of authoritative opinion on any aspect of fluoridation in any country?

To make matters worse, he also made this statement: "You seem concerned about the amount of fluoride to be put in the water. Why? There are from 75 to 100 parts per million of fluoride in an average cup of tea." That is the statement in the letter I have here.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You had better check that information.

Mr. TONKIN: I would say so, when, of course, it has been scientifically proved that on the average, there is one part per million in a cup of tea. Of course, if a cup of tea is made with fluoride water of one part per million, and the kettle is allowed to boil for ten minutes before the tea is made, there would be considerably more than two parts per million in the cup of tea. The British Ministry of Health and H. Trendley Dean have both said that if that amount is reached there is trouble.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: What amount?

Mr. TONKIN: What amount?

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You did not give an amount.

Mr. TONKIN: Yes I did. I said more than two parts per one million.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You said more than three before.

Mr. TONKIN: No; I said more than two parts per one million. This so-called expert in Western Australia, who sought to guide me on this question, did so by making two absolutely false statements. This is a man who has these qualifications: M.D. Sc.—I take that to be a doctor of medical science—and F.D.S.R.C.S. (England). To make sure that it was not overlooked, he said at the bottom, after he had signed his name, "Master of Dental Science, University of Western Australia, Fellow in Dental Surgery, Royal College of Surgeons, England, and an Associate of the International Academy of Oral Pathology."

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Obviously I think you would appreciate that in the figures he has missed putting the decimal point in the front.

Mr. TONKIN: No; there are no decimal points at all. If the Minister were going to write decimal one, would he write 100?

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: No; I would not.

Mr. TONKIN: Of course the Minister would not, and neither would anybody else who knew anything about it. To make sure he means what he says—

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: It is obviously a mistake.

Mr. TONKIN: —he puts in brackets, 12 milligrammes. I have no doubt that this gentleman has really been fed up with this stuff—that it has been fed to him by somebody.

Mr. Graham: The member for Wembley.

Mr. TONKIN: He has been sold on it and has then sought to pass it on.

Mr. Dunn: He must have good teeth.

Mr. TONKIN: Whilst we are on the question of how many parts per million are likely to be toxic, let me quote from the *United States Dispensatory*, 24th Edition, p. 1456—

Fluorides violently poison all living tissue, for they precipitate and remove calcium; cause fall in blood pressure; respiratory failure; general paralysis; bones become hard and fragile.

Mr. Hawke: It has already happened to most members over that side.

Mr. TONKIN: If that is a lot of nonsense, do not blame me, because that is what members can find in that book.

Mr. Dunn: In what doses? Does it say?

Mr. TONKIN: It is the 24th edition.

Mr. Dunn: No; what dosage?

Mr. TONKIN: There is no date. It is like the encyclopaedia, apparently.

Mr. Dunn: It could be a thousand parts to the million.

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister said that a number of scientists of varying repute still opposed fluoridation, but when considered against the overwhelming body of scientific opinion, the opposition is comparatively very small indeed and is not considered to represent a division of opinion in the professional sphere.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: That is so.

Mr. TONKIN: That is not on a par with the statement of the member for Wembley who quoted the names of four persons, of whom I had not heard, and said they were typical of the people who were in the twilight of medicine. He conveniently overlooked men like Sinclair, Exner, Theorell, and Sutton, and hundreds of others who could be quoted as being opposed to this programme.

To come back to the matter I raised when I commenced to speak, and that was that the Minister tried to deprive me before I spoke of any possible argument which I might use, he said—

I do not wish to be sidetracked at this stage, but I would like to point out to the House that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition will quote findings from people who have made research into this matter. I daresay he will quote the findings of a varied number of people.

The member for Balcatta interjected—

You do not know what he will quote; he may even support your Bill.

The Minister went on—

I know he will quote these findings, and I know also he will not support the Bill.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I am not wrong, am I?

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister went on—

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition will, however, expect the House to take cognisance of and accept the remarks and findings he quotes. In many cases he will quote findings by individuals which have been checked by teams of experts and found to be wanting.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order! The honourable member has another five minutes.

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister continued—

Little merit can be placed on their findings, because they are not conducted in the proper way.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: That is prophetic.

Mr. TONKIN: It proves the point I made: that before I had a chance to get on my feet the Minister attempted to deprive me of the only possible argument available to every member in this House; and that is, argument from authorities.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Nonsensical!

Mr. Oldfield: A most undemocratic outlook.

Mr. TONKIN: The well-qualified dental surgeon, to whom I referred, ought to be placed in the category of those mentioned by the member for Wembley; and, unfortunately for members opposite, he is on the other side.

Mr. Bovell: Which side are you on?

Mr. TONKIN: I will leave the Minister to judge.

Mr. Graham: Go back to sleep!

Mr. TONKIN: The critics have searched the facts—

Mr. Bovell: There is not much bite in what you have said up to date.

Mr. TONKIN: —and on such basis question the validity of the claims put forward by those who support fluoridation. If the findings of the critics are matters of fact—and I repeat that we just have to judge whether they are or not, particularly where the information relates to the unsafe nature of fluoridation—then the continuance of the controversy by the proponents can amount to no more than a struggle for the maintenance of their prestige and its complicating involvements.

The fluoridation hypothesis in its entirety rests on a very narrow base of selected experimental information, and that is the information obtained from four towns where there were controlled experiments. This base is vulnerable to scientific criticism, but it is on this very narrow base that the impressive array of endorsement rests like an inverted pyramid. It can be shown that long before the special committee of the National Research Council gave its endorsement serious evidence against

fluoridation was already in existence. The validity of this evidence has been confirmed by subsequent investigation.

If the members of the special committee had applied the simple concept of the factor of safety to their hypothesis it is clear that their proposal could not pass the test as a safe procedure to be used in conjunction with the public water supplies. They could only have come to their questionable conclusions by failing to make a complete search of the literature or arbitrarily accepting certain information and conclusions to the exclusion of the totality of the knowledge on record.

The Minister has said that fluoridation is a beneficial health reform which is completely safe. I would say that on the part of the Minister that is an act of astonishing intellectual courage—

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Not one bit!

Mr. TONKIN: —because the American Medical Association will not guarantee its absolute safety. I have here a copy of a letter, over the signature of Bernard D. Hirsh, from the American Medical Association, dated the 7th September, 1961, to Kingston, Ontario. It reads—

This is in reply to your letters of August 18th and September 3rd, 1961. You inquire concerning the remarks I made in a letter to Mrs. Judy Jacob concerning the AMA's position on fluoridation.

In her letter, Mrs. Jacob referred to an AMA letter dated January 30, 1958 in which it was stated "It is not true that the AMA guarantees the safety of fluoridated water . . ." In the letter to Mrs. Jacob, she was advised that this statement was made in response to a specific question on this point from a woman in Brooklyn. It was also stated that the above quoted answer was and is correct and that the answer is not in conflict with any statements appearing in the AMA's pamphlet entitled "Statement on Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies". For your information, I am enclosing a copy of this pamphlet. Your attention is directed to page 3 of this pamphlet where it is stated that the AMA "is of the opinion that fluoridation of public water supplies is a safe and practical method of reducing the incidence of dental caries during childhood . . ."

As you noted in your letter, the AMA advised Mrs. Jacob that it does not engage in the approval, endorsement, guarantee or acceptance of any food, drug, cosmetic or medical appliance. Similarly, the AMA does not engage in the approval, endorsement, guarantee or acceptance of unfluoridated water or fluoridated water.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

Extension of Time

Mr. J. HEGNEY: I move—

That the honourable member's time be extended.

Motion (extension of time) put and passed.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): The honourable member may proceed.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

Mr. TONKIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am grateful for that, because I needed the time. It is a fairly big subject to cover and to do it adequately a good deal must be dealt with.

I referred earlier to a rather extensive and devastating critical review which had been published, and I want to draw the attention of the member for Wembley to the fact that this person by no means can be regarded as being in the twilight of medicine, that shady area from which he drew certain examples. I quote first of all the criticisms of—

F. B. Exner, M.D., F.A.C.R., in his publication *Fluoridation, North-West Medicines*, number 54 and numbers seven to 10 and 11 issues.

Then I refer to—

Mr. G. L. Waldbott, M.D., F.A.C.P., F.A.A.A., F.A.C.C.P., F.A.C.A. in his book, "Medical Evidence Against Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies," which is to be found in the *Australian Journal of Dentistry*, February, 1955, pages 13 to 20.

I refer also to the following:—

M. Klerer, M.D., in his book, *The Fluoridation Experiment, Contemporary Issues*, February and March, 1956.

P. R. N. Sutton, Ph.D., D.D.Sc. Melb., L.D.S., Vic. in his publication, "Errors & Omissions in Experimental Trials" Melbourne University Press, 1959.

In general these state—

- (1) The data submitted by the proponents of fluoridation to prove the safety of the measures are unreliable and controverted by scientific and medical information on record;
- (2) the data submitted to prove the claims related to dental prophylaxis are questionable;
- (3) the public water supply is neither a suitable nor efficient vehicle for administering fluoride. The variable consumption of children makes individual dosing unreliable.

Benjamin Nesin, Director of Laboratories, Department of Water Supply in the City of New York says—

It is no longer a question of fluoride being toxic when ingested continuously in small quantity. This is established.

It is possible for an individual living in an area with the water supply fluoridated at the recommended level of 1 ppm to acquire a chronic fluorosis due to sub-acute poisoning.

It is impossible to escape the ingestion of fluoride since in varying amount it accompanies almost every article of diet. Cases of fluoride poisoning have been recorded from areas naturally fluoridated.

It is characteristic of the history of toxicity that poisonous effects occur and become established long before the association becomes known. This arises from the imperfect knowledge of the basic causes of disease. While the medical profession identifies many diseases it is not always able to place their fundamental cause. In the case of fluoride poisoning the number of individuals in the medical and related fields who have devoted time and study to its understanding particularly its subtle clinical aspects are very few.

Standard medical text books provide very little information, and the standardisation of proper diagnostic procedures whereby individual physicians may be guided is not an established fact.

Despite assertions that fluoridation is completely safe it must be stated that the medical and public health professions cannot guarantee the comprehensive safety of fluoridation.

The use of the public water supply must carry a guarantee that its contamination with fluoride could not cause even a minimal harmful effect upon the consuming population—not just average individuals—but everyone; the weak and the sick. The addition of fluoride is not concerned with purification, improvement in quality, or providing an additional factor of safety. No one suggests that water is a cause of dental caries in children. The essentiality of fluoride as an element in nutrition has not been established.

My authority for that statement is L. A. Maynard, *New York State Journal of Medicine*, 1st May, 1955. To continue—

It is evident from the proponent's data that the margin between claimed benefit and hazard is extremely narrow. Facts revealed by investigation point to the following:—

- (1) Fluoride is cumulative at any level of intake. This means that fluoride accumulates in the body even when the water supply contains less than 1 ppm fluoride.

I understand that is contrary to the views held by the member for Wembley. My authority for the statement I have quoted is C. A. Boissevain and W. F. Trea in the

Journal of Dental Research, No. 13, pages 495 to 500, 1933. This has also been demonstrated by the following:—

G. E. Glock and F. Lowater, and M. M. Murray in the *Biochemistry Journal* No. 35, pages 1235 to 1239, November, 1941;

P. Durbin Wallace, Metabolism of Fluorine in the Rat using F18 as a tracer, *Journal of Dental Research*, No. 33, pages 789 to 810, December, 1954;

H. C. Hodge and F. A. Smith—Fluoridation as a Public Health Measure—American Association for the Advancement of Science, Washington, D.C., 1954, pages 85 to 101.

The previous claim made by the proponents of fluoridation that fluoride does not accumulate in the body unless it exceeds 4 p.p.m. has been thoroughly discredited. My authority for that is F. J. McClure—*Journal of Industrial Hygiene Toxicology*, No. 27, pages 159 to 170, June, 1954.

The fluoride content of a body increases with age. However, the extent and disposition of accumulation varies with individuals. Workers engaged in certain industries are exposed to fluoride poisoning at an accelerated level. I would refer members to H. B. Elkins—*Chemistry of Industrial Toxicology*, Wiley, N.Y., 1950, pages 72 to 74.

It can be shown that when a water supply is fluoridated, the additional intake of the fluoride resulting would expose these workers well beyond the safe level established for industrial environments. It is interesting to note that the comparative study between Newburgh and Kingston revealed four cases of fluorosis in an examination of 612 children from Kingston—the non-fluoridated city in this study.

Where a water supply is fluoridated at the recommended level of 1 p.p.m., the average personal intake of fluoride increases at least threefold. My authority for that is B. C. Nesin, Director of Laboratories, Water Supply, New York. The water intake of individuals may vary by as much as 20 to one. Workers engaged in high temperature environment consume considerably more water than white collar workers. Among children the amount of water intake varies very considerably. I would refer members to studies in Newburgh and other areas; to N. H. Neumann, *Personal Communication*, the 10th May, 1955; and Amos E. Light—*Fluoride Intake with relation to Milk and Water Consumption—Archives of Biochemistry and Biophysics*, No. 47, pages 447 to 479, 1953.

Time is running out, but I would like to refer to a statement made by the Minister with regard to whether we can safely control the dosage or not. The Minister read a letter which he said he had received from Hastings to prove that the

dose in the water supply could be adequately controlled. I think the letter said that the person who should have answered it was away, but that someone else was answering it on his behalf.

It so happens that I have a report here called, "The Current Status of Fluoridation Discussion." It is the result of a conference held on the 7th March, 1959, in New York city, and was sponsored by the Medical Dental Committee on the evaluation of fluoridation. This publication deals with the very question that the Minister dealt with; namely, the question of dosage. It refers to a report which was published not for this committee, but for general use, by a person called Ludwig, who was the officer in charge in the town to which the Minister referred in his quotation.

I was pressing the Minister at the time to give me the name of an engineer who would stake his reputation on the fact that the dosage could be controlled. In order that we might get the records straight I will read the piece in question. The Minister said—

There are now no problems associated with delivering a constant and uniform concentration of fluoride throughout the entire water reticulation system, although findings of a sort may be presented to prove that there is a wide variation in the concentration of fluoride through our water system. To refute this, 90 per cent. or more water engineers will say there is no problem in keeping the concentration of fluoride to the right level.

Mr. Tonkin: Can the Minister quote one eminent authority to support his views?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Yes.

Mr. Graham: Just one!

The Minister then said—

I may as well do so while I am speaking on it. I have here documents which have been received from New Zealand. There is a copy of a letter from the Department of Health, post office box 5013, Wellington, to the executive officer, Health Education Council, Australia, which reads as follows:

And then the report goes on and sets out the letter. I have not the time to read all of it, but I would like to read the following passage:—

The fluoride level in Hastings is satisfactory and I can only speculate about the rumour that check readings have revealed widely different concentrations of fluoride. In 1953, when the first attempt was made to fluoridate the water supply, a converted lime feeder was used but this proved unsatisfactory and the fluoride concentration was generally speaking much less than the desired level of one part

per million. This equipment was removed and replaced in 1954 by specially developed fluoridation equipment and has worked perfectly satisfactorily ever since.

That is not in accordance with the report which Ludwig himself published on this very question; because his report shows a very considerable variation in the amount of fluoride in the water delivery from time to time.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I have a photostat copy here of tests made over the last three years showing the variation.

Mr. Toms: Can you quote one?

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister may have all sorts of things. I quote from page 14 of this report issued by this organisation which, I understand, comprises more than 1,500 qualified men—dentists and doctors—and they were giving consideration to this question of fluoride. This is what they had to say about it in this passage—

This problem of fluoride uncontrollability has been experienced in foreign installations as well. A report of the Hastings, New Zealand, programme showed erratic and inconsistent fluoride dosing from 1953 to 1954.

That is the period mentioned in the letter during which this lime machine was used to put the fluoride in the water. This report coincides with what the Minister read about that. Continuing—

Sixty-six per cent. of the samples were below the range of proper control and 25 per cent. showed excessive amounts of fluoride. Subsequently changes were made to correct the situation and while a considerable improvement resulted, almost 25 per cent. of the samples at the treatment plant were still not within the proper control range. This Committee has information that the Norrköping, Sweden, fluoridation project has shown considerably greater variations in high and low fluoride values.

All I can say about it is that the information contained in this official report issued by Ludwig himself—who is the officer in control of fluoridation in Hastings—from which these people quoted, is information which is at variance with what the Minister supplied to the Parliament. The Minister can give his own explanation for it. I merely state the situation as it presents itself to me. I cannot imagine that these people would run the risk of quoting from a report which did not exist, or making incorrect quotations from Ludwig's report, because I think if they did that they would soon be in serious trouble.

May I conclude on this note: The member for Wembley was at some pains to show how those opposed to fluoridation misrepresented the position and did it in order to mislead people. I have here a copy of an extract from *The Times* of

Friday, the 24th November, 1961, and it is a statement from the High Court of Justice, Queen's Bench Division. It reads as follows:—

Fluoridation Dispute

Waldbott v. Sharp and Another
Before Mr. Justice Glyn-Jones

The settlement was announced of this libel action by Dr. George L. Waldbott of Detroit, Michigan, United States, against Dr. C. L. Sharp, Medical Officer of Health for Bedford, and the Royal Society for the Promotion of Health arising out of a paper presented at a meeting of the Society on June 16, 1960, entitled "Fluoridation—a Layman's Guide to an Advance in Preventive Medicine."

In his paper Dr. Sharp made strong criticisms of Dr. Waldbott and alleged that Dr. Waldbott had a financial interest in his opposition to fluoridation. Dr. Sharp now recognized that there was no foundation for this most damaging suggestion and he very much regretted that his enthusiasm for the subject matter of his paper should have led him into making such a statement, which he now unreservedly withdrew, and for which he offered his sincere apologies to Dr. Waldbott.

Mr. Dunn: What *Times* was that?

Mr. TONKIN: The *London Times*.

Mr. Hawke: Not the *Kalamunda Times*.

Mr. TONKIN: That shows there is misrepresentation on the side of those who stand for fluoridation.

Mr. Lewis: And none the other way.

Mr. TONKIN: I never said that; you said it. What we have to keep in mind about this is that for the first time within my knowledge a Minister in a Western Australian Government is going to take unto himself the power to say to districts in the country with water supplies, "You are going to have fluoridated water irrespective of what you say about it. You are going to have it because I say you are"—and the Minister is going to be responsible. The Bill puts the responsibility on him to make that determination. How does that square with Liberal policy—the little red booklet issued by the Liberal Party? The Minister should read that and try to square this policy with the precepts in that booklet. Of course it is impossible to do it.

Mr. Graham: Heil Hutchinson!

Mr. TONKIN: I say that Western Australia with regard to this question ought to follow what is more or less general practice throughout the world and let the people decide. If this is the good thing it is supposed to be; if it is demonstrated in America that it is perfectly sound, why is it that, despite repeated attempts, there is no fluoridation in New

York? One would have thought that with all the brains concentrated there and with all the powerful propaganda and the excellent examples around them—Newburgh and Grand Rapids—New York would be one of the first to fluoridate. But what are we told? They have not fluoridated because of the strength of one man; and they are waiting for him to die.

Mr. Graham: They need Hutchinson there!

Mr. TONKIN: One man in an organisation is too strong for anybody else, and because he is strongly opposed that is why New York has not fluoridated. What nonsense!

Mr. Graham: As the Minister would say, "A lot of bosh!"

Mr. TONKIN: Let us come back to Sweden, a country long known for its democratic ideas and principles. What did they say in that country? We will make it legal for one town which has been fluoridating for 10 years to continue to fluoridate if it wants to.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: It is to permit them.

Mr. TONKIN: If they want to. But for five years nobody else will be permitted, whether they want to do it or not.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: That is their way of doing it.

Mr. TONKIN: The attitude here is, "I, the Minister, have made up my mind this is good for you, and irrespective of whether you like it or not you are going to have it."

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: This is not a personal thing.

Mr. TONKIN: I would like to know what arrangement the Minister has in mind for testing the water fluoridated to make sure the discharge is properly controlled—

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: There will be regular tests.

Mr. TONKIN: —despite the fact that all sorts of difficulties have arisen in the countries where they use it. There is not the time available, but I could quote case after case from actual statistics to prove the difficulties that are attendant on fluoridation, and where great lengths of pipes have to be used in order to get water to the people. What we cannot overlook is the fact that in concentrating fluoride in the water, as a result of boiling we will be giving to some people far more than the quantity which is regarded as the safe quantity, because the safety factor for fluoride is zero; whereas for things like arsenic or caustic soda, which the Minister said were in our water supply, the safety factor would be at least 10.

But with fluoride it is zero; and one thing which concerns me very much is that it has been discovered and proved there is a plant called gifblaar which has the power of forming a fluoride carbon link. The plant itself in its metabolism forms a fluoride carbon link which is wholly poison, and we do not know what other plants may do the same thing if we water them with water containing sodium fluoride. That I find is contained in this volume entitled, *Medicinal and Poisonous Plants of Southern and Eastern Africa*. It refers to the substance which is formed from this fluoracetate, which was tracked down by a scientist named Marais, who proved that it is fluoracetic acid containing 15 mg./gm. One of the reasons for its elusiveness is that it is water-soluble and insoluble in most of the commonly used organic solvents. This acid is taken up by the plant from the fluoride in the ground and from the air and makes a fluoride carbon link, which is highly toxic, and a few leaves would kill an animal within seconds.

It is pointed out in a scientific review which I have here that we do not know which plants may have the same power as the gifblaar to form this fluoride carbon link. So I think our attitude ought to be—as is the attitude of many leading scientists—that until we know more about the possible after-effects of the ingestion of fluoride for a long period, we should not go ahead and compulsorily fluoridate as it is proposed to do in Western Australia. This is a subject which requires a lot of consideration.

MR. GRAYDEN (South Perth) [8.52 p.m.]: We often hear of political parties running away from their responsibilities. I feel that rather than their running away from their responsibility in regard to this particular matter, members of the Opposition are actually cringing and fleeing away from their responsibilities to the children of Western Australia.

After listening to the Leader of the Opposition a few nights ago and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition tonight, I would say this is the worst exhibition of political fence-sitting that it has ever been my misfortune to witness.

Mr. Hawke: It must be full-moon time again!

Mr. GRAYDEN: We know perfectly well—

Mr. Oldfield: It was, too, on Friday.

Mr. GRAYDEN: —the Opposition has been told not to speak on this subject. That is an extraordinary state of affairs. The normal pattern of debate in this House is for a member of the Government to speak followed by a member of the Opposition, and then a member of the Government followed by a member of the Opposition. That is the usual pattern.

Mr. Jamieson: That was a long time ago.

Mr. GRAYDEN: When we have controversial measures before us we find that members of the Opposition, one after the other, monopolise the debate, and members on the Government side, in their eagerness to get legislation through the House, do not get an opportunity to speak.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order!

Mr. GRAYDEN: Is that the situation which obtains in respect of this Bill? Of course it is not! We had the Minister for Health introduce the Bill in respect of fluoridation; the Leader of the Opposition replied to the debate; then we had two members on this side of the House—back-bench supporters of the Government—speaking to the measure.

Mr. H. May: Now we have you!

Mr. GRAYDEN: Then the Deputy Leader of the Opposition spoke; and as far as I know no other members of the Opposition are going to speak because they are too frightened to.

Mr. Jamieson: That is as far as you know

Mr. GRAYDEN: The Labor Party in Western Australia is frightened of what its back-bench members will say in respect of fluoride and they have been told to say nothing. But we will have member after member on this side of the House getting up and declaring where he stands.

Mr. Oldfield: When did you alter your line on this?

Mr. GRAYDEN: However, no member of the Opposition will speak, for the reasons, I have outlined. This is the first time such a situation has obtained during the session; and it is the first time it has happened so far as I can remember. That is a pretty good indication that the Opposition is very frightened of this issue and does not want to commit itself.

Have Opposition members committed themselves? The Leader of the Opposition spoke the other evening. Did he say he was opposed to fluoridation of water supplies? Of course he did not! He made a long statement which purported to give the policy of the Labor Party in Western Australia on this particular subject. He went out of his way to make it clear that there were many arguments in favour of fluoridation of water supplies, but he said he was not going to canvass them because the Minister for Health had already presented those arguments.

What an astonishing state of affairs! We had a member of the Opposition standing up and virtually saying, "I am the Leader of the Opposition. It is the role of the Opposition in this Parliament to criticise, and therefore I am going to criticise. I am not going to put forward an argument in favour of fluoridation";

and he made no reference to that aspect of the subject because he did not want to commit himself. No wonder he did not want to commit himself, because he knows that those members who sit behind him are, in the main, wholly in favour of fluoridation of water supplies!

The member for Canning made a long speech on the matter at a conference in the Eastern States. Many of the statements he made were referred to by the member for Claremont. The member for Warren wrote to a local authority—I understand that this is correct—saying that he was in favour of fluoridation, but it was contrary to his party's policy and therefore he would have to oppose it. The same applies to other members of the Opposition. Opposition members are not opposed to the fluoridation of water supplies. They seek a referendum on the matter purely for political reasons.

The Opposition is fence-sitting on the issue; and I am sure you will agree, Sir, that is a reasonable statement of fact. There are political parties who, because they do not wish to offend the parties involved in a controversy, go out of their way to avoid making up their minds on political issues and to some extent they fence-sit. But it is another kind of fence-sitting when the Opposition sits on the fence and avoids declaring where it stands and by its action affects the lives of many hundreds of thousands of people. That is what the Opposition is doing on this occasion. It is sitting on the fence for political reasons, and hundreds of thousands of our future citizens may suffer as a consequence.

That is an extremely serious state of affairs, particularly when we bear in mind that the Opposition is doing it purely for political reasons. The Opposition is of the opinion that there are a few people in the community who are opposed to fluoridation of water supplies, and at the next election that factor may affect the outcome of the election. Take, for example, a seat like the former electorate of Wembley Beaches, which was won by a couple of hundred votes. The Opposition reasons that there must be 200 people in that area opposed to fluoridation and therefore it opposes the measure.

Mr. W. Hegney: The member for Wembley Beaches was returned unopposed.

Mr. GRAYDEN: By opposing the measure the Opposition hopes that the seat will be won by the Labor Party, and that the party will be returned to office. It is doing this at the expense of the dental health and health generally of the children of Western Australia.

Mr. Kelly: When are you going to talk sense?

Mr. GRAYDEN: We know where the Labor Government of New South Wales stands on this issue.

Mr. Oldfield: We know where the Liberal Party of South Australia stands.

Mr. GRAYDEN: Let us see how farcical is the Labor Party's attitude in respect of this issue. In the United States—as every member on this side of the House knows, and as every member of the Opposition knows—50,000,000 people are drinking fluoridated water. That figure represents five times the population of Australia and approximately 50 times the population of Western Australia. These people in the United States are drinking fluoridated water from choice; and there has not been a single instance—and the water is fluoridated to the extent of one part per million gallons—of anyone being affected by fluoridation.

Mr. Oldfield: Quote your authority.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order!

Mr. GRAYDEN: What an amazing thing: 50,000,000 people have been drinking fluoridated water for many years and not one single person has been found to be adversely affected! The reduction in dental decay in the United States has been to the extent of 60 per cent. or 65 per cent. In spite of this, the cowardly Opposition in this House hesitates to make the benefits of fluoridation available to the children of Western Australia. It would have us believe that this is possibly because somewhere along the line an aged person might be affected by fluoridation, even though not one single person has been found to be so among 50,000,000 people in the United States.

Mr. Hawke: What about Elvis Presley?

Mr. GRAYDEN: Because they believe that somewhere along the line some person might be affected, members of the Opposition are going to deny the benefits of fluoridation to the children of Western Australia. All sorts of statements have been made by the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition concerning the drug thalidomide.

Mr. W. Hegney: You should see the pained look on the face of the Minister now!

Mr. GRAYDEN: When thalidomide was first introduced it was considered to have beneficial effects. However, America was reluctant to accept the drug, and many people voiced their concern at its introduction into America. Research was undertaken; and after a comparatively few years it was found the drug had harmful effects; and it has now been removed from the list of drugs freely obtainable.

That is not the case, however, in respect of fluoride, as every member of the House knows. The beneficial effects of fluoride were first discovered in 1874. At that time Sir John Forrest was making the first west to east crossing of this continent.

Research into fluoride has been undertaken ever since. Fluoride was discovered long before responsible government came to Western Australia. In no instance have any harmful effects been found where fluoride has been introduced at one part per million gallons of water.

There are many areas in the world where fluoride exists naturally in water to the extent of eight parts per million gallons; and in some areas it exists to the extent of 14 parts per million gallons. Huge populations in these regions have been drinking this naturally fluoridated water for generations. Far from having a deleterious effect on the human body, it has had the effect of strengthening the human frame. People in those areas regard fluoridation as an advantage. There are far fewer bone fractures among the aged because the bone structure of people in those areas is stronger than in other areas. Fluoride exists naturally in water in Cue, and Western Australians have been drinking it for years.

Let us consider what we have been doing ever since Western Australia was founded. We have been drinking tea. We have been told that if we drink six cups of tea we are consuming the optimum dose of fluoride. Our authorities for this are members of the Pure Water Association who are represented in our galleries this evening. Two representatives of the Pure Water Association spoke to members on this side of the House on the disadvantages of fluoride. We appreciated their talk because—

Mr. Hawke: You had to be shamed into giving them a hearing.

Mr. GRAYDEN: —we wanted to see what arguments they could possibly put forward. They stated that if anyone drank six cups of tea he or she would be consuming the optimum dose of fluoride. Australians have been drinking tea ever since the country was first settled. Some people drink six cups of tea, and according to the Pure Water Association they have been consuming the optimum dose. Others drink 12 cups of tea, and they have been consuming twice the dose. Other people drink 36 cups of tea, and they have been consuming six times the dose.

Have we ever heard, either from the Opposition—which has been vocal on this matter of fluoridation—or from the Pure Water Association, that it is harmful to drink tea because Australians would die of fluoride poisoning or be adversely affected? People have been drinking tea since the foundation of this country. No member of the Pure Water Association has pointed out that people suffer ill effects from drinking tea.

Mr. Hawke: They could safely point to you.

Mr. GRAYDEN: It is easy for the Leader of the Opposition to resort to invective, because that is what we expect of anyone who does not have an argument. The Leader of the Opposition spoke for some time the other night, and he spoke to such effect that the member for Wembley rose in his place this afternoon and said that the leader of the Opposition's speech had no merit in it.

Mr. Oldfield: Neither has yours.

Mr. GRAYDEN: I think the statement made by the member for Wembley was the understatement of the year. When the Leader of the Opposition could speak at such length and put forward statements which were absolutely untrue and calculated to mislead, we can understand his now taking offence at any arguments put forward by this side of the House giving the facts—which, of course, give the lie to the statements which he himself made.

Mr. Hawke: The member for South Perth would not know the truth if he fell over it.

Mr. GRAYDEN: I understand the Leader of the Opposition is a tea-drinker and a teetotaler too, which is to his credit. He drinks tea, and I daresay for the greater portion of his life he has been drinking more than six cups of tea a day.

Mr. Hawke: Wrong again.

Mr. GRAYDEN: If so, he has been getting more than the optimum dose, according to the members of the Pure Water Association; so perhaps that is what is wrong with him.

Mr. Hawke: Wrong again.

Mr. GRAYDEN: Seriously, the Leader of the Opposition has undoubtedly been ingesting more than the optimum dose; and in addition to that he has been getting fluoride in all the food that he consumes, because fluoride is present in all food.

The Leader of the Opposition does not appear to me to be suffering from fluoride poisoning; and I have never heard him or any other member of the Opposition complain of fluoride poisoning. Obviously, when he has been drinking more than six cups of tea in the past he has been getting more than the optimum dose. What has been happening to that surplus fluoride? Has it been accumulating in his body? Of course not; because we know that fluoride is not a cumulative poison to the extent that it is commonly said to be by the members of the Pure Water Association.

Fluoride accumulates to a certain extent in the human body up to the age of 55, but it does not accumulate to the point where it becomes harmful. It accumulates slowly, and after the age of 55 equilibrium

is reached and all the additional quantities are excreted from the body. But even up to the age of 55 a great proportion of the surplus fluoride which is taken into the body is excreted; and surely no member of the Opposition would deny that.

We could go further and say—the members of the Pure Water Association are again our authority for this—that beer contains fluoride. We know only too well that in places such as the goldfields some people have been in the habit of drinking up to a gallon of beer a day, not for a matter of months but for years. Have we ever heard of fluoride poisoning of such people? Of course not! And it is for the very reason that I have given; namely, that the body excretes the surplus quantities of fluoride; and as an indication of that, it is always present in the urine.

Mr. Toms: If fluoride is so good, can you give me the names of two members on your side of the House who have voluntarily taken fluoride tablets?

Mr. GRAYDEN: I have no doubt that the majority of the members on this side of the House who have young children give them fluoride tablets. Let us get on to that argument: The member for Bayswater says, "Can you tell me two members?"

Mr. Oldfield: You reckon they are so good. Do you give them to your children?

Mr. GRAYDEN: I certainly do. I want to ask the member for Bayswater, through you, Mr. Speaker, if he is opposed to giving fluoride tablets to children.

Mr. Toms: I will make up my own mind.

Mr. GRAYDEN: Of course the honourable member will; because he has not yet made it up! He is sitting on the fence, just as other members of the Opposition are, on this issue; and there is not a member of the Opposition—and I defy them to do this—who would say that fluoride tablets are harmful to children. Such tablets are not harmful, and members opposite know it; they would give fluoride tablets willy-nilly to all children in Western Australia. Would they have the children medically examined first to see whether they were allergic to the tablets? They say, "of course not! We are in favour of giving fluoride tablets to all children whether they be in Western Australia or anywhere else." They are prepared to do that to the children of Western Australia and yet they are not prepared to allow any adults to have the same or a lesser dose. When children get fluoride in tablet form they get a far larger quantity of fluoride than when they drink fluoridated water.

This is an astonishing state of affairs. The members of the Opposition are opposed to the fluoridation of water by which

means the people only ingest into the body a limited quantity of fluoride, but they advocate giving it in tablet form to the children. They are prepared to give it to any children because they know it is not harmful. How then can they maintain their argument against the fluoridation of water supplies? Of course they cannot. For that reason the Opposition is simply sitting on the fence in regard to this subject.

Members opposite will not declare themselves; they are getting out of it the easy way. They say, "We will have a referendum. That will please the people opposed to it, and we may scrape back on to the Treasury bench when the elections are held in 18 months' time." That is a cowardly attitude. They are shirking their responsibilities; they are cringing away from their responsibilities; they are fleeing from their responsibilities!

Earlier I made some reference to the amount of fluoride that is contained in tea, and I mentioned that the members of the Pure Water Association said that if a person drank six cups of tea he got the optimum dose. Shortly after the members of the Pure Water Association gave a talk in this Chamber I asked them: If, since Australia was first colonised, people had been drinking tea which contained fluoride, how did they reconcile that fact with the fears they expressed with regard to fluoride; and they immediately turned completely around in respect of the argument they put forward to members and said that fluoride in tea is not harmful because milk is added, and where we have milk or calcium in association with fluoride, the fluoride is neutralised.

There we have one example of members of the Pure Water Association misleading members of the House. They said that six cups of tea contain the optimum dose, and that when water is allowed to boil we get more than the optimum dose. But immediately I asked the question that I put to them, they said it was not harmful in tea because tea was taken in association with milk, which contains calcium, and calcium has a neutralising effect on fluoride. That is the misleading type of statement we have heard quite often from members of the Pure Water Association and from the two members of the Opposition who have spoken on the measure.

In that regard it is frequently said by members of the Pure Water Association that the artificial type of fluoride is completely different from the naturally occurring variety; and that, of course, is quite untrue. Here I might make one brief reference to the statement made by Dr. A. J. Dalzell-Ward, Medical Director, The Central Council for Health Education in Britain. Dr. Dalzell-Ward has this to say—

It is necessary to explain at this point that although we talk of the consumption of 'fluoride', it is the

fluoride 'ion'—the electrically charged particle resulting from dissociation of the salt in water—which is present in the water. Whether the fluoride is the naturally occurring calcium compound, or the sodium fluoride used for treatment of water, the resulting ions are identical in chemical state and action on the body.

I have read that extract because it completely refutes the argument so often put forward by members of the Pure Water Association. They say that certain types of fluoride are quite all right because they are contained in water in natural form. They say that sodium fluoride is an artificial substance and is harmful; and yet I have just read the opinion of an eminent authority, which is supported by the opinions of countless other authorities, that the fluoride ion—which is the substance that counts—is exactly the same in its chemical state and in its action on the body whether it occurs naturally or is in the form of sodium fluoride.

The Pure Water Association is basing its objection to the fluoridation of water on the assumption that there is some difference between natural fluoride and sodium fluoride; but, of course, there is no difference whatsoever as far as the ion is concerned. That is one of the most important aspects. Another point I would like to make—

Mr. W. Hegney: You have not made any yet!

Mr. GRAYDEN: —in support of fluoridation of water supplies is that the fluoridation can be stopped at any time. We are not saying that fluoridation is to be introduced and will continue for eternity. If, after fluoride is added to our drinking water, we find—in, say, a year's time—that someone has been affected by fluoride, we can stop adding it to our drinking water at any time we please. Of course, if someone showed any sign of being affected by fluoride the logical thing to do would be to have him drink rain water. That would be the logical approach.

I repeat that there are 50,000,000 people in the United States of America who are drinking fluoridated water by choice. That is a population five times that of Australia, yet there has never been a single instance of a person being affected by fluoride added to water to the extent of one part to a million parts of water. In those circumstances we can stop the fluoridation of water supplies at any time we desire; so it is absolutely absurd to put forward any opposition to this proposal.

Recently a particularly interesting question was asked in this House and, in my opinion, it has a great bearing on the fluoridation of water. The question was

asked by the member for Gascoyne of the Minister for Health, and the question and answer are as follows:—

SODIUM FLUORIDE

Recommended Daily Consumption

Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Health:

- (1) What is the recommended daily amount in milligrams of sodium fluoride for—
 - (a) an infant (under 12 months);
 - (b) children (one to 12 years);
 - (c) adults?

Quantity in One Gallon of Water

- (2) How many milligrams of sodium fluoride would be in a gallon of water which has had one part per million of sodium fluoride added?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) (a) and (b) 2.2 mg.
(c) 3.3 mg.
Note: 2.2 mg. sodium fluoride contains approximately 1 mg. of available "fluoride".
- (2) 4.546 mg. of sodium fluoride (about 2 mg. of available "fluoride").

Those answers show the recommended daily dose for all children up to 12 years of age—namely, 2.2 milligrams; and the recommended daily dose for adults was 3.3 milligrams. Then from the answers we find that in order to get the optimum dose a child under 12 months would have to drink a gallon of water a day, or even more, if the water were fluoridated to the extent of one part to a million parts of water.

Further, we find that in respect of a child up to 12 years of age, he would have to drink more than a gallon of water in order to get the optimum dose of fluoride daily, and an adult would have to drink more than a gallon and a half of water to obtain the optimum dose if the water were fluoridated to the extent of one part to a million parts of water. I think every member in this House will agree that no one would drink a gallon and a half of water per day, and an adult would have to do that in order to obtain the optimum dose of fluoride if the water were fluoridated to the extent I have mentioned.

Of course, fluoride is present in all foods; so apart from getting fluoride in their drinking water, people are going to get it in limited quantities in their foodstuffs. As I have already pointed out, the body excretes certain quantities of fluoride; and, therefore, if one were to add fluoride to drinking water to the extent of even more than one part to a million parts of water,

instead of being harmful it could be beneficial because it would help to build up the bone structure of the body. We have the members of the Opposition sitting on the fence on this issue. They are afraid to come out in the open and say they oppose fluoridation. They are afraid to say they are opposed to giving fluoride tablets to children. They are afraid to declare themselves. They are simply sitting back and saying, "We are asking that this question be put to a referendum."

I hope the children of Western Australia will realise exactly what the members of the Opposition are doing to them and that they will show their objection in this way: that, whenever the Leader of the Opposition passes any group of them in this State, they will stand with their mouths open in mute protest against the cowardly way the members of the Opposition are shirking their responsibility on this question of the fluoridation of water supplies. The children should stand with their mouths open showing their decayed teeth.

Mr. W. Hegney: I wish you would stand there with your mouth shut.

Mr. GRAYDEN: The children of this State should adopt that attitude wherever the Leader of the Opposition goes, because the members of the Labor Party, by persisting in their attitude to this question, must accept the responsibility of inflicting upon the children of this State the 60 to 65 per cent. of dental decay they will eventually suffer if this proposal is not put into effect.

We know that in various parts of the world, where water has been fluoridated to the extent of one part to a million parts of water, dental decay has been reduced by 60 to 65 per cent. But, by the action of the members of the Opposition, this great benefit of fluoridation may be denied to the children of Western Australia. I suggest it is a criminal act for any member of this House to adopt an attitude such as that; for, by opposing this proposal, the members of the Opposition will inflict upon the children of this State the suffering of 60 to 65 per cent. dental decay. Also, as a consequence, they will inflict upon those children all the agony one goes through as a result of dental decay and of having to go to dentists. Further, members of the Opposition will be responsible for 65 per cent. of the mental agony these children will have to go through in the future if this Bill is not passed. Those members have shown, by their attitude, that they are afraid to declare themselves on this issue.

In addition, the Opposition must accept the responsibility for the psychological effects the young people of our State will suffer as a result of 60 to 65 per cent. dental decay. Such effects are not uncommon when a young girl, for instance, has to have her teeth removed whilst she is still

in her teens. Simply because her teeth had decayed she would suffer as a consequence serious psychological troubles.

It can possibly be said that a lot of the delinquency in Western Australia is attributable to the psychological effects I have outlined; and the Opposition must accept responsibility for 60 to 65 per cent. of such psychological disorders. The children of Western Australia, for the reasons I mentioned earlier, should stand in mute protest—they should not say a word, but merely stand with their mouths open—whenever the Leader of the Opposition drives by, or walks past them, to protest against the contempt he has for their health and mental well-being.

This stand taken by the Opposition is solely for the purpose of winning seats at the next election; so that it might convert a couple of hundred votes to its advantage. That is the only reason for the stand which the members of the Opposition are taking on this issue. They feel that possibly in Karrinyup and Bunbury—although I do not know what will be done with the water supply there—they might influence a couple of hundred voters, which might make it possible for the Opposition to occupy the Treasury bench.

The **SPEAKER** (Mr. Hearman): The honourable member has five minutes left.

Mr. **GRAYDEN**: The attitude of the Opposition on the question of fluoride is one typical of witch doctors. It is consistent with what we read about in relation to South Africa. In parts of that country the very latest in medical science is available to the natives. For instance, there are such medicines as the sulphanilamides, which are available to the natives in those areas. Every now and then, however, we have witch doctors beseeching the young people beset with certain ills to ignore these modern medicines, together with the advice of trained medical men, and in their stead the witch doctors suggest their own remedies. For instance, they might prescribe ground rhinoceros horn for appendicitis. That is the sort of thing we expect from witch doctors. We are, however, getting the same sort of thinking from the Pure Water Association, and from the members of the Opposition. It is a witch doctor attitude. They are ignoring the great bulk of expert medical opinion in the world.

The members of the Opposition know that possibly 250,000 medical men in the English-speaking countries of the world are in favour of fluoridation; but they ignore that fact, and prefer to believe that there is still serious doubt about fluoridation, even though its benefits were first discovered in 1894. What would have been the fate of thousands of people had the Opposition adopted the same attitude when the drug penicillin was found? I wonder whether the members of the Opposition

would have opposed the use of penicillin, simply because hundreds of years had not elapsed to fully prove its effects on the human body? Members opposite are opposing this legislation purely on political grounds.

Mr. **Bickerton**: Your constituents should be proud of you.

Mr. **GRAYDEN**: The suggestion has been made that this should be referred to a referendum. I would point out, however, that a Gallup poll was taken throughout Australia, and I would like to quote the results of that poll as it appeared in the *Daily News* of the 3rd October, 1963. Under the heading, "Fluoridation: 7 out of 10 say Yes," we find the following:—

Almost 7 out of 10 Australian men and women favour adding fluorine to water supplies, according to the latest Gallup Poll.

For the fifth time in six years, a different but similar Australia-wide cross-section of about 2,000 adults has been asked by the Gallup Poll whether they favoured or opposed adding fluorine to their water supply to try to prevent children's teeth decaying.

The following comparison of answers shows that though opposition is higher than at any time since 1957, there is still a majority of nearly 4-to-1 for adding fluorine to water supplies.

That was the result of the Gallup poll in spite of the misleading propaganda that has been put out by members of the Pure Water Association, and equivalent associations, in other parts of Western Australia. I would point out that a month or two ago I was violently opposed to the fluoridation of water. I have always believed that people should eschew medicines as far as possible, and eat natural foods.

Mr. **Tonkin**: How long did you say you had been giving it to your children?

The **SPEAKER** (Mr. Hearman): Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr. **BURT** (Murchison) [9.42 p.m.]: We have heard some interesting speeches on this all-important subject, and have been given a number of quotations by so-called experts from all over the world, both for and against the fluoridation of water. I am one of those very scientifically ignorant members of this Chamber; and I am completely ignorant on this matter.

The reason I want to speak tonight is that I represent a town which has had natural fluoridation in its water ever since the scheme was evolved in the beginning of the century. I refer to Cue. Cue is the only town in Western Australia with a greater natural fluoride content than is considered sufficient by the proponents of fluoridation. Its water supply has a content of 1.2 to 1.5 parts per million.

As this water supply was established in about 1900, many thousands of residents of Cue, whether they liked it or not, have had to drink fluoride with their water.

I will endeavour to show the beneficial effects of fluoride on the people of Cue, together with the complete lack of any disastrous effect which the opponents of fluoride think it might have. First let me say that for many years I had no knowledge that I was taking fluoride with my drinking water. I knew nothing at all about it. One must take notice of such organisations as the Australian and British Medical Associations, and the Australian and British Dental Associations, which favour fluoridation; and also of such well-known men as Professor Gordon King, Professor Sutherland, Professor Saint, Professor Macdonald, Dr. R. H. Crisp, Mr. A. L. Dawkins, Dr. Cyril Fortune, Dr. J. T. Irvine, Dr. Godfrey, and Dr. Peverill.

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. Kallis, 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.

The result of that survey was published only a few months ago.

Getting down to personalities, I have spent 25 years of my adulthood in Cue, and reared three sons in that time. However, the less said about my teeth the better, but my three sons have wonderful teeth. The reason for that has always been a source of interest to my wife and myself. When we read about the survey I referred to, and were made aware there was fluoride in the Cue water supply, we naturally considered the addition of fluoride must have had something to do with the good teeth of our children.

Although it is very important for people to have good teeth, it is not quite so important to only consider the beneficial effects from fluoridation, because I feel that good teeth come naturally and will always be found in some people. Surely it is much more important for those who are opposed to fluoridation to look at the absence of any detrimental effects from it.

A large number of people lived in these old mining towns. When I was in Cue recently I took the opportunity to examine the burial register and the ages of citizens who have been buried in the Cue cemetery since the last war. In other words, I examined a fair section of the people who went there in the early days and remained in the town all their lives. I was rather astonished to discover that the average age of those who have died and were buried in the Cue cemetery since the war was 74.4 years.

I must point out that I discarded those cases which I knew had died for reasons such as accidents, and so on. The average age of the total of 81 persons who died between 1946 and the present day and were buried in the Cue cemetery was 74.4 years. Surely had there been any deleterious effect in the water they drank during their lifetime their life-span would have been considerably less than 74.4 years. Among the people who died in the period referred to were Charles Cameron, aged 97 years; Mrs. Ryan, aged 94 years; Arthur Darley, aged 94 years; Jim Peken, who was a very well-known personality and died only a few weeks ago aged 94 years; and Patrick Morrissey, who died last December at the age of 93 years. Mr. Morrissey was the owner of Nallan Station, which is about eight miles from Cue, and on which the Cue water supply is established. This old gentleman who lived all his lifetime there, drinking practically nothing else but fluoridated water; did not have a day's sickness; and finally went to rest at the age of 93.

Apart from the facts I have outlined I have not seen any of the so-called bad effects of fluoridation of water among the people of Cue. I am not aware if any of them has cancer, but cancer is not prevalent. I am not aware that any has suffered from kidney trouble; I am not aware of any incidence of mongol birth, which is supposed to occur from the drinking of fluoridated water; nor am I aware that nervous disorders are more prevalent than they are in other communities.

In this case we have the materialistic evidence of the benefits and of the lack of ill-effects of fluoridation in a community which has been forced—in the words of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition—whether the people liked it or not to drink fluoridated water, and which has been drinking that water, and will continue to drink it.

Mr. Tonkin: Is there any mottling of the teeth?

Mr. BURT: That aspect is not mentioned in the survey. If an argument in favour of fluoridation is needed, we do not have to look beyond the example of Cue, which to my mind gives far clearer evidence of the lack of ill effects than is given in many

of the quotations that we heard in this debate. For that reason I support the Bill.

MR. GUTHRIE (Subiaco) [9.55 p.m.]: I suppose this measure has received more publicity than most Bills presented to this Parliament. Publicity occurred, firstly, prior to any announcement and intention to introduce the legislation; secondly, after such announcement; and, thirdly, since the presentation of the Bill and up to the present time.

Members of Parliament have been inundated with literature on this subject, and it is safe to say that 90 per cent. of such literature emanates from those persons in the community who are opposed to the legislation. In fact, the opponents of the proposal have had cards printed for electors to sign, insert their names and addresses in, and post to their local member.

We have been told by the Minister that dental decay is one of the most prevalent of child diseases; that fluoridation of water supplies will reduce dental decay in children by 60 per cent.; that the benefits of such reduction in dental decay in children will not merely finish with childhood but will be of lasting benefit to that child as he or she progresses into adulthood; and that it is safe.

We also know that dentists could not possibly cope with the demands on their time if all adults and children in the community took the trouble to have the dental treatment which they really should have. I am not sure of the figure, but I think I have heard it said that if all persons sought all the dental treatment which they need, the present dental profession in this State could only handle 33 per cent. of the cases coming to them.

We also know that practically all, if not all, eminent national medical and dental bodies, firstly, in the United States of America; secondly, in the United Kingdom; and thirdly, in Australia, support these proposals. We know that our own Health Department and an overwhelming majority of our own medical and dental professions support the measure.

It is true that there is opposition; and it is fair to say that, in the main, those people in the community who oppose fluoridation of water rely on their professional support from, firstly, individual practitioners in particular professions; and, secondly, one or two professional associations which cannot be classified as national professional associations.

Some of these individuals, on the face of it, appear to be eminent individuals in their particular profession, and no doubt some of them are very eminent. However, even though they could be said to be so eminent, does that prove the point? Surely these people, if their opinions were to be

so respected, should have been able to convince the great national professional associations which have supported this proposal. The mere fact that they have not been able to convince the great national professional associations leaves one with a lingering doubt that for some reason or other their opinions are not sound.

I would not propose to base my arguments on such a generalisation, but nevertheless, I do suggest that the generalisation is in point. For this reason, however, I have examined the material which has been placed before me by the anti-fluoridationists and I propose to deal with it in some detail. I have here all the pamphlets which have been sent to me. The first is a roneoed sheet headed "Fluoridation". It does not indicate in any way who was responsible for its production. It quotes statements alleged to have been made by a number of professional people, and I propose to read some of those quotations.

The first quotation is from a Dr. B. C. Saunders, Lecturer in Organic and Inorganic Chemistry at Cambridge University. He is quoted as having said this—

Sodium fluoride is incorporated in many powders designed to kill cockroaches, mice and rats. At one time it was used as a food preservative, but it is much too dangerous for this purpose—many cases of poisoning of human beings by sodium fluoride have been recorded.

A case is recorded of 47 out of 263 patients dying in a hospital after eating food in which sodium fluoride had been incorporated. The lethal dose for adults is estimated at between 5 g—

I presume they are grammes—

—and 10 g, and 17 g is calculated to kill within one hour. The ingestion of sub-lethal doses often leads to nephritis and injury to the liver.

I would point out that Dr. Saunders is a lecturer in Organic and Inorganic Chemistry, and there is no suggestion to say he is a medical man. So much for that.

The next quotation is from a Mr. Charles E. Perkins, who is described as a foremost industrial American chemist—

I say this with all the earnestness and sincerity of a scientist who has spent nearly 20 years research into the chemistry, biochemistry, physiology and pathology of fluorine, any person who drinks artificially fluorinated water for a period of one year or more will never again be the same person mentally or physically.

Mr. Perkins, members will note, only claims to be an industrial chemist. He is certainly not a medical man.

Then follows a quotation from a Dr. Nicholas, which I do not propose to read. Then we come to a quotation ascribed to Sir Arthur Amies. He is said to have said this—

Fluoridation of domestic water supplies involves the administration with therapeutic intent of a chemical preparation to young or old, dentate or edentulous, well or ill, without individual examination and regardless of individual desire.

May I suggest that is a self-evident fact, but it appears in this pamphlet garbled up as if Sir Arthur Amies was making a statement opposed to the fluoridation of water. If one analyses what he said, he did not say that at all. He stated a self-evident fact.

Mr. Tonkin: He is opposed to it.

Mr. GUTHRIE: He is not. Before he left Australia on his last trip recently he authorised Sydney papers to state emphatically that he was not opposed to fluoridation.

Mr. Tonkin: He is joint author with Sutton of a work against it.

Mr. GUTHRIE: Before he departed from Australia he made a statement denying he was opposed to fluoridation. The next quotation is from Dr. Feltman, Research Dentist at Passiac Hospital, New Jersey—

Fluoridation is bad for heart, kidneys and pregnant women.

Dr. Feltman is a dentist and apparently sets himself up as an authority against medical men on, firstly, diseases of the heart; secondly, diseases of the kidneys; and thirdly, problems of pregnant women.

The next is from Dr. Hugo Thiorell, a Nobel prize winner, who said, "Fluoridation of tap water should not be allowed." Firstly, we are not told the profession of Dr. Thiorell; and, secondly, we are not told for what he gained his Nobel prize. Thirdly, we are presented with one sentence only; and obviously there must have been some other context, whatever it was.

Finally, we come to Dr. C. Keyde. Apparently he is a medical man, and it is to be assumed that he was once President of the American Medical Association. He said this—

I am appalled at the prospect of using water as a vehicle for drugs. Fluoride is a corrosive poison that will produce serious effects on a long-term basis. Any attempt to use water in this way is deplorable.

The mere fact that a man was once President of the American Medical Association does not necessarily constitute him as an expert in this field. In any event, it is fairly apparent that his views do not coincide with the official views of his association.

I now turn to a pamphlet which the member for Wembley showed the House and from which he read, I think, what Dr. Waldbott had to say. I do not propose, therefore, to read it again. Dr. Waldbott, I believe—and the member for Wembley has confirmed it—appears to be quite a distinguished physician; but what knowledge he has on this particular subject, and what research he has undertaken, is not disclosed in this particular pamphlet.

The next pamphlet to which I propose to advert is one which appears on a plain sheet of paper. There is nothing to show who issued it. The pamphlet first of all purports to quote an extract from *The West Australian* of the 8th August, 1963. This particular article criticises members of the Government for reaching a decision after having heard only one side of the case. If we took this pamphlet as a fair standard of the accuracy in the presentation of their case by the people opposed to fluoridation, we would probably be very unkind in our comments; but let us take it at its face value.

The first thing not mentioned in this pamphlet is that this is a direct quotation from a political column written in *The West Australian* of that date by the Leader of the Opposition, and it was a political article criticising the Government. In any event the members of whatever association opposed to fluoridation was responsible for publishing this, conveniently overlooked—when it criticised the members of the Government for having reached a decision on the same day as they heard the proponents of fluoridation and without hearing the case against as alleged in this article—that we had all been inundated with the pamphlets against fluoridation. We had all had plenty of opportunity to read the case against fluoridation; and, in fact, it would be safe to say that up to that point of time we had heard very little in favour of fluoridation at all, and consequently it would be ridiculous to suggest that members of the Government reached their decision after hearing only one side of the case.

Mr. Graham: Why?

Mr. GUTHRIE: Speaking personally, I was not present and I did not hear the speakers on that occasion, but I had heard them on a previous occasion. In any event the actual facts of the matter are that the members of the Government parties heard those speakers in the morning, and in the afternoon a very lengthy meeting was held at which this matter was debated, and the points against fluoridation were made and considered as part of the discussion.

Mr. Graham: By whom?

Mr. GUTHRIE: By various people. We had read the pamphlets. We were well aware of the arguments against it, and

we were quite capable of assessing it. I will proceed to show to the House how very little there is in this case put up against fluoridation.

The next pamphlet which has been sent to me is one headed "Effects of Fluoride on a Human Body." It is issued by the Pure Water Association (W.A. Branch), and quotes the views of Dr. Charles A. Brusch, Dr. Leo Spira, Dr. Alfred Taylor, Dr. Carl Neuport, Dr. C. T. Betts, and numerous others. No attempt is made in this pamphlet to prove the expert knowledge or the particular research undertaken by any of the gentlemen mentioned above, or any of the other gentlemen mentioned in the pamphlet. I could go on wearying the House by reading all they have stated, but I think it is fair to say it is only a repetition of the types of opinions I have already read.

I am not competent to say whether any of the experts in these pamphlets can be relied on because—

- (1) I do not know whether they are competent experts.
- (2) I do not know whether they have indulged in proper exhaustive clinical and other research.
- (3) I do not know whether they have correctly evaluated the results of such research.
- (4) I do not even know whether any one of these experts would be capable, by himself, of reaching a satisfactory conclusion.
- (5) I would think, however, that a satisfactory conclusion could only be reached by research undertaken by a team of experts, each contributing the special knowledge which he could be regarded as having.

I must therefore treat all these pamphlets with considerable reserve. I certainly do not accept them as in any way proving what the authors of the pamphlets claim they do prove.

Now permit me to turn very shortly to the High Court case in Ireland. We have been supplied with this yellow pamphlet headed "Fluoridation Case, The High Court, Dublin, Eire," and it purports to give a resumé of the evidence given by Professors Gordonoff, Benagliano, Fiorentini, and Steyn, together also with a resumé of the evidence given by Drs. Rozeik, Sinclair, and Waldbott. It is fairly apparent that the quotations have in some places been taken from newspaper reports; but in the case of Professor Gordonoff the pamphlet rather suggests that it is an actual facsimile of the judge's notes of evidence. That could not be so when one reads the whole of these notes and sees the changing in the language.

Mr. H. May called attention to the state of the House.

Bells rung and a quorum formed.

Mr. GUTHRIE: It will be noticed in the pamphlet that Professor Gordonoff is reported to have made such statements as "Fluorides were very toxic" and "Fluoride was the most toxic of the halogen elements" which would appear to be statements he could have made himself. But then we come down to a quotation stating, "He began his experiments of the antagonism of fluorides to iodine and to calcium in 1943; he had worked on animals". That immediately shows that this could not be and is not, in fact, an exact quotation of Professor Gordonoff's evidence. Therefore I cannot accept this particular pamphlet as being necessarily an accurate account of the evidence given in the Irish Court. It may be that it does give a fair account of what was said by these learned gentlemen; but, on the other hand, it is open to question.

I have over the years many times read the newspaper reports of court cases and I can say with all honesty I have yet to read a newspaper report of a court case that approaches accuracy. However, it is noteworthy that in this instance at least three of the witnesses are dentists, and I would not accept them as necessarily being experts on a subject of this nature. I would expect that the experts would be medical men. Incidentally, this particular case in Ireland, as far as I am aware, failed, and the action was dismissed.

Finally dealing with these pamphlets, I would like to refer to the much-quoted evidence of Mr. Arthur C. Ford, and to make the following comments on the statements ascribed to him:—

Firstly, he spoke six years ago.

Secondly, he was a water supply expert and nothing else.

Thirdly, he started off by saying that he would not usurp the prerogative of the medical profession.

Fourthly, having said that, he proceeded to do just that and offered opinions on medical subjects.

Fifthly, the most he could offer authoritatively would be the difficulty of an even dose.

Sixthly, we are told by our experts that the unevenness of the dose would be very small and, in any event, would not be in toxic quantities.

Seventhly, it is strange that Mr. Ford is the only engineer who is quoted by the opponents of fluoridation and his opinion is more than six years old.

Against all that we have, firstly, a very formidable array of recognised medical bodies in favour.

Secondly, there seems to be no place where these individual professional men quoted in the various pamphlets have been able to convince any recognised national medical body that their views are sound.

Thirdly, are we to assume that these reputable bodies which reached the decision which they have reached, just ignored the opinions of these claimed experts?

Fourthly, would it not be reasonable to assume that if they did ignore these opinions they ignored them for very good reasons, which could well be that either the persons expressing the opinions were not to be considered to be experts or, alternatively, their theories were unsound.

Fifthly, there is always a possibility that these quotations have been taken out of context.

Sixthly, in the pamphlet issued by the British Ministry of Health in April 1963, entitled "Fluoridation" most of the questions which have been stated by the anti-fluoridationists to be controversial have been answered emphatically and unequivocally.

I propose to read some of the answers that were given to questions by the British Ministry of Health in a pamphlet published this year. The first question is: "Is there a need for fluoridation?" the answer given is: "Most definitely. Dental hygiene and correct diet are very important and their value cannot be too strongly stressed, but the problem of bad teeth is so formidable that we cannot afford to ignore a simple, safe, natural and proven way of laying the foundations for healthy teeth."

The next question is: "Can't other methods be used to prevent dental decay?" The answer is: "Various other methods have been suggested and tried. They include: taking fluoride tablets, painting teeth with fluoride solutions, using fluoridated toothpaste or fluoridated milk, bread, salt or chewing gum. But no other method of preventing dental decay has been shown to be as effective or convenient as fluoridation of water."

The next question is: "Does fluoridation constitute mass medication?" The answer is: "By 'medication' most people think of medicine—something which is taken to cure an illness or disease. Fluoride will not 'cure' existing dental decay. It prevents dental decay. Fluoride is a natural constituent of water supplies. The choice does not lie between no fluoride and fluoridation, but between some fluoride and enough for dental protection."

The next question is: "Will fluoridation only benefit children?" The answer is: "Children will be the first to benefit because of the vital part fluoride plays right from the start of tooth formation. As these children become adults they will continue to benefit and thus, in time, everyone will enjoy better health."

The next question is: "Is fluoride a poison?" The answer is too long, and I do not propose to read it. The next question is: "Is fluoride a cumulative poison?" The

answer is: "The human body stores a portion of its fluoride intake and excretes the remainder. But this is one of the normal physiological processes which goes on throughout life. With a fluoride level in the water of 1 p.p.m. the amount of fluoride retained by the body causes no harmful effects."

Those are very emphatic statements by no less an authority than the Ministry of Health in the United Kingdom. Are we to assume that those statements would be made without proper thought; without proper consideration as to what they really do purport to say? In the appendix there is a commendation by the Standing Dental Advisory Committee of England and Wales and also by the Joint Subcommittee of the Standing Medical Advisory Committees for England, Wales, and Scotland.

Finally, on this subject of information on the safety or otherwise of fluoridation there is the research conducted by Dr. Moffin of Fremantle. Dr. Moffin sent out 53 letters to 53 medical practitioners in his area. Of that number, 40, being 75 per cent. of the total, replied. Of those 40, 37 signed a statement to the effect that they supported fluoridation of water supplies; two refused to sign it; and one was undecided.

It is reasonable to assume that all medical practitioners in that survey who disagreed with fluoridation would have replied; so we have the situation that two out of 53 in this particular part of our State—the West Province I think it was—are opposed to fluoridation. That is a very small percentage.

It is somewhat significant that in the United States of America, in the United Kingdom, in Australia, and in Western Europe there are approximately 200,000 medical practitioners, yet according to these pamphlets no more than 30 professional men have expressed opinions out of a total available field of 200,000 medical practitioners.

It is somewhat interesting to read an article which appeared in *The West Australian* on the 17th May, 1963. I quote as follows:—

Like many cities of the world, Perth has had its fluoridation controversy.

Another city in the toils was Charlotte, North Carolina (U.S.). Its health authorities and medical and dental associations announced that on a certain day the water of Charlotte would contain fluoride. These bodies, as well as the newspapers, the district attorney and the mayor were inundated by phone calls on that date. For one solid week more spines stiffened, more cancer grew, more thirst was intense and more goldfish died than ever before in Southern history. The phone callers all claimed that "poison" in the water was responsible.

A week later the health authorities, the medical and dental associations, joined by the district attorney, the mayor and the newspapers, announced they had not added fluoride to the water as planned. They had simply waited a week to test the reaction of the anti-fluoridationists, and because everything had happened in the mind, they were going ahead to save the teeth of the children.

It is also interesting to read a statement by the Minister for Health in the United Kingdom (Mr. Enoch Powell) when he opened the Hitchin Health Centre and Junior Training Centre on the 17th May this year. His remarks are contained on page 1582 of the *British Medical Journal* of the 15th June, 1963. I quote as follows:—

I am aware that there are cranks who are trying to hold up fluoridation by scare-mongering and misrepresentation. It is hard to speak of these people in moderate language. They themselves drink water which contains numerous chemicals artificially added. They themselves drink water which already contains fluoride, sometimes at appreciable levels. Yet, for the sake of a private fad or personal quirk, they are satisfied to see whole generations of children grow up suffering avoidable pain and ill-health. I am glad to know that in Hertfordshire no fewer than 27 out of the 29 county districts that have considered fluoridation want the county to go ahead with it; and I am sure that the Hertfordshire County Council, with their encouragement, will not deny to Hertfordshire children the benefits which children in some fortunate parts of the country have always enjoyed and which can now be available to all.

I would therefore say in conclusion that there is no doubt there is an overwhelming preponderance of medical experts in favour of fluoridation. Furthermore, there is no reason to believe that they have not indulged in proper research on the subject. Are we, all laymen—with one exception; namely, the member for Wembley—to substitute our opinions for those of the experts, and are we to be so irresponsible that we disregard their advice?

Might I now deal briefly with the suggestion which has been made by the Leader of the Opposition that there should be a referendum on this subject.

Firstly, in this country we govern by a parliamentary democracy, and members of Parliament should accept the responsibility of making the awkward decisions which are required of them. They should not run away from a proposal just because there is a somewhat vocal opposition which appears to come from a minority—and a fairly small minority—of the community.

Either it is right or it is wrong. We have the opportunity of studying very carefully all the available evidence, and certainly have a better opportunity of studying that evidence than the average man on the street.

Notwithstanding the very strenuous opposition which has been built up, it is somewhat notable that the number of complaints received is comparatively small. Of a total of 11,236 electors, I have received 60 cards in a form familiar to most members, and about six or seven letters. Although I have replied to each letter in detail, I have not received a further comment from any of the constituents concerned.

A recent Gallup poll, already referred to by the member for South Perth, suggests that only about 14 per cent. of the community are, in fact, opposed to fluoridation—there is another percentage undecided—and it is doubtful that that 14 per cent., or I suppose for that matter the remainder, are fully acquainted with the subject.

A very formidable document has been placed in front of us regarding communities in the United States of America which have voted against fluoridation; but when one totals all the figures one finds that they do not amount to more than communities having an aggregate population of approximately 2,750,000 people out of a total of 180,000,000 in that country. Furthermore, we are told that there are about 50,000,000 people in the United States of America receiving fluoridated water. Consequently, when one puts those figures in their proper context, they assume their proper proportion. It is a small minority, and a small minority only, who are opposed to fluoridation.

Might I deal for a moment with one particular aspect of a referendum. It is to be presumed that if Parliament agrees to a referendum and it is carried, then it automatically follows that we have fluoridation. This would be so, even if it were carried by a majority of one vote in a poll of 250,000 people. Would that be sound? Surely the situation is that if we really believe there is a very substantial proportion of the community opposed to fluoridation, we should reject the proposal here and now. I would regard a substantial proportion as being more than 33 per cent.; and if I believed there were 33 per cent. of the people who had given the proposition proper consideration—I emphasise those words, "had given it proper consideration"—and rejected the proposal, I would vote against it.

That, however, I do not believe to be the position. But those who propound a referendum would compel a minority as great as 49.9 per cent. to accept fluoridation if it were carried with an affirmative vote of 50.1 per cent. I could not accept such a proposition.

Mr. Jamieson: The Government has a majority of only one vote.

A member: This Government is a Government of the people. It does not matter that we have a majority of only one vote.

Mr. GUTHRIE: To demand a referendum for the purpose of merely establishing just how many people are in fact opposed, requires a great deal more evidence than is available at this point of time. As I have said, the evidence suggests that the numbers who are opposed do not amount to more than about 15 per cent. of the community, and it is very doubtful whether any of their reasons are sound.

The final point on which I wish to touch is this question of compulsion. The Minister has already given some examples of other health legislation where compulsion was contained and accepted by this House. I would point out in addition that almost every week during a session we pass legislation which compels somebody to do something which he does not want to do. We even compel metropolitan dwellers to register their fruit trees and spray them. We prevent people parking cars in a public street outside their homes. One could go on indefinitely.

However, it is wrong to say that this Bill contains any element of compulsion. Firstly, it does not even require, if passed, that anybody should drink fluoridated water. Anybody who fears the consequences of fluoridated water is quite entitled to defluoridate it without any fear of a penalty. However, the Bill does not even say that the water system shall be fluoridated, it merely sets up a committee which is required to examine the situation, and if the committee finds favourably for fluoridation, then the Minister may adopt its recommendation. If the committee does not find in favour of fluoridation, then there is no fluoridation and the Minister cannot compel it.

On a point which has been greatly emphasised—namely, the great variations in the dosage—I would point out that there will be two engineers on this committee, and surely we can rely on them to closely examine this aspect before any recommendation is submitted to the Minister.

I would therefore say in conclusion that there is no reason to accept any of the arguments that have been submitted as reasons for rejecting the measure. I have pleasure in supporting the Bill.

MR. GRAHAM (Balcatta) [10.32 p.m.]: Any member who has set out to make an honest and conscientious study of this question will, I think, confess that, because of the bombardment of literature and advice he has received he would be somewhat bamboozled and therefore in a difficult situation in the matter of making up

his mind. Having regard for the importance of this question, it has been a simple matter for members of the Government to sneer and cast aspersions on good and worthy citizens who have expressed themselves in opposition to the Government's proposal.

Similarly, there have been instalments of criticisms and jibes directed at the Opposition because of its stand in connection with this matter. Let me, here and now, state that many members of the Opposition are in favour of fluoridation of water supplies. Some members of the Opposition are opposed to the procedure, and others again feel somewhat confused—in other words, not competent to make a firm decision, having regard for the mass of conflicting evidence that has been submitted to them.

So far as I am concerned, in case anyone is interested, I am disposed to be in favour of the fluoridation of water supplies, but at the same time I have respect for the viewpoint of those persons who disagree with me. It is all right for the member for Subiaco to talk about compulsion in respect of registration of fruit trees and the rest of it. I do not know whether he was endeavouring to be nonsensical deliberately, or whether he just could not help it.

Mr. Guthrie: I also referred to cases involving health legislation.

Mr. GRAHAM: That is so; but we are concerned with an essential ingredient for the existence of human life. We are concerned with an element essential to all forms of life; and surely it is a responsibility, to a very large extent, of the individual to determine whether he shall eat peaches or eat apples; whether he prefers brown bread or white; whether he prefers butter or margarine; and so on.

In this instance we have the Government insisting, because it believes in a certain type of food with certain elements added to it, that every person in the community should be obliged to consume that ingredient; unless, of course, this Government compels them to take certain steps to eliminate that which the Government seeks to foist upon them. These people who have been belittled this evening so far as I am aware are not opposed to the introduction of fluoride into the human system.

Mr. Guthrie: Then what are all the pamphlets about?

Mr. GRAHAM: Indeed, many of them, as in my own case, are administering pills and tablets to members of their families; and, speaking for myself, and my family, we are quite happy with the arrangement. I repeat: Some consideration should be given to people who think differently.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: To the detriment of the majority?

Mr. GRAHAM: There is no question of a detriment to anybody.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Yes there is.

Mr. GRAHAM: There is not. The water which is being consumed at present is not detrimental to anybody's health.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I did not say that it was.

Mr. GRAHAM: Then I wonder what the Minister is endeavouring to say. He spoke for about three-quarters of an hour the other night—

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I am sorry. Go ahead.

Mr. GRAHAM: —but unfortunately he gave a jaundiced version of one side of the case. I submit that in all fairness the whole of the case should have been presented; and because the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition have endeavoured to give the other side to establish that there is another side, and that there are experts who have opinions which are worthy of note and consideration, and are not to be brushed aside lightly, the Minister and his colleagues have concluded that everyone on this side of the House is opposed to the proposition. I repeat, and emphasise: such is not the case. But we do not take unto ourselves the right to compel every citizen, irrespective of his feelings, to absorb this particular element if he is opposed to it.

Mr. Bovell: What about compulsory unionism?

Mr. GRAHAM: What about it?

Mr. Bovell: You are compelling people in that direction.

Mr. Hawke: The Minister for Lands does not have to eat that.

Mr. GRAHAM: On another occasion we can have an interesting discussion on that point.

Mr. Bovell: It is no good waving your finger at me. It is a form of compulsion.

Mr. GRAHAM: Of course, in any civilised community there are compulsions. That is the very essence of civilization.

Mr. Jamieson: The Minister would not pay his taxes unless he were compelled to do so.

Mr. Guthrie: After your referendum was carried it would be compulsory, would it not, to have fluoridated water under your proposition?

Mr. GRAHAM: Those of us who believe in democracy are prepared to acknowledge and accept on many occasions things which are distasteful; or, for instance, the present Government is repugnant to me. But the people have expressed themselves—

Mr. Craig: And you have to swallow it.

Mr. GRAHAM: —and the majority of people accept that situation.

Mr. Guthrie: But you are building up an argument that nobody should be compelled to do anything he does not want to do.

Mr. GRAHAM: This Government has, for some unaccountable reason, chosen to race into the matter of fluoridating the public water supplies, and the Opposition is endeavouring to take certain precautionary steps—in other words, to provide that the people themselves should be consulted and not the junta or the inner circle of the Liberal Party. Is there anything wrong with that?

The members for Subiaco and South Perth gave us figures that only 14 or 15 per cent. of the people are opposed to the proposal. If the Government and its supporters are so confident of their case then they should grasp with both hands the opportunity of proving that they are in touch with public feeling, and that the anti-fluoridation people are a small minority who are out of touch with public feeling. But no; we find that the Government and its supporters are, for reasons known to themselves, afraid of submitting this matter to the public. I readily confess that this is not the perfect answer, but it is certainly far more democratic than the attitude of the Government in its approach to this question.

Mr. Guthrie: Would you support the proposition that on every measure which comes before this House, and upon which there is opposition, a referendum should be held before it is agreed to?

Mr. GRAHAM: If the member for Subiaco is capable of absorbing anything else but fluoride he would long ago have appreciated my earlier remarks that something so fundamentally basic to the existence of human life—indeed all forms of life—namely water—

Mr. Guthrie interjected.

Mr. GRAHAM: —is something in an entirely different category from the hundred and one other things that Parliament resolves from time to time during a parliamentary session. I wonder what drivel was emanating from the member for Subiaco a second ago. I pause for him to repeat it.

Mr. Guthrie: There has been—

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order! The honourable member will address the Chair.

Mr. GRAHAM: I think it is significant that we have had speeches this evening—and from the Minister earlier—from members of the Liberal Party only; and this is a coalition Government.

Mr. Guthrie: Now the old wedge comes out.

Mr. GRAHAM: It is no wedge; it is a statement of fact which apparently is not entirely welcomed by the member for Subiaco.

Mr. Guthrie: No. You have to get back to that sort of thing!

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order!

Mr. GRAHAM: I mention this for entirely different reasons from those behind the mind of the member for Subiaco. The Liberal Party, as everybody knows, is that political party which prates of civil liberties, of personal freedom, and the rights of the individual. It decries any invasion of human rights. But I say again—and this has been said on many occasions in this House—we have had examples of the insincerity and hypocrisy of members of the Liberal Party who use those bold words among the public for the purpose of gathering support for themselves. I prefer to judge the Liberals by their actions, and we have had a concrete example this evening in connection with this particular measure.

It is all right for Government supporters to talk about the Labor Party sitting on the fence and being afraid! The Labor Party made a decision in respect of this matter some two years ago, before this Government had given any thought to the question; and the position of the Labor Party was, as indicated by my leader, that before fluoridation is foisted upon the people, the people, in the majority, should say that they are agreeable to such a proposition.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Good heavens!

Mr. GRAHAM: Is there anything wrong with that? It is pretended from the other side that members of the public would not be in a position to gather together the facts and arrive at a reasonable conclusion. Those who speak and think along those lines have all the marks of a despot. I suppose the same sort of argument that they use in connection with this matter could be used in respect of parliamentary elections. How can the ordinary man in the street be expected to know the rights and wrongs of the various important matters that come before Parliament and before Governments from time to time? Therefore the public should not be consulted, because they could not be expected to understand. That, as I say, is the line of thought prompting members of the Government—that is, the Liberal Party members—in their opposition to the proposition of the Opposition that there should be a consultation of the people. What are members of the Government afraid of?

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: The Labor Party is afraid of it.

Mr. GRAHAM: The Labor Party is afraid of nothing, and I have expressed my view in connection with the matter. The

member for Claremont derived a certain amount of satisfaction in outlining the views which had been expressed by the member for Canning. The member for Canning is not denying anything he said.

Mr. Crommelin: I did not say he was.

Mr. GRAHAM: I am sure that the member for Claremont thought he was scoring a pretty political point.

Mr. Crommelin: Not at all.

Mr. GRAHAM: In case the honourable member was not here, as I have already indicated, I gave my feelings in connection with the matter.

Mr. Crommelin: I heard your feelings.

Mr. GRAHAM: Exactly; and I say again it is surely refreshing that members of the Labor Party are free to express their viewpoint, not like the bunch of automatons on the other side of the House—

Mr. Crommelin: That is not right.

Mr. GRAHAM: —who, when the inner circle makes a decision, have no alternative but to bend the knee and obey.

Mr. Crommelin: Rubbish!

Mr. Hawke: The member for Claremont changed his view on another subject.

Mr. GRAHAM: I wonder whether the House should be reminded of that.

Mr. Crommelin: You can remind it!

Mr. Brand: Members on the other side of the House have done that also.

Mr. GRAHAM: That was the occasion when the member for Claremont propounded what subsequently developed into that snake-like object in the middle of Stirling Highway. That was something that was approved by the member for Claremont.

Mr. Crommelin: I certainly did not approve of it.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): The honourable member will have to be very brief in speaking along this line.

Mr. GRAHAM: He did not care what the people down in Claremont thought of his views and he said he would still stick to them. Subsequently, however, the member for Claremont hurried along to the Minister for Works screaming and panting and asking for a change to be made. Such is the courage and principle of the member for Claremont! I repeat that he took this action because he thought it was a political point he was scoring off the member for Canning. I now repeat what I have said on previous occasions; namely, that apart from certain cardinal principles the members of the Labor Party are free to express their views on any question.

Mr. Crommelin: Are they free to express them on this question?

Mr. GRAHAM: Of course! Is it not obvious that certain members on this side of the House are opposed to fluoridation of public water supplies, and is it not equally obvious that certain other members on this side of the House are in favour of the proposal?

Mr. Crommelin: Yes; but how will you vote?

Mr. GRAHAM: That will be demonstrated shortly. I repeat: Because the member for Balcatta is in favour of this proposal and another member on this side of the House is opposed to it, what right have I, because I am successful in getting the majority of members in this Chamber to vote with me, to foist my viewpoint on several thousand people in Western Australia? What right have I to do that, especially on a matter upon which so many people feel so keenly?

I dissociate myself completely from the attitude shown by members of the Government in rubbishing these people. There are some good and substantial members of the community who, by their studies, are violently opposed to what the Government intends to do with this legislation. They have a right to be heard and to express themselves.

Mr. Crommelin: They were not heard in New South Wales!

Mr. GRAHAM: Anything I may be able to say or do by voting in this Chamber cannot affect the situation in New South Wales or anywhere else.

Mr. Crommelin: It is A.L.P. policy.

Mr. GRAHAM: The A.L.P. is expressing its policy at the present moment as it has ever since this question has been posed. Why is it that there is such merit in the action of the Australian Labor Party when such action is taken elsewhere?

Mr. Crommelin: I did not see any merit in it.

Mr. GRAHAM: Perhaps we are right in Western Australia on certain occasions. When we are standing for a democratic principle I do not think there can be much fault in a policy such as that.

Mr. Bovell: The A.L.P. hasn't a policy on this.

Mr. GRAHAM: The members of the Government no doubt will recall a referendum that was held some 30 years ago. The Labor Opposition, as it was at that time, had a very definite viewpoint on the matter posed during the referendum, but the Labor Party was not opposed to the opinion of the electors being obtained, and that is precisely the position at present. The only difference is that on that occasion the Liberal-Country Party Government was seeking to have a referendum supported by the Labor Party, but on this occasion it is the Labor Party seeking the holding of a referendum; so what about some reciprocity? Also, the other question on which

a referendum was held was more or less a mundane constitutional affair, whilst this issue is one on which a number of worthy citizens have given a great deal of thought, time, study, and research, and they have made inquiries from many parts of the world. In any case, what is the urgency in this matter?

Mr. Crommelin: Sixty per cent. of dental decay.

Mr. GRAHAM: I do not want to be partisan on this issue, other than that I have expressed my own viewpoint on it with the reservation that whilst I think in one direction, other people think in another. Just because I happen to be a member of Parliament for the time being, I do not think that gives me license to dictate to these people on a matter which is so intimate and so personal to them. On the broader matters it is essential for the Government of the day and for Parliament, in the interests of the general public, to make a decision; but I insist that this matter is one which is more personal and I think, therefore, the personal viewpoints should be appreciated.

If I commenced to develop a point one way or the other, perhaps I can be credited with a certain measure of sincerity; but all I say, without passing an opinion upon it, is that there are several places—I think there are 160, but there may be more—where fluoridation has been introduced and where it was subsequently discarded. I suppose there were reasons for that. Whether it was mass hysteria or some other reason that was involved, I do not know, but that is a matter of historical fact.

I am aware, too, that many proposals have been introduced and implemented, and the experts have poured scorn on the contributions of those who gave birth to the original ideas. The reason I mentioned that is to indicate that the experts are not necessarily right, either in medicine or on other matters.

Speaking of other matters, I think it is now generally recognised that what was called the Premiers' Plan during the depression is now regarded as a tragedy because it was the opposite from what should have been done in the circumstances. We are of that mind now, but the experts of the day were of one mind then. I draw the attention of members to the work of Louis Pasteur. What did the experts think of him initially? Also Madame Curie; Sister Kenny of Australia; Harvey, when he propounded the theory of the circulation of blood in the human system. That is something which a kindergarten child accepts today without question. There is also a man called Pinel who made certain discoveries in the treatment of mental diseases. The experts poured scorn and derision on these people; and in years gone by they spoke of burning them at the stake, declaring them witches, and all

that sort of thing, but several of the instances I have quoted have occurred during our own generation.

Therefore, notwithstanding the volume of evidence produced by experts and quoted by the Minister for Health, they could still be wrong—I do not know. The Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition have also quoted the views of other experts against fluoridation and they may be right or they may be wrong. Again, I do not know. It is true to say that the populace generally, in a campaign held for or against fluoridation of water supplies, would be confused.

Mr. Dunn: You want to send them to a referendum all confused?

Mr. GRAHAM: If we in this Chamber are honest we will admit that we are all confused. My objection is that because we have been organised, or instructed, or even if we feel along a certain line on our own initiative, we have no right to foist that upon the people. The people have a right to be consulted in this matter.

Alternatives have been proposed. It is suggested to me, in a publication which I will not bother to read, that the introduction of fluoride into milk might be a better way—that is to say, fluoride put into our milk supplies with the proviso that any person, or family, shall have the right to order milk that does not contain the additive.

So, if in the minds of the Government, the great mass and multitude have no proper sense of responsibility, and cannot be trusted to give tablets to their children, or to use toothpaste which has fluorine added, or something of that nature, then they will be free to order their milk without caring whether it has fluoride added to it or not, and accordingly the children will be consuming it either as raw milk, or in the preparation of other foods.

We would then allow those people who, for any reason, have objection to the compulsion of fluoride, to escape unscathed from the deliberations and the decisions of this Government. There is nothing unreal in an approach such as that. It has also been suggested that there are certain additives which could be placed in bread, again with the qualification that anybody raising objection to it should be free to obtain bread which does not contain these additives.

But if fluoride is to be added to our public water supply what chance, or prospect, has the family which takes strong exception to it of installing some sort of mechanism or device to exclude these additives to which they take exception? I wonder whether the Government does not underestimate the commonsense of the average member of the community. Because they do not live in Dalkeith, but in East Perth, Osborne Park, or somewhere

else, does the Government conclude that the parents are not anxious or zealous for the welfare of their children? Or does the Government think that is the prerogative of the wealthy; of those who live in the more salubrious suburbs? Apparently the Government feels there are people who are irresponsible, and who cannot be trusted to do the right thing.

I think it is generally recognised that legislation of any sort has impacts upon the community which affect it in different ways; some favourably, some unfavourably. In regard to income tax in the higher incomes, for the purpose of assisting widows and orphans, it has an unfavourable impact at one end, but a favourable impact at the other.

So if the price—and after all the Government has the numbers—of some measure of support for this principle is that there should be inserted a proviso that a referendum be held of the people in the affected areas, then surely, in all equity the Government could approve such a proposition.

There are just one or two other observations I wish to make. Firstly, I would like to comment on the Bill itself. No doubt there will be more mention made of this when we reach the Committee stage, if that be the pleasure of the House. But I will read the appropriate portions of the Bill to indicate just where we are going. There is to be a committee of seven, where a quorum of four is necessary. The majority decision would, I suppose, be three. I have not been able to ascertain whether the chairman gets a casting vote. So we find that three persons can make a recommendation to the Minister, and then it is in the hands of the Minister. I will read the relevant parts of the Bill. They are as follows:—

Where the Committee makes a written recommendation to the Minister that fluorine be added to any public water supply, if the Minister approves the recommendation, the Minister shall—

- (a) send the water supply authority having control of the public water supply a copy of the recommendation; and
- (b) direct in writing the water supply authority to give effect to such matters contained in the recommendation, as are specified in the direction, within a time so specified.

(2) (a) Notwithstanding anything contained in any other Act, a water supply authority to whom a direction has been given by the Minister under subsection (1) of this section shall, subject to this Act, add fluorine to

any public water supply under its control and to which the direction relates, within such period as the Minister specifies in the direction.

Here let me interpolate. This can be done notwithstanding the fact that the water supply authority may be unanimous in its opposition, and an overwhelming number of people in the affected area may also be opposed to fluoridation. The provisions of the Bill continue as follows:—

(3) The cost of and incidental to the fluoridation of the public water supply pursuant to the direction of the Minister shall be borne by the water supply authority.

(4) A water supply authority shall not add fluorine to any public water supply except—

(a) pursuant to and in accordance with a direction of the Minister given under this section; and

(b) in accordance with this Act.

(5) A person, not being a water supply authority, shall not add fluorine to any public water supply.

Penalty: Five hundred pounds and, in the case of a continuing offence to an additional sum not exceeding twenty pounds for each day on which the offence continues after conviction.

10. (1) When a water supply authority fails to add fluorine to a public water supply under its control, as directed by the Minister under section nine of this Act, the Minister may—

(a) cause the fluorine to be so added; and

(b) send to the water supply authority a statement of account showing the cost of and incidental to the fluoridation of the public water supply under this subsection.

(2) If the water supply authority fails to pay to the Minister the cost referred to in that statement of account within thirty days of the receipt by it of the statement, the cost may be recovered from the water supply authority by the Minister in a court of competent jurisdiction.

You will see the proposition, Mr. Speaker. Three persons decide, and a Minister as flaccid as the present one would undoubtedly approve. This means that four persons in the State of Western Australia are in favour of this, and the people subject to water supply in Albany or elsewhere—irrespective of what the water supply authority, or the people, think—will have to fall into line; and whatever installations are necessary the people will have to pay the cost. The Minister will then say to the people concerned, "If you do not like it you can add a little

device of your own to your taps to exclude it. But at least your sewerage system will have the benefit of it."

That is the proposition before us, and I think the Minister will agree that it requires attention. I am certain that a number of members supporting the Government have not even read the Bill; they are unaware that there are such ridiculous provisions as those I have read out. I say with all due respect—if any is deserved—no matter how distasteful it may be to the member for Subiaco, who is now absent, that the pro-fluoridationists were asked to address the Government parties one morning, and that at a meeting held in the afternoon they agreed to support the proposition. Now, every one of them, as though they were regimented, is apparently compelled to support the Government.

Because the Opposition decided that on a certain day both the pros and the antis in respect of fluoridation should be heard for an equal length of time, the Government parties felt a little shamefaced and have endeavoured to cover up their bias. So after they had made their decision they invited those who were opposed to fluoridation of public water supplies to express their viewpoint. That is certainly a sorry state of affairs.

Because of the facts and circumstances of the case I suggest the Government might well reflect on the attitude of the Opposition in this Parliament. However keen the Government might be—its members are only simple souls in the community of Western Australia—it should allow the people of this State living in areas served by water supplies to have the right to determine by way of referendum whether they are in favour of, or against fluoridation.

I do not think the Government is too happy about the proposition it has put forward, because I have before me a long list of individual localities—these are contained on several pages—in which fluoridation was introduced, but where the people by popular vote subsequently decided they did not want any more of fluoridation. Is the Government, which seems to be sold on this proposition, afraid the public should be permitted the opportunity to express their views? The Government has expressed some fears by its action, because if I remember correctly many thousands of pounds have been devoted to the pro-fluoridation campaign.

Mr. Oldfield: I think something like £5,000.

Mr. GRAHAM: The anti-fluoridationists say they have experienced a great deal of difficulty in getting a bare mention in the newspapers, in broadcast sessions, and the rest. So it appears there has been more or less a one-sided campaign. We, as members of Parliament, have been subjected to a barrage of information. These

poor hapless souls, without the usual media of mass communication available to them, and indeed with mass communication clamped down against them, are at their wits' end to put their point of view to the people. I suppose they are hoping that we as reasonable men and as representatives of the people will give some heed to their point of view, even if we do not necessarily agree with all or any of the evidence they have submitted to us.

There is the proposition as I see it. The Opposition asks for a democratic process to be given effect to. As members are aware, when a Government or a State conducts a referendum an opportunity for the pros and the antis to be given equal hearing is made available; and every elector is sent a copy of both cases. Therefore the people have the chance to study both sides of the question—something which the public at large has not been given up to the present moment, because the general mass propaganda almost exclusively has been very one-sided. Occasionally there is published just a flicker of the viewpoint of people who, for their own good reasons, are opposed to mass medication or whatever this might be called.

I conclude on the note that the Opposition has nothing to be ashamed of; it is not running away from any issue. Is a political party to be accused of lack of courage when it allows its members to express their viewpoint but insists that the viewpoint of the public must be respected?

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Just words.

Mr. GRAHAM: They may be words to the Minister; and his dictatorial approach to this question, as exemplified in the terms of the Bill, conforms very largely with that thoughtless interjection of his. He feels that as long as he has the Press, television, radio, the provincial journals, and the influential sectors of the community on his side, he can get away with murder, and that there is no need to worry, because he is adequately protected.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): The honourable member has another five minutes.

Mr. GRAHAM: That will be ample, and I thank you, Mr. Speaker, for reminding me. If the Government is honest in this matter it will raise no objection to the proposition which has been submitted. In fairness to members of this House who find themselves favouring the proposition, the Government should try it out. I am afraid those of us who, notwithstanding the objections, feel that before any precipitate action is taken the people should be consulted, would be compelled to vote against the measure unless the Government gave an assurance that action would be taken along the lines of a referendum. If the Government will do that, it can be assured

of a reasonably easy passage of its legislation; but without that important proviso the united opposition of those who sit on this side of the House can be expected.

The whole approach of this Government in the early deliberations before arriving at its decision; its scant respect for those who dare to differ from its attitude, as exemplified in the printed document; and the whole sorry affair reflect no credit on the Government. I suggest in all seriousness that the Government can save something from the situation by agreeing to the reasonable and democratic proposition which has been submitted by the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. MITCHELL (Stirling) [11.12 p.m.]: I would like to make a few comments on the measure before us. I am a member of the Country Party, but I am not speaking on behalf of that body on this occasion; I am speaking personally. I consider the approach to this question is entirely wrong by expressing the views of any particular political party. The Leader of the Opposition said that very often some people have a deep sense of right and wrong in such matters, and they should be entitled to form their own opinion.

Having formed my opinion from all the evidence submitted and possible to be obtained from reading, I think the Government would be neglectful in its duty if it did not introduce this measure. Having arrived at that conclusion I am only too happy to support the Bill. Feeling as I do, I would be very neglectful of my duty if I were to vote against a measure such as this, which has been introduced for the sole purpose of benefiting the children of this State; that is, as far as the care of their teeth is concerned. A Government could probably be judged on the things it left undone, rather than on the things it did; and if it had omitted to introduce this very essential measure it would be open to more criticism than it would be by introducing it.

Mr. Graham: Who among the general public have asked for fluoridation?

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: The general public did not ask for compulsory chest X rays.

Mr. MITCHELL: The medical advisers to the Government suggested that here was an opportunity for steps to be taken to safeguard the dental health of the people of Western Australia. I am particularly fortunate in my electorate in that I have not received a single objection to the measure; in fact, one shire council unanimously passed a resolution supporting fluoridation of water supplies. So I am particularly fortunate inasmuch as I speak with the support of those people in my electorate who have taken some interest in this matter.

I am sorry indeed to see the teeth of the children of this State made a political football; and I very much regret that the Opposition could not see eye to eye with the Government to support this measure for the benefit of all concerned. It has been said that the present-day diet is one of the reasons for the bad teeth which children have. I cannot subscribe to that view, because in my younger days diets were not quite the same as they are today, especially when one lived in the country, and lived as hard as we did. However, if I could save one child what I suffered with my teeth in my younger days I would be very happy indeed.

The Leader of the Opposition also made some comment on the fact that we take much more care and spend much more money in keeping our machinery in order than we do in looking after our children's teeth. That is just what the Government is trying to do—spend money in looking after the children's teeth. Another point is that if we can liken our children to machinery, perhaps we could say the same as an eminent American authority said recently, "If the people of this State and Australia spent as much care on their children's teeth as they did in considering the diet and nutrition of their animals, it would be a much better place so far as the teeth of children was concerned."

The suggestion made by members of the Opposition that a referendum should be held was, I believe made in all sincerity. However, I am quite certain that a referendum would be useless in deciding this matter. If there were only one vote cast against the proposition that person, to my mind, would have every right to say, "There is one vote against it and it should not be introduced." I would be anxious to know what percentage the Opposition would consider necessary to carry this proposition. Presuming we have a 51 per cent. vote in favour of it, I suppose we can take it the other 49 per cent. of the people would have to accept the decision of that 51 per cent.

Mr. Graham: Make it 75 per cent., if you like.

Mr. MITCHELL: We could make it any percentage. Figures have been quoted about many referendums held where towns have gone out of fluoridation. I think if those figures were examined, it would be found that approximately 10 per cent. of the people voted against the use of fluoride; and on the result, there were certainly less than that number who voted for it. Approximately 10 per cent. of the people voted against it; so on that basis, because the other people did not bother to vote, the towns went out of fluoride. It proves nothing to me, because other people do not bother to vote.

Mr. Graham: We could make it compulsory here, if you like. We will oblige you whichever way you like.

Mr. MITCHELL: There has been an oft-quoted statement about the water supply of New York. It has been said that one man there—I believe his name is Dr. Ford—said he could mix fluoride satisfactorily, but he could not draw it from the taps in the same proportion as he mixed it. However, most speakers forgot to mention the last part of his quotation where he finishes up saying this—

I can assure you that whatever the amount you draw out of the taps, nobody is likely to get a lethal dose because of the over-supply that comes out of some taps.

Therefore, while the earlier part where he said that he could not get water out of the taps in equal proportions has been quoted, it has been conveniently overlooked that he made the statement which I just quoted. He is not a medical man, but an engineer; and he said that nobody is likely to get a lethal dose. Therefore, I am quite certain that whilst we cannot get the same amount out of the tap, we cannot at least get a lethal dose as a result of over-mixture in some cases.

Mr. Graham: How close to death do you think you can get without dying?

Mr. MITCHELL: In regard to this problem, many figures have been quoted by the medical men in Western Australia in support of the fluoridation of our water supply. We all know that the acceptance of medical advice is a matter of having faith in those people. Many of us go along to have a serious operation because our medical adviser has told us that it is necessary for the continuance of our good health.

Mr. Rowberry: You have to signify your assent beforehand.

Mr. MITCHELL: Surely we can accept advice from our medical men who are people of high standard and ability. It is those men who have suggested to the Government that certain alterations be made to the water supply to improve the standard of health amongst our children. Therefore, on that ground alone I suggest we should support the measure; and I do hope that members opposite, despite what they have said, will at least accept the proposition as a sincere attempt by the Government to do something for the betterment of our children's teeth. I am quite sure that the people in the world who are receiving fluoride today would not be receiving it unless some benefit was accruing from it.

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe—Minister for Health) [11.23 p.m.]: I find this has been a very interesting debate, not one by any means which is unique in Legislatures throughout the world. Indeed, this debate must have been paralled on many occasions in many public places.

At the outset, I would like to say that when I first spoke on the second reading of this Bill, I said the Government made no apology for introducing this legislation and also said quite honestly that the measure provided for the compulsory fluoridation of public water supplies. There was no attempt whatsoever to hide any fact associated with the compulsory addition of fluoride to our water supply.

Mr. W. Hegney: It is set out in the Bill.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: We believe—whether or not the Opposition believes it is another thing—that this is a proven health reform of some considerable magnitude. It is rather interesting to speculate what might have happened if there had been no change of Government in 1959—what might have happened in regard to the problem of dental decay in children's teeth and fluoride. It is interesting to speculate on who might have been Minister for Health—the portfolio I now hold—and I am going to suggest that there must be a number of members opposite who, if they were Minister for Health, would have brought legislation of a similar kind forward to their Government for ratification and approval—and I like to think that the Labor Party would have approved it. I like to think there are members opposite who would have had the courage to take this thing up on its own merit so as to bring to the children of the State—and the people eventually—a very beneficial health reform.

To sum up the debate very broadly—very broadly indeed—I would say that the Government has seen the problem, and there is very definitely a problem of dental decay, a problem which various speakers have mentioned. It involves pain and suffering and malformation of mouths, and attendant health worries and the like—not forgetting the financial worry.

Mr. Graham: There is no argument on that one.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: There is no argument, then, on the question of the problem, and it is a very great one. We have seen this problem and we have realised that there appears to be no way in which we can overcome it apart from this public health measure of fluoridation.

Mr. Graham: I am going a bit bald on top. What are you going to put into the water to correct that?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I am going to suggest that there are other ways of trying to combat dental decay in children, but not one of them—and this has been stated by public health authorities all over the world—can compare with fluoridation of public water supplies.

The Government, having seen this problem, has taken it up and made a decision that if we are going to tackle it we must

tackle it properly. It is no good introducing legislation which will permit local authorities to fluoridate their water supplies. That just will not work. It was considered but it would not have meant anything as a public health measure. It would not have beaten the disease or brought it under control; and so we decided, in the interests of the people—and I repeat, in the interests of the people—to take this controversial step, a step which, as I said in my first speech, will perform something in the nature of a minor miracle.

On the other hand the Opposition sees the problem. Members of the Opposition have even admitted there is problem; but they are not prepared to tackle it. In their wisdom they have determined that this is a question which should be put to the people in the form of a referendum.

Mr. Graham: Why not?

Mr. Oldfield: It would be the democratic approach, I would have thought.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I would say that a referendum would not solve the situation. A decision would still have to be made in regard to introducing legislation, and the percentage of people in favour of it would determine the Opposition's point of view as to whether or not it supported the legislation. If 40 per cent. of the people were against it, we would still have to legislate against that 40 per cent. Therefore the problem would just not be solved.

Mr. Jamieson: You admitted you did not have to legislate to do this.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I did not.

Mr. Jamieson: In your initial speech you did.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I cannot remember having said that.

Mr. Jamieson: You said it was desirable to do so but not absolutely necessary for legislation to be introduced.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I think you are wrong.

Mr. Jamieson: You had better read your own speech.

Mr. Oldfield: You would not know what you said five minutes ago.

Mr. Rowberry: I have no recollection of writing to the shire council about the business either.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: We see then that the Government has taken a stand and is prepared to abide by its decision on a controversial issue in the interests of the people. But the Opposition is sheltering—whether or not it is a deliberate sheltering, I am not prepared to say in connection with all members of the Opposition—behind a referendum, thus avoiding the necessity to make a decision—

Mr. Davies: Nonsense!

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: —whether their principles are the highest or not.

Mr. Davies: Nonsense again!

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: The member for Victoria Park knows something about nonsense.

Mr. Hawke: Hear, hear!

Mr. Graham: Yes, we get large doses of it from over there.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: He deals with it all the time. It is quite obvious that members of the Opposition have been drilled into the situation in which they stand. Whether or not it is the result of a decision, as stated by the member for Balcatta, made two years ago, within the party structure, I do not know. It does not matter. However, it is quite obvious that they decided on this course of action as the safe course and the right one, as far as they are concerned—

Mr. Graham: Right course, yes.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: —and that the only speakers should be the leaders of the party.

Mr. Jamieson: It is a bit of a change to see some of your back-benchers on their feet.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: The Leader of the Opposition spoke first on the Opposition side, followed by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and then the member for Balcatta.

Mr. Graham: We will see if the other members can make up for it in Committee, if that will make you happy.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I thought there was a chance that only two speakers would speak, those being the first two I mentioned. But then the member for Balcatta came in, and that was rather dismaying to me—

Mr. Graham: I bet it was!

Mr. Jamieson: You had the wrong ear to the ground.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: —because leaders of the Labor Party in opposition have shown themselves to be reactionary in their approach to problems of this kind, and it only goes to show what I have said on numerous occasions before that the Labor Party is not the party it once was. It has become a reactionary party.

Mr. Hawke: All renegades say that.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: What a nasty thing for the Leader of the Opposition to say! He usually takes the nasty approach.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order!

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Perhaps we should try to clarify the nasty remark, or the remark that is trying to be nasty, made by this poor type of Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Hawke: All renegades say what you just said!

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: The Leader of the Opposition is referring to the fact that my father was a member of the Labor Party.

Mr. Hawke: I did not mention your father.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: You are mentioning him; and don't crawl out of it!

Mr. Hawke: I am talking about you.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: A most detestable remark.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order! We must confine ourselves to the Bill.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: He is a pious humbug—as I've said previously!

Mr. Hawke: You are a political poltroon and a political renegade.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order! Remarks must be confined to the Bill.

Mr. Hawke: Sold out for place and position!

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Mr. Speaker, the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition—whilst I do not suppose I should take notice of them, but I do—are most objectionable.

Mr. Graham: Have yours not been?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I would ask him to withdraw them.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): What are the remarks the Minister desires to be withdrawn?

Mr. Hawke: Give him some fluoride!

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order!

A member: Calm down!

Mr. Graham: Sit down and let's have a vote on it.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order!

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Mr. Speaker, I can see it would be useless to expect the Leader of the Opposition to do the honourable thing, so I will proceed.

Mr. Hawke: That's right! Squib it!

Mr. Court: Back to the same language he used the other night!

Mr. Hawke: Yes, when the Minister for Railways squibbed it.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order!

Mr. Court: Every night the same old thing!

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Members can see the depths to which the Leader of this once great party will descend!

Mr. Davies: Still great!

Mr. Hawke: That is what all renegades say!

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I consider that the approach made by the Labor Party in this regard is a weak and pusillanimous one. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition adopted a rather extraordinary attitude. His speech can be summed up by saying that he considered fluoridation to be very dangerous; that it needed a great deal more inquiry into it; and a good deal more should be done before a decision was made on this important subject. At one stage in his speech he said the safety factor was zero; and in the next breath he said, "Let us have a referendum on this subject."

If the request for a referendum on this subject is carried, it would mean that it would be perfectly all right for the legislation to be introduced. That is a highly anomalous situation, and one that does not reflect credit on the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Tonkin: In replying to a question you told me that the safety factor was zero.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition meant it in an entirely different way. He said there was no safety factor.

The Leader of the Opposition spoke at great length on the necessity for good diet habits on the part of children. That is agreed. It is a fact that by and large the public would enjoy much better and improved health if greater consideration were given to the diet factor. Indeed, the Education Council puts forward this view very compellingly in a booklet entitled, "Let's Keep Our Teeth." Over half the booklet is devoted to matters pertaining to the diet factor, to good oral hygiene, and the like. However, that does not have any impact whatever on dental decay as a public health measure.

The Leader of the Opposition and other speakers questioned the safety of fluoridation of water supplies. They are entitled to their opinions. But do they believe that the British Ministry of Health, that the United States public health authorities, that the Australian health authorities would advocate a health reform that is unsafe for the public? This, of course, is not so. They advocate this reform because it is perfectly safe and perfectly beneficial.

Mention has been made that tablets should be used to allow freedom of choice. Tablets do not satisfy the situation at all. They are not a public health measure. Tablets were tried as a public health measure in Hawaii, commencing from 1957. Extensive publicity was given to the benefits of fluoride tablets on dental decay, and they were issued free to everybody.

Initial results showed that 90 per cent. of parents were using fluoride tablets. But four years later only about 12 per cent.

of the population was using fluoride tablets. I mention that to show that the giving of fluoride tablets free to people does not constitute a public health measure and does not control the disease.

The basic idea of the Government in connection with this matter is to improve the health of the community. Fluoridation is only a phase of public health activity, and there are many other facets of the work in which public health authorities in this State and in other States are keenly interested in order to preserve and improve the health of the public.

That is the sole desire of this Government. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition made the point that we can only argue from authority; and I think that is correct. I am prepared to abide by that. I believe that the overwhelming weight of authority concerning fluoridation is in favour of fluoridation of water supplies. It is a fact.

Mr. Graham: That is what you think; and you are entitled to think that.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: It is a question of which scientists we trust. That is a very pertinent point. Public health authorities of those countries which now advocate fluoridation had teams of experts assess the merits of the scientific work that has been done. Those experts are qualified men and they devoted a good deal of time to this research. After assessing the merits they were overwhelmingly in favour of fluoridation.

Mention was also made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition of a letter written to *The West Australian* by Philippa Hall. In that letter mention was made of the dangers of boiling fluoridated water and of making soup from fluoridated water. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition questioned the reply I gave. My reply was based on information conveyed in a cable received from the British Ministry of Health. The cable was in reply to one sent by the Health Education Council of Western Australia. The cable sent to the British Ministry of Health on the 27th September, 1963, reads as follows:—

Alleged locally that Health Ministry circular to medical officers of health in Britain this year about fluoridation of water advises against prolonged boiling before making tea and the use of fluoridated water for soups gravies and preserves stop Urgent clarification desired as State legislation now under debate

The reply from the Ministry of Health was addressed to Carr, Health Education Council, and reads as follows:—

Ministry of Health has never issued warnings about boiling fluoridated water stop Although boiling increases concentration of fluoride to some extent harmful levels cannot be reached

It is signed "Health Ministry, London." Whether or not the Deputy Leader of the Opposition chooses to believe the Toronto paper editorial, the Kingston weekly editorial, or the cable from the British Ministry of Health, is a matter which is up to him.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition queried the difficulties of getting an even dosage of fluoride throughout a reticulated water system. The mechanical fluoridation of water supplies has been tried and tested in many large cities and in smaller cities and towns in the United States of America and in Britain. As previous speakers on this side of the House have pointed out, in the United States of America there are approximately 50,000,000 people who are drinking fluoridated water from approximately 2,000 water supply systems.

Mr. Graham: How many people are not?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: A larger number of people are not. There would probably be 130,000,000 people who are not drinking fluoridated water. But the significant point in regard to the interjection just made is that the number of people in the United States of America who are drinking fluoridated water is increasing year by year despite the fact that some of the small towns have discontinued fluoridation. I am certain that the discontinuance has been caused by the types of speeches made by the leaders of the Labor Party in opposition to this measure—merchants of fear.

I have here a document which states that an extensive report of the engineering aspects of fluoridation has been compiled by the New York University College. It summarises fluoridation practices in the 22 major cities of the United States where fluoridation is in operation, among them being Chicago, Cleveland, Baltimore, Denver, Milwaukee, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, San Francisco, and Washington. This report shows clearly that there were no engineering problems in the handling of fluorides that did not have an adequate solution. It went on to say that no technical problems were observed in the reticulation of fluoridated water, the persistence of residual fluoride iron in the system, pipeline corrosion due to fluorides, or the maintenance of the concentration of fluorides at the pre-determined level. I think that is highly significant and shows there are no difficulties associated with it.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition also made mention of the fact—or either he, or the person he was quoting, said—that the American Medical Association was against the fluoridation of water supplies. I do not know whether he said that or whether he quoted someone else who said it.

Mr. Tonkin: I read a letter from the secretary.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: This is the information which I supplied to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in this House regarding the American Medical Association—

The House of Delegates of the American Medical Association at its meeting in Los Angeles (Dec. 4 to 7, 1951) adopted the following resolution:

That the House of Delegates of the American Medical Association endorse the principle of fluoridation of community water supplies.

A subsequent comment by the Secretary and General Manager of the American Medical Association is also relevant:

The unscrupulous opponents of fluoridation have spread the impression that the American Medical Association did not endorse this public health measure. The fact is that they did and that it stands by its endorsement. It is true that the endorsement did not urge any action whatsoever upon responsible officials because that is not the function of the Association. Both the A.M.A. Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry and the A.M.A. Council on Foods and Nutrition expressed themselves definitely to the effect that fluoridation is safe.

As I said initially, when opening this debate, there would be many arguments advanced for and many arguments advanced against this proposal of fluoridation. We have a mass of evidence for and a mass of evidence against it, and one must try to assess the quality of the evidence—the quality and not the quantity. Countries like the United States, Britain, New Zealand, and Australia have done that; they have assessed all this evidence and come down completely and wholeheartedly in favour of fluoridation. So I believe that this Government is taking a very responsible course of action in trying to benefit the health of the community; and I believe if we do not pass legislation of this kind to benefit the health of the community we are denying better health to our people. This is something to be avoided, and it was something I hoped the Opposition would also try to avoid. It is important that we take this step in the interests of the people of Western Australia.

Mr. Graham: Tell us about the referendum. That will decide my vote.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I do not believe that any good purpose would be served by having a referendum. I think I stated earlier that we are opposed to the idea of a referendum because it does not serve any good purpose.

Mr. Graham: That's you!

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Legislation would still, have to be introduced, with a number of people dissenting from it. I hope the Bill will be agreed to.

Question put.

Mr. HAWKE: Mr. Speaker—

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): The Minister has closed the debate on the second reading.

Mr. HAWKE: I want to move to delete the motion before the House.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): The honourable member is too late. The debate has been wound up and I am putting the question.

Mr. HAWKE: There is a motion before the Chair.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Yes, there is.

Mr. HAWKE: That the Bill be now read a second time. I want to amend that.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): The debate has concluded. The Minister has wound it up, and I am putting the question.

Mr. HAWKE: Then I will move it in Committee.

Question passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Mr. Crommelin) in the Chair; Mr. Ross Hutchinson (Minister for Health) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 8 put and passed.

Clause 9: Fluoridation of public water supplies—

Mr. HAWKE: This is the clause which gives to the Minister total power to direct any water supply authority to put fluorine into the water supply under the control of that authority. One of the preceding clauses lays it down that the Committee to be set up under this legislation makes a written recommendation to the Minister in favour of adding fluorine to a particular water supply; and where the Committee makes such a recommendation under clause 9 the Minister shall send to the water supply authority a copy of the recommendation and direct in writing the water supply authority to give effect to such matters as are contained in the recommendation, and so on.

Quite clearly this clause proposes to give to the Minister complete and dictatorial power to direct the water supply authority to add fluorine to the water supply under its control provided, as I said earlier, that the Committee has first made a written recommendation to that effect to

the Minister. The water supply authorities have no say in the matter whatsoever under this clause or any other clause, and the local people who will have to consume this fluoridated water—once this part of the legislation is put into operation—will have no say in the matter, either.

Therefore, I propose to move an amendment to clause 9 which would make it necessary for the local people in the water supply district concerned to be consulted by referendum, and for an affirmative decision to be given by them before any such direction, as given by the Minister to the appropriate water supply authority, could take effect. Accordingly, I move an amendment—

Page 6, line 11—Insert after the word "direction" the words "Provided a referendum of the electors on the roll of the Legislative Assembly within the water supply authority's area has first approved of the direction of the Minister."

This amendment will be much better than the one I tried to move earlier, because that one would have been of a general character—a referendum on a State-wide basis. However, by moving for the same principle in this clause, we localise the issue as it should be localised. I think all members would realise immediately that a State-wide referendum might not be the best in the circumstances in view of the fact that many of the people who voted in that referendum would not be affected by the fluoridation of the water supply system in the metropolitan area or by the fluoridation of some other water supply system associated with, for example, the Wellington Dam.

However, this proposal for the holding of a referendum before the Minister's direction could take effect, localises the issue to each water supply area where the Minister proposes to issue the direction. In other words, should the Minister propose to issue a direction to a water supply authority controlling the domestic water supplies in the metropolitan area, then all the people on the Legislative Assembly rolls within the metropolitan water supply district would have the right—and I think it should be a right they should be compelled to operate—to vote either for or against the proposal to fluoridate the local water supply. That, I think, is a much better proposition than the general one I had in mind earlier because it will ensure that those people who are to be directly affected, and, possibly, in some circumstances, detrimentally affected, will have the right to express their opinion before the fluorine can be put into their own water supply.

I am at a complete loss why the Minister and the members on the Government side of the Chamber oppose the principle of the referendum even in the general

sense. However, I will be more surprised if they oppose it in this localised sense which is contained in the amendment I have now moved. If half of what the Minister has said is true, and if half of what members on his side of the Chamber who support him say is true, it would seem that anyone in any local water supply district when consulted on this issue would vote as he and his colleagues would desire. Nevertheless, I have yet to be convinced that that would occur. I think it could easily happen, in a referendum, that the majority of the people would vote that the proposal to put fluorine in their water supply could, on balance, be detrimental.

To debate this question of whether fluorine should be put into our drinking water—and clause 9 is the critical part of the Bill—we have heard arguments for and against. The Minister, and those who support him, put up arguments for fluoridation and naturally put up a one-sided case. I did not hear any one of them quote an authority or an argument against fluoridation. We on this side of the Chamber put up the balancing arguments and quoted the other side of the case against fluoridation in order that there might be a fair statement of the case from both sides of the Chamber, thereby enabling members of this deliberative Assembly—although I have grave doubts on whether it still is—to vote according to their own decisions.

This amendment is completely democratic. It will give to the people who are affected, or whom it is proposed to affect, a direct voice in saying whether they are prepared to accept or oppose the proposition. As far as I am concerned, in regard to the majority that would be required to enable the water to be fluoridated, I would say I would have no objection to a simple majority deciding the issue. Some members, in discussion upon the question of a referendum earlier, said it would be unreasonable if only 51 per cent. voted for fluoridation and for their will to be imposed upon the other 49 per cent. However, if we take that a step further, we could even speculate and say that it is even more unfair for 25 men in this Assembly to inflict their will on 90 per cent. of the people in any particular water supply district; and, who can say at this stage whether 90 per cent. of the people consulted in a particular water supply district might not vote against the proposition? I do not know, and no-one knows.

There should not be the slightest objection to consulting the local people and allowing them to have a voice and make a decision in the matter. If the Minister is as sincere as he claims to be, he should have no fear in being prepared to allow the people to have a voice in the matter and to make such a decision on the issue as they think fit and proper.

Progress

Progress reported and leave given to sit again, on motion by Mr. Ross Hutchinson (Minister for Health).

BILLS (2): RETURNED

1. Bee Industry Compensation Act Amendment Bill.

Bill returned from the Council with an amendment.

2. Pig Industry Compensation Act Amendment Bill.

Bill returned from the Council with an amendment.

House adjourned at 12.7 a.m.
(Wednesday).

Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 9th October, 1963

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