

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 7 October 1980

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A

The Committee met at 11 a.m.

Treasurer, Miscellaneous, \$41 907 000

Chairman:
Mr. G. M. Gunn

(Continued from 2 October. Page 197.)

Members:

Mr. E. S. Ashenden
Mr. J. C. Bannon
Mr. H. Becker
Mr. G. J. Crafter
Mr. R. E. Glazbrook
Mr. T. M. McRae
Mr. J. W. Olsen
Mr. K. H. Plunkett

Witness:

The Hon. D. O. Tonkin, Premier and Treasurer.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr. R. D. Barnes, Under-Treasurer, Treasury Department.

Mr. J. R. Wright, Acting Treasury Accountant, Treasury Department.

The CHAIRMAN: I have examined the minutes of 2 October 1980 that have been circulated, and unless there is any objection I intend to sign them as a correct record. There being no objection, I will sign them.

The Speaker has agreed to a variation in the time table. A request was made on Thursday to allow the Premier to appear before the Committee for one more hour. I also understand that the Premier has some information which he would like to have circulated and inserted in *Hansard*.

The Hon. D. O. Tonkin: I have several answers that I undertook on Thursday to obtain for members of the Committee. They relate to various questions under various lines, and I suggest that they be tabled and incorporated in *Hansard* without my reading them.

Mr. BANNON: Can we please have an indication of the subject matter?

The Hon. D. O. Tonkin: Yes. Details are supplied in relation to the work and value of work contracted out to the private sector so far; *Vantage* magazine; membership of the Air Pollution Board and the reason why no funds were provided (there were no sittings because only one appeal had been brought forward which was withdrawn without a formal hearing); disclosures made under sections 120 and 121 of the Public Service Act (no record for the past five years); State Superannuation Office, Investment Policy of the Superannuation Fund; and the answer to the specific question—what basis was used for the 1979-80 payments of wages and salaries when the provision was \$56 000 000, and what were the actual salary and wage rates for the period.

Mr. BANNON: I would like to return to the question that was being discussed a few minutes before the adjournment last week relating to the transfer to Loan Account to supplement capital programmes. This is recorded as a transfer of \$15 500 000 in 1979-80. Of course, in the Loan Estimates this year a transfer to

Revenue Account from Loan of \$16 000 000 is to be provided for. The Premier referred me, in relation to some questions I was asking about that, to remarks by his Deputy in replying in the Budget debate, in which he suggested in his inimitable fashion that I could not do arithmetic and I could not read the accounts, and so on, but stripping aside the usual verbal hyperbole, the Deputy Premier was trying to make some more substantial points, I hope, about the way in which we had interpreted the accounts and what was their actual significance. If the Committee will recall, the point I was making is that we have had a turn-around of \$31 000 000 in 12 months, and my argument was based on the fact that in one year revenue was in surplus \$15 500 000, and this year it is in deficit, a deficit requiring its balance by the transfer of this \$16 000 000.

The rebuttal to that was expressed by the Deputy Premier, and the Premier referred me to his remarks by saying that I had it all wrong, that one must look at the two accounts as combined, that they are all really part of the same transactions, Loan and Revenue, and that indeed we are moving to have the accounts recorded in that fashion, the first step being this joint consideration that has taken place over the last few years. Rather than totalling it up and seeing some alarming trend in the Revenue Account, one must just simply see it as a continuing state of balance, that \$15 000 000 going one way one year and \$16 000 000 going back the other year, means in effect that the two accounts are in some form of total balance and therefore no point can be made.

I certainly agree with a method of looking at our accounts which combines the two documents. I think that is a good move. I think that it is being done at the Federal level, and I think Victoria handles their accounts similarly. This does give a better overview of the State's budgetary position. However, the point has still not been answered by the Premier (and I do not think it has been answered by the remarks of the Deputy Premier) in relation to the Revenue Account, namely, the point I was making in saying, in relation to the Revenue Account, that the Revenue Account represents the on-going expenses of Government, (the things it is locked into by way of salaries and other regular out-goings can be, if you like, set against the regular revenue that the State receives through taxation and so on), and, that the Loan Account is obviously money that is borrowed, money on which interest is to be paid, and money that is traditionally used (quite properly so) for capital works and on-going Loan programme works. So that while we cannot isolate any one year, an ideal situation for a State Budget and one that was maintained consistently, with one or two exceptions, throughout the years of the previous Labor Administration, and indeed, under Sir Thomas Playford's Government, over much of the time, is one where the revenue of the State is sufficient to provide its out-goings. There is some sort of balance at least within them. In fact, the position has often been that the surplus in Revenue Account can go to supplement the Loan programme, and that is an extremely desirable situation.

My question really homes in on this particular point, that in 1979-80 the Government provided for all its services and paid all its salaries and whatever out-goings were necessary, and its revenue more than covered these. There was \$15 500 000 surplus in that Revenue Account, and that went into the Loan Account. This year because, the Premier has clearly stated, among other things there have been major tax cuts, and major cuts in Government revenue, we find there is a deficit of \$16 000 000. The basic question is; what will happen in the 1981-82 financial year? One cannot just say that the situation is in balance

this year, if one looks at it in relation to last year. We would argue that indeed Treasurer Corcoran left the finances of this State in a very healthy position indeed. That healthy position has been eroded, and this year it has been necessary to make up the deficit in revenue from the Loan Account. What will happen in 1981-82? What predictions does the Premier have in relation to this item then?

The Hon. D. O. TONKIN: The Leader has virtually repeated his concern as he started them in his second reading speech. If he still has those concerns I respect them, but I can give him an absolute assurance that he has no reason to be concerned about the situation.

In the first four years of the Dunstan Government's operation, the Revenue Account was in deficit and balances were held in Loan Account to make up that deficit; in other words, it is not an unusual form of accounting, and has not been. It is simply because of the long-standing need to balance the two accounts that we have come to the conclusion—and I think this was originally reached three or four years ago—that we should be looking at the two accounts in conjunction and, indeed, that they will be brought together in one accounting system by the legislation which it is planned to introduce into the House later this session.

The question arises that Premier Corcoran left the State's finances in a healthy position. That may be so if one looks at one form of accounting but, if one looks at it from the point of view that the Leader is looking at it, so they should have been, because the State taxes which were in operation then certainly brought in some \$28 000 000 more in today's values than we expect to get in. The so-called healthy position has been eroded, not by waste or extravagance, but by following a policy which was what the present Government was voted into office to do; the so-called healthy position has been eroded by tax cuts. In other words—and I think this is something which all members of Parliament tend to forget from time to time—the money which a Government has is the taxpayers' money; whether it is paid by them in income tax and returned to the States, or whether it is paid in State taxation it belongs to the taxpayers.

The so-called healthy position has been eroded by tax concessions and tax cuts which will cost about \$28 000 000 in this financial year. It has been a worthy running down of the funds, if running down it is, but the important thing is to look at the way in which the accounts are run and, generally speaking, what has been happening over the years is that there have been on occasion years when the State has been able to operate more or less out of a savings bank account, out of a general revenue account, without having to go to the bank manager and ask whether it could borrow against an overdraft account to make up for the money being spent in that financial year. In many years, it has been necessary for the State to use Loan funds to top up general revenue accounts; in other words, we have gone to the bank and said that we want to borrow against overdraft, and we pay interest on that. If we use Loan funds, we have to pay interest, as we would on an overdraft. That is a situation which has been corrected as against the situation last year of a \$15 000 000 transfer one way and a \$15 000 000 transfer back in the following year. That is a good situation to be in.

I can understand the Leader's concern that, if we have reduced our tax income by \$28 000 000, we may be forcing ourselves into an overdraft situation and, more positively, being more committed to an overdraft situation. With the present indications and from the way the accounts are going at present, and with continual awareness of the possibility of waste, and so on, in general revenue

spending, I can give an assurance that there is a very good prospect that we can be much closer to a balance in Revenue Account at the end of this financial year than we thought, at the beginning of the financial year, would be the case. I am not able to give figures, and it is dangerous to interpret trends, but at present the trend which was so marked last year, where we managed to finish the year with a considerable surplus before transfers, has been continued, and the indications are that it is being continued and that the Revenue Account will be in a relatively healthy position at the end of the financial year.

I am not in a position now to say how much money is likely to be needed from the overdraft from the Loan Account at this stage. Of course, I would hope that none would be necessary. An ideal situation would be one in which we can afford to take some of the money that is presently set aside and use it for more capital works and additional sums, and it may well be that within a month or two we will be able to see the position more clearly and be able to put even more money than has been provided for out to capital works. Again, I cannot give that positive indication, but I think from what I have said that the Leader can understand that I am confident that the situation which was begun last year will continue and that, in spite of the tax cuts, the general Revenue Account is going to be in a very healthy position indeed and there is unlikely to be any great dependence on the overdraft account (that is, the Loan funds). Only time will tell, but I can assure the Leader that the trends at the present time are most encouraging.

Mr. BANNON: I do not have any doubts that the Premier is confident. My questions are aimed at the basis of that confidence and at whether or not it is well founded. Just using the simplistic analogy that the Premier did, if one takes an overdraft one naturally must pay it back. My question is still: "By what means does the Premier see this year's Revenue Account, or indeed future years, going back into balance or, possibly, surplus?" Where lies this improvement in State finances that he is confident will occur?

The Hon. D. O. Tonkin: There are a number of factors, and I will try to be as brief as I can. An enormous number of factors are now bearing which did not bear on Accounts in the past. First, there is the Government's very strict policy of containment of public expenditure. I repeat that the money that we spend belongs to the taxpayer, and it is our responsibility to get the best possible value for the taxpayer's dollar from that expenditure. That is our very strong policy, and we will adhere to it and hold a very strong line.

Secondly, our policy is for less Government intrusion and less regulation and, therefore, less Government activity. We will hold a strong line as far as the size of the Public Service is concerned. Where it is obvious that there needs to be increases, those increases will have to be contemplated, and in fact achieved, but where it is possible to reduce activity and to reduce Government intrusion, that will be done. Again, this will have the effect of containing expenditure very well.

The work of the Public Accounts Committee of this parliament has been most significant to date in giving the Government a lead in areas where expenditure can be contained and, indeed, should be contained. Contrary to some attitudes, the policy of this Government is not to regard the Public Accounts Committee in an adversary light. Quite the contrary: we regard it as being one of the best allies that a Government can have. In my view, the only time that a Government can be condemned for anything which is brought up in a Public Accounts Committee is if, in fact, the Government is told about

various occurrences and takes no action to correct the matters which have been brought forward. So I think properly used, and used in a co-operative fashion, the Public Accounts Committee is of immense value to the Government, and this has already proved to be so in the Engineering and Water Supply Department, in the Hospitals Department and, I have no doubt, in other areas. That is the Parliamentary backup that we have for our policies.

We then get back to the general thrust of the budgetary programme which we are now introducing and of which this Estimates Committee, perhaps inadequate as it may have proved in some particulars, is a part. First, there is the adoption of programme and performance budgeting, zero-based budgeting. I do not think it is an exaggeration to say that a significant percentage will be saved by the adoption of programme and performance budgeting, simply because all costs which hitherto have been hidden under the line budgeting system must be brought out and considered in a general balance sheet for each programme and each section of a department, and, as such, can be identified.

I refer honourable members to that section of the programme and performance budget documents that pertains to Ayers House; it would be easy to say that the cost of operating Ayers House is the cost for upkeep during the year contrasted against the income from the rents, and that is all there is to it. However, looking at that document, members will see that there are many hidden factors, including the capitalisation, the amount of interest paid and contributions to sinking funds, etc. Up until now, we have totally lost sight of this sort of thing. That procedure will be of immense value in containing expenditure.

I also point out that the Government accounting service is currently under review, and, undoubtedly, there will be tighter control. Internal audit of each department is now being instituted on a trial basis, and that will mean a much tighter control on expenditure in Government departments. I believe that all departments to which we have spoken have welcomed the opportunity to keep a closer tab on their activities. More responsibility is being given back to individual Government departments. Fundamentally, Government policy is still the issue, but all of these things point us to more efficient, tighter and less obtrusive operation of Government and, therefore, there will be less demand for revenue for straight administration.

The savings which we have made and will continue to make under that policy will help us to come close to a balance in the Revenue Account, which means that we will be able to put more Loan funds where they belong—into general public works—to stimulate what is happening. It will certainly mean that we may be able to contemplate further State taxation cuts in various areas, and in so doing we will be doing what the people of South Australia want: they want value for their money and they do not want to pay too much money but, when they pay it, they want to know that it will be spent wisely.

Mr. BANNON: The Premier referred to Ayers House on a number of occasions as an example of the way in which programme and performance budgeting can operate. But the balance sheet does not show entries to indicate the intrinsic value of what Ayers House provides or what it represents, the cost of its preservation as a national heritage place in terms of its being maintained, the fact that it is the headquarters of the National Trust or the fact that it has facilities for State functions and dining purposes, which are used quite constantly. The public gains value from all of these aspects and a comprehensive programme and performance budget must analyse any

programme or place such as Ayers House in the light of factors such as this if any value is to be gained. Simple figures are meaningless. However, we can come to grips with that issue when programme budgeting is more formalised.

I believe that the most significant aspect of the Premier's answer was that it related totally to the containment of expenditure and the reducing of Government activity: the Premier restated his philosophic view that public enterprise and activity is negative in growth terms and is a drain on the economy. That is absolute nonsense but, nevertheless, it is a philosophic view that is held by the Premier—the smaller the public sector and the more it can be obtained, the better is the value the taxpayer is getting for his dollar. The Premier did not once mention the effect of economic growth on State revenue. I would be interested to hear the Premier's predictions. Is he saying that our general economy will experience a nil growth situation over the next few years? Is that why he did not mention it?

The Hon. D. O. Tonkin: Again, the Leader is entitled to his philosophic opinions, and I respect his right to hold those opinions, although I drastically disagree with them (I am sure he feels the same way).

Regarding the Ayers House situation, he is right in saying that it is a matter of defining beforehand what is the programme, and the programme for Ayers House encompasses all the things to which he has referred. Having defined the programme and the aims of that programme, it is possible to conclude whether or not the expenditure is justified only when one has that balance sheet and finds the net cost to Government of operating such a programme. I suggest that, were the total annual cost of maintaining Ayers House about \$5 000 000, we would be looking closely at whether the intrinsic value was worth that amount. If we decided that it was worth \$5 000 000, we might be hard pushed to justify \$10 000 000. It is a relatively expensive operation, but for the things that it provides, particularly the preservation of that building, I believe that most people would agree that the current expenditure is justified, but it is important that we have the total expenditure available before we make that value judgment. The Leader is right, some of that decision could be a matter of policy, but it is necessary to make that value judgment to evaluate the programme and performance budgeting.

On the question of balancing the Revenue and Loan Accounts, economic growth will occur and, indeed, it continues to occur, whether or not we like it. The only thing that varies is the rate at which it occurs. We have been through a period where economic growth has been very much dependent on the investment growth in the State itself. One of the things that came through clearly in the recent Chamber of Commerce review was that a large proportion of companies were prepared to put investment in capital expenditure to increase their ability to produce and increase their productivity. If the Leader has not had an opportunity of studying the document, I suggest that he do so. It is a down-to-earth document, which does not hold out any false hopes, certainly not for the employment situation, which is a matter of great concern, but it indicates that the economic growth is being considered in the private sector.

Mr. BANNON: Where does it indicate that there will be growth in the private sector?

The Hon. D. O. Tonkin: I am referring to the Chamber of Commerce report, and I was referring to that throughout my reply. The next thing is that the list of projected investment and committed investment projects over \$5 000 000 (the list produced by the Federal

department from which I have quoted in the House many times) shows an extremely high increase in the volume of committed expansion and development in South Australia since last October. That, in itself, will bring further income to the Government. There will be, unquestionably (and I am sure that I do not have to outline this for the Leader), the increase in pay-roll tax.

There is also the increase in the income tax share as a result of the national wage case decisions, an increase in pay-roll tax payments and income to the State, and there will be, hopefully, a build-up in the amount of royalties that will be obtained not only from the Cooper Basin being paid at present but also from the development of Roxby Downs as a result of the uranium and copper mining that will be taking place there. We hope that, if the Kingston coal deposits are exploited, royalties will be accruing to the Crown.

The whole growth of the income base in South Australia depends very much on industrial and mineral development over the next few years, and I have no reason to doubt that we will have any difficulty in matching the performance ultimately that has been so notable in Queensland and Western Australia in recent years. It will be very much in the hands of the private sector and that, of course, is a matter of policy and philosophy, again. I have no doubt at all that the private sector will rise to that challenge, that it will seize the opportunities it has, and it will move on to the benefit of the State and the people. I have not talked about multiplier effects, and so on, but I am sure the Leader knows all about those.

Mr. BANNON: The Premier still has not given any precise indication in relation to the promise to create new jobs in South Australia. After 12 months, we are in an employment deficit, as it were, which means that, in order to fulfil that promise over the three-year period of the Government's mandate, there is a fair backlog created in the first 12 months that will have to be made up before we move into a surplus situation. The fact that the Premier has held out no hopes of an up-turn in employment in this coming financial year, makes the situation even more grave. I would still like to hear the Premier's prediction of what level of economic growth we will have over the next two or three years. Will it be 2 per cent a year, 3 per cent, nil or a negative growth?

The Hon. D. O. Tonkin: This is one of the difficulties resulting from the position in which we found ourselves at the end of 1979 when we took office. I do not think it is possible to make any such firm prediction at this stage; I think it is far too early. At least we know that there are now projects being contemplated and projects that have been committed, and that is something we did not have 12 months or so ago. It is far too soon to make any firm commitment about the level of growth; I wish I could. I wish that all of these projects were now beginning, that they had started, that the factories were being built or the extensions were being built or that the plants were being put in, and that a work force was being employed, because that would enable me to have a greater chance of giving some indication but, unfortunately we are in that hiatus period between the announcement of particular projects and their coming to fruition.

Unfortunately, because of the situation which pertained up to September 1979, there was very little in the way of continuing decision; all of these decisions have now been taken and confirmed in relatively recent times. Unfortunately, there is nothing to fill up the hiatus which was left as a result of decisions not to proceed in the late 1970's. The job situation concerns me greatly, as the Leader knows, and it concerns the Government greatly, but I would like to correct one impression which the Leader has

given. This is not in any way to take away from the seriousness of the situation as it presently applies, but I would point out to the Leader that this Government has been instrumental in creating new jobs. Again, I cannot give any figures at this stage (it is not as many as I would like), but we have been able to create new jobs. What has happened is that the run-down in the employment situation which was quite marked and which has been quite marked for some considerable time has continued and, balanced up against the new jobs which have been created, it still leaves, as the Leader has said, a net deficit. Again, I will not make any long-term commitments on that, except to say that we will be doing everything we possibly can to create as many new jobs as we can, and that will very much depend on the rapidity with which the projects announced can be put into operation. Unfortunately, there is nothing that the Government can do, other than what it is doing at present, to speed up that development.

I find it impossible to make the predictions that the Leader would like me to make. Unfortunately (and I have made this point before, and it was brought home to me very vividly during the discussions I had with the Dow Company), there have been in the past too many assumptions made that projects, because they have been discussed, are going to go ahead. I think the people of South Australia had come to the conclusion that the Dow petro-chemical project at Redcliff was a foregone conclusion; it was only a matter of timing. It has become quite clear to me since my discussions with Dow that there has never been any commitment by Dow apart from discussions. I do not want in any way to build up false hopes. I have made it clear publicly that I believe there is a pretty hard road ahead of us, at least in the immediate future, but that I hope to see some lightening of the load we are bearing at the end of another 12 months and possibly 18 months; probably it will not be any sooner than that. I believe one has to be realistic.

The CHAIRMAN: After considering this item, we will have the Loan Estimates, the State Bank and the Treasury and the Second Schedule of the Public Purposes Loan Bill. What is the wish of the Committee in allocating the remaining time? I also point out that before the time expires, it will be my intention to invite questions from any other member besides those official members of the Committee.

Mr. BANNON: I have a couple more questions on this, but I will restrict it to one. I will comment on what the Premier has just said. He says that he has created new jobs but there is no evidence of that. Indeed, the major job initiative that his Government promoted was extraordinarily underspent in the past financial year, and there is no such evidence that it will be successful in the future. Really, what the Premier is saying is that he is prepared to take a gamble with the State's revenue by reducing taxes and cutting back at a time when he is not sure what the situation is in the general economy of South Australia, when, indeed, the outlook is very pessimistic.

The Hon. D. O. Tonkin: I cannot accept that what has been done in our economic strategy is a gamble. To say we are not sure of the economy is quite wrong; we are very sure of the economy. Whilst the Leader uses the word "pessimistic"; I would simply use the word "tough". I am sure now of what the economy is and what the timing is; I know that it will take a long time and a lot of hard work but it is not in any way a gamble. I repeat my belief that there is every chance of coming close to a balanced Budget on Revenue Account by the end of this financial year.

Mr. CRAFTER: Regarding the provision for housing agreements between the State and Commonwealth

Governments, I note there has been a marked decrease to the State from the Commonwealth in this area. In 1974-75 3.9 per cent of the Federal Budget was allocated to housing, whereas in the 1980-81 Federal Budget 1 per cent is allocated for this purpose. With respect to this State, net payments for housing in the 1980-81 financial year from the Commonwealth represent 11 per cent in real terms of the net payments made to this State in 1974-75, whereas I note the national average is 15 per cent. Can the Premier explain why this State is worse off?

The Hon. D. O. Tonkin: This is a matter probably best dealt with under the housing line with the relevant Minister, but I think that the Under-Treasurer might have a comment to make on it.

Mr. Barnes: This would probably be better dealt with by the Minister of Housing, but it is true that Commonwealth provisions for housing in recent years have been reduced sharply—by 20 per cent in one year and 16 per cent in another year—so that they are significantly less than they were a few years ago, as the honourable member has mentioned.

The CHAIRMAN: I invite questions from any member other than official members.

Mr. Millhouse: Mr. Chairman, I want to ask the Premier what the intentions of the Government may be with regard to the Parliamentary Salaries Tribunal. For the past two or three years, anyway, I have appeared before that tribunal in January to suggest—

Mr. BECKER: Is this in the—

Mr. Millhouse: This is the first thing the honourable member has said in the Committee. Perhaps he would hear me out.

Mr. BECKER: It is nice to see you are present for a change.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. Millhouse: I find it very frustrating to have to sit for hours listening to inexpert questioning before I even get a chance to speak.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member having been given the invitation, I suggest he proceed with his question.

Mr. Millhouse: If I may continue without further interruption. I have in the past two or three years attended before the Parliamentary Salaries Tribunal and suggested that members of Parliament should set an example of restraint and should not seek an increase in salaries, and I remind the Liberal members that last year, not this year—

The CHAIRMAN: I point out to the honourable member for Mitcham that he does not have licence to go into a general debate on the Parliamentary Salaries Tribunal.

Mr. Millhouse: I am trying to explain—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! We are currently discussing the fees and expenses of the organisation, and I intend to rule that the honourable member may ask questions in relation to expenses and fees of the tribunal, but I do not intend to allow a general debate on the merits or otherwise of the total operation of that organisation.

Mr. Millhouse: Nor, Mr. Chairman, do I propose to initiate such a debate. I was merely pointing out, for the benefit of some of the Liberal members, that last year, not this year, the present Premier himself appeared before that tribunal and suggested that there should be no increase. He did not elaborate; I understand he was there for only about five minutes.

The point I wish to make is that I found it a very unpleasant experience to suggest to the tribunal that there should not be an increase. The Chairman is Mr. Jack Elliott, Q.C., and I certainly have no complaint about the way in which he received me. However, I do point out to

the Premier that he is about to retire from practice. I wonder whether he proposes to continue as a member of the tribunal, as Chairman of the tribunal.

The second member is His Honour Judge Stanley, and he has made it a very unpleasant experience to appear before the tribunal and to put a submission that there should be no increase. Apparently His Honour's view (and of course he is not sitting as a judge in that tribunal, although he acts as though he were, as though I were appearing before him in court) seems to be merely that there should be some sanction of an increase in salaries and allowances. The third member of the tribunal, I think, was Mr. Mercer, but he took very little part in it.

It is an unsatisfactory situation where one member of the tribunal makes it so obvious that he is determined that there should be an increase in accordance with what he regards as general arbitral principles which he would apply in his judicial jurisdiction. I was going to say those things in a debate on a Bill which did not proceed in the last session of Parliament. I put my name on the list to speak. This is an opportunity to make those comments about the tribunal and to voice my discontent with its approach to such submissions as my colleague, the Hon. Lance Milne, and I made on the most recent occasion and which I have made when I have been on my own in years gone by. I note that the members are getting an increase. We voted them \$5 000 last year, and they are going up to \$6 600 this year, although they got \$5 795 last time, which was an intermediate figure. I ask the Premier whether the Government is content, first, with the present system of fixing Parliamentary salaries, and, secondly, with the personnel on the tribunal?

The Hon. D. O. Tonkin: The system (and I think this is the first question that the honourable member asked) is certainly one which is open to various comments. He has voiced some. I would make the point that it is the Government's view that the Parliamentary Salaries Tribunal in principle is a far better system than is asking members of the House, or the House itself, to vote increases in salaries, and I think the honourable member would thoroughly agree with that. Having established that principle, I think the question then arises what should be the basis for the Parliamentary Salaries Tribunal making a determination. At present, it takes into account very much the movements in the cost of living and the normal wage increases in the community as a whole. There would be many people who would say that that is the fairest possible way of doing things.

Unfortunately, because we are members of Parliament (and many of us are members of Parliament with only that one source of income), many people would say that that is a fair way but, because we are members of Parliament, somewhere there is a stigma attached to the whole situation and we are expected to accept less than everyone else is prepared to accept themselves or give to other people. So, I think there is a built-in difficulty with the reputation which has been built up simply by being a member of Parliament, and I think that is something which should not prejudice people from receiving a fair and just salary increase whenever other people in the community receive it.

After all, members of Parliament represent the community, and I believe that they should be entitled to have exactly the same benefits as other members in the community when it comes to salary increases. I am not going to argue with the honourable member as to his view with regard to those matters; he is entitled to his view, and I respect it.

Mr. Millhouse: It is a view you put yourself 18 months ago.

The Hon. D. O. Tonkin: I respect his view, and it was a view, as he says, that I held at one particularly difficult time in our economic situation, a time which I am thankful to say is now passed.

As far as the principle is concerned, it has been suggested in the past that the Parliamentary Salaries Tribunal would have a much easier job if the position of members of Parliament was equated with, say, the position of a magistrate or some other person in that scheme of things, so that it would be a matter of automatic adjustment whenever that particular category of officers received an increase in salary. I do not personally think that that would in any way take away the criticism which inevitably seems to arise from the community at the very mention of an increase in salary for members of Parliament. Although it might shorten the sittings of the tribunal, I do not think it would help in what is, after all, an exercise to ensure that the general public sees that justice is done.

I am not prepared to make any comment as to the membership of the tribunal. I do know that Mr. Elliott is contemplating retirement. The Government does have a policy which is pretty firm and that is that we do not appoint people to committees ordinarily who are likely to pass the age of 70 during their next term in office. It is not a hard and fast rule, but a guideline to which we adhere. I believe that there may be a change in the make-up of the tribunal, but I am speaking personally. The Government has given no consideration yet to the matter, and I have no doubt that it will when Mr. Elliott makes his intentions known.

Mr. Millhouse: I appreciate the Premier's reply to my first question and his partial reply to my second in relation to the membership of the tribunal. I also mentioned His Honour Judge Stanley. Of course, the 70-year consideration does not apply to him; he is a contemporary of mine, and so has a fair way to go yet. We are both on the verge of old age, but we are not there yet.

The Hon. D. O. Tonkin: I am almost prepared to take issue with the honourable member on that.

Mr. Millhouse: If the Premier thinks we have both passed it, that is up to him. What is the term of appointment to the tribunal?

The Hon. D. O. Tonkin: I can find that out for the honourable member.

Mr. Millhouse: I can look it up in the Act. Is it the intention of the Government, apart from Mr. Elliott, if he resigns because of his retirement, to reconsider the composition or the membership altogether of the tribunal?

The Hon. D. O. Tonkin: I think the answer, briefly, is that I cannot answer that at this stage. No consideration has been given to the matter by the Government. My personal view would be that when the position of Mr. Elliott comes forward then undoubtedly the Government will be looking at the overall composition of the tribunal. Mr. Mercer, I understand, is represented there as Chairman of the Public Service Board, and it may be that we will consider putting on statutory office holders in much the same way as the Electoral Redistribution Commission is made up. It has not been considered, but I will bear in mind what the honourable member has said.

Mr. Millhouse: The allocation to the State Bank concerns the Riverland Fruit Products Co-operative. We are voting it a whopping \$514 000. I am aware of the problems that have occurred there, and I do not want to canvass them. It may be that members of the Labor Party have gone into this. When does the Government expect to get the money back, or does it not expect to get the money back?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The matter has been

canvassed at some length. The Premier may answer if he desires.

The Hon. D. O. Tonkin: I do not think that question has been asked. That money will be necessary, and it will be required, as we have told the Leader before. As to whether or not we will see the money back, I am not really in a position to be confident one way or the other.

Mr. Millhouse: It is really a grant, is it not?

The Hon. D. O. Tonkin: It may turn out to be a grant, but I do not think we should assume necessarily at this stage that it is.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the vote completed.

Treasury, \$35 083 000

Chairman:

Mr. G. M. Gunn

Members:

Mr. E. S. Ashenden

Mr. J. C. Bannon

Mr. H. Becker

Mr. G. J. Crafter

Mr. R. E. Glazbrook

Mr. T. H. Hemmings

Mr. J. W. Olsen

Mr. K. H. Plunkett

Witness:

The Hon. D. O. Tonkin, Premier and Treasurer.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr. R. D. Barnes, Under Treasurer, Treasury Department.

Mr. J. R. Wright, Acting Treasury Accountant, Treasury Department.

Mr. BANNON: Referring to public authority Loan programmes, in part of the earlier discussion about the Government's Revenue and Loan Accounts, mention was of the fact that much of the Loan programme of the Government is not shown in these accounts, because they are statutory authority programmes of considerable size and importance. In his speech in reply to the Budget, the Deputy Premier instanced some examples of those programmes. Could the Premier provide us with a comparison of figures, year by year, of the public authority Loan programme, showing what has been spent in each of the past 10 years by the public authorities, as a group, in total?

The Hon. D. O. Tonkin: I am not able to do that now, and I am sure the Leader did not expect that. However, although it will involve a good deal of work, I have no reason to expect that it cannot be done ultimately if the Leader is prepared to give us a little time. The question he has raised is most important, and I thank him for it. It is important to make it generally known that, in relation to the programme and performance budgeting techniques that we are applying to the Government departments, we believe that it is equally important to apply the same accounting measures to statutory authorities ultimately, and we hope that those measures will be adopted. The building up of statutory authorities in some measure comes back to the Loan programme and the need to get around the gentlemen's agreement of the Loan Council that statutory authorities may be entitled to borrow certain sums.

Going right back, it was only \$200 000, and then it became \$1 000 000, and latterly it has been \$1 200 000, without having to get formal Loan Council approval. With the escalation of the number of statutory authorities, each of them is now entitled to borrow \$1 200 000 without going through Loan Council, and there is a heavy build-up of indebtedness for which the Government finds itself ultimately responsible.

I think it is necessary, therefore, that we have a full disclosure of all those loans and of the Loan works programmes of the various statutory authorities. It will be much easier, I would hope, from this year on to produce that, rather than to go back into the past. I shall certainly consult with the Under Treasurer to see what details can be obtained for that period. I think the noise from behind us, Mr. Chairman, is the sound of one or two officers of the Treasury shuddering in their seats, but I am sure it can be done.

The whole question of statutory authorities will soon come under review. Investigations are being made into means of reviewing their activities and bringing in sunset legislation to do so. It is hoped that a final decision will be made on that some time this year, and that legislation, if it is necessary, or the necessary Parliamentary procedures, if that is the course adopted, can be brought in to institute sunset legislation at some time later in this session or early in the new session.

Mr. BECKER: Each year we see provision for advances to the State Bank. Is the Government reviewing the operation of the State Bank now that it is the only true trading bank left in South Australia with its head office in the city, apart from the Savings Bank of South Australia? What is the actual capital structure of the bank, and what is the earning ratio of profits to capital? Is the Government satisfied that the State Bank is meeting the needs of the community, and is there any possibility of its expansion?

The Hon. D. O. Tonkin: It is important, I believe, to recognise that the State Bank must operate efficiently and provide an appropriate return on capital, but it has another function. It is a State Bank, and it has certain responsibilities to the Government and certain roles to play in the provision of relatively low interest housing loans, and so on.

I believe that State Bank operation could be examined and that its activities could be expanded. I believe that a very good case may be made out for the transfer of some of the operations which are currently being conducted by the South Australian Development Corporation into a section of the bank especially designed to look after that. Again, that is just a personal view, but the Government is reviewing the total function of the State Bank with a view to seeing whether its functions are appropriate for today's needs and whether or not they need to be changed.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the examination of the vote completed. I also declare the examination of the Second Schedule completed. I thank the Premier and his officers for their appearance before the Committee and for their co-operation.

Local Government, \$10 582 000

Chairman:

Mr. G. M. Gunn

Members:

Mr. E. S. Ashenden

Mr. J. C. Bannon

Mr. H. Becker

Mr. R. E. Glazbrook

Mr. T. H. Hemmings
Mr. G. R. A. Langley
Mr. J. W. Olsen
Mr. J. W. Slater

Witness:

The Hon. C. M. Hill, Minister of Local Government.

Departmental Advisers:

Dr. I. McPhail, Director, Department of Local Government.

Mr. M. Herrmann, Chief Administrative Officer, Department of Local Government.

Mr. E. Miller, Chief Librarian, Public Libraries, Department of Local Government.

Mr. BANNON: I see that the Government members are now coming in.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There was a quorum present. It is entirely a matter for honourable members whether they are in the Committee or not.

Mr. BANNON: Yes. We have noted their absence.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I suggest that that comment not be recorded in the record.

Mr. BANNON: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. Can I ascertain that ruling from you?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have been advised that it is not possible to have comments struck out. I would prefer that questions relate to the proposed expenditure and not to matters which are not before the Committee.

Mr. HEMMINGS: I refer to the number of positions within the Department of Local Government. I have found in another place when I have asked questions about the numbers or the manpower figures given that I have received the rather awful admission that these figures are rather guesses and that one really cannot take notice of them. I ask the Minister whether that would be his opinion also. I am dealing with the programme papers, the yellow covered book.

The CHAIRMAN: Before the Minister answers the question, I think the honourable member ought to be aware of the clear explanation given in the front of that document.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I must refer to the yellow document and the specific points that the honourable member has made.

The CHAIRMAN: Could the honourable member give the actual page to which he has referred?

Mr. HEMMINGS: I am sorry, Mr. Chairman, I did not realise that the Minister needed assistance on this.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Chair asked for the assistance, not the Minister.

Mr. HEMMINGS: I refer to page 336.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The figure of 519, which is perhaps the one that the honourable member specifically has in mind, is an average figure of those employed in the 1979-80 year. The figure is somewhat down because of the considerable number of vacancies which have not been filled.

Mr. HEMMINGS: I refer to the line "Office of Minister: Administrative and Clerical Staff". Bearing in mind that the Minister has just stated that the figure of 519 is down quite considerably because of unfilled vacancies, could the Minister inform me how many unfilled positions there are in his own office, what positions they are, and whether it is intended to fill those positions in the very near future?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: There are no unfilled positions in my office.

Mr. HEMMINGS: Can the Minister inform me how

many positions there are in his Ministerial office?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: There are two positions in my Ministerial office. Incidentally, one has only recently been filled.

Mr. HEMMINGS: I refer to "Management Services Division" and "Local Government Administration", in combination, because now staffing is under "Local Government Administration". Last year there was a figure of \$724 702 for salaries. For 1980-81 the figure proposed is \$774 667. Again, bearing in mind that the Minister stated that there were unfilled positions, can the Minister state how many unfilled positions there are now in "Local Government Administration"?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I think the questioner indicated that this matter must be considered in regard to the item which I will call line 4 and which deals with Deputy Director, Administrative, Accounting and Clerical Staff, as well as item 12, which occurs further down and which deals with Director, Administrative and Clerical Staff. The combination of those items gives the expenditure for 1979-80 of \$724 702, to which I think the honourable member referred. The carry-over effect of the national wage and clerical awards and the full year effect of staff appointments which are not of an expansionary nature will occur during this year. The additional expenditure is partially offset by a reduction in staff administering the community development board activities, and this may be specifically the point that the honourable member is getting at. The staff involved previously in regard to community development activity has been reduced from nine to five.

Mr. HEMMINGS: I understand that, but how many unfilled positions exist in Local Government Administration, bearing in mind the amalgamation of the Local Government Division and the Management Services Division? The Minister said that the reason for the reduction in manpower was the considerable number of unfilled positions. I am trying to ascertain the number of unfilled positions, what they are, and where they are located.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Two junior positions are unfilled: one has the classification of CO6 and the other the classification of CO2, and both are in the administrative division.

Mr. HEMMINGS: Is the Minister saying that there are only two unfilled positions under that part of his portfolio dealing with local government?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: That is my immediate estimate, but I can make a further check to ascertain whether there is any variation. However, to the best of my knowledge, at present only two junior positions are vacant.

Mr. SLATER: It is stated in the programme papers (page 336) that 46 casual workers have not been accounted for in the figures; how and where are these casual workers employed?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: They are mostly employed at the Parks Community Centre. Regarding the former question and my answer to it, I indicate that the figures in the yellow book (for example, the 519 average that was discussed) involve all library staff, and this may be somewhat confusing in relation to the staff of the Department of Local Government. The bulk of the staff represented by that figure of 519 is involved in the libraries, which come under my administration as Minister of Local Government.

Mr. SLATER: The Minister has not answered my question. I note that 46 casual workers have not been accounted for in figures in the programme papers; where and in what capacity are these casual workers employed in the various sections under the Minister's department?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I refer my previous answer to the honourable member. This matter appertains to the Parks Community Centre, and those involved are casual workers such as cleaners, gardeners, and people who service in those areas.

Mr. SLATER: Where in the Budget is an allowance for remuneration for casual workers?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It is allowed for on page 64, under "Miscellaneous: Community Centre Projects", with a total figure for 1980-81 of \$1 583 000.

Mr. HEMMINGS: I notice that there has been an increase in the allocation for payments to consultants for services, which I am not really worried about. For what kind of service are consultants used, and are tenders put out for such consultancy services?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Payments have been made to one consultant, Mr. M. J. Edmonds, who was previously employed in the former Department of Community Development. Mr. Edmonds has now left the service, but we have been able to obtain his services as a consultant.

Mr. HEMMINGS: Will the Minister elaborate on the services provided?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Mr. Edmonds has provided services for general local government purposes and also services in regard to community development works. His retention as a consultant was part of an arrangement that was agreed between the Government and Mr. Edmonds when he left the department's employment.

I can obtain details of the exact arrangement. To the best of my knowledge, the arrangement was that he was to be retained for one year after his resignation, and I believe that the fee was a \$15 000 ceiling for the one-year services.

Mr. HEMMINGS: Is it usual that, when an officer resigns from a Government department, that officer's services are retained for one year, or was some exception made in this case?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: There was some exception in this case. Mr. Edmonds held a senior position in the former department and, when the community development activity was run down in that department, there was not much work for him. An amicable arrangement was arrived at between him and the Government as a means by which he resigned, and the Government agreed to continue this form of remuneration to him. That only \$8 156 is showing there indicates that, in the next financial year, he will get the balance of the \$15 000 to which I have referred.

Mr. HEMMINGS: One is tempted to say that it is almost a golden handshake. It concerns me that, when the Department of Community Development was abolished, only one officer, a senior officer, resigned from the department, and the Government saw fit to retain that person's services as a consultant. Why was Mr. Edmonds not offered another position within the Department of Local Government, as was the present Director?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: First, there is no suggestion that he was dismissed, because the Government's policy was that in no case should there be retrenchments. The Government in no way considered retrenching Mr. Edmonds. The second most senior position, Acting Deputy Director, was filled by Mr. Lewis. As I said earlier, it was an amicable arrangement. I think, from memory, that it was initiated by Mr. Edmonds, who saw better opportunities for himself, mainly out in the private sector as a consultant. Undoubtedly, he had other fields in view in which he might like to become involved. So, by an amicable discussion, this arrangement was arrived at, and both the Government and Mr. Edmonds were very satisfied.

Mr. GLAZBROOK: I note that the total proposed expenditure on libraries is \$8 687 000, or 66.22 per cent of

the department's budget. What proportion does local government pay in relation to the establishment and ongoing costs for new book purchases and replacements or, alternatively, what percentage is borne by local government compared to the South Australian Government?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: They are all dollar-for-dollar subsidies up to maximums.

Mr. GLAZBROOK: I notice also that there has been a substantial increase of 45 per cent in the Libraries Division allocation, coupled with the services for the disadvantaged and the Reference Library re-establishment grant and subsidies to local government libraries. As this expenditure has increased from \$3 272 642 to \$4 751 000, can the Minister indicate where the increase will be expended?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Basically, on local government libraries.

Mr. SLATER: Regarding payments to consultants for services, are any other consultants currently undertaking activities for the department, and, if they are, who are they?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: No.

Mr. SLATER: Is a Mr. Edwards undertaking consultancy work in regard to the Birdwood Mill Museum?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: He is retained by the Department for the Arts, and not by the Department of Local Government.

Mr. GLAZBROOK: In the break-down of the staffing positions of the Library Services Board, can the Minister indicate what duties the libraries support services staff perform and whether the drivers and the librarians in the mobile libraries are included in the staff number?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Yes.

Mr. GLAZBROOK: That being the case, can the Minister indicate what percentage of the cost of these mobile libraries staff comes from local government, and say whether the cost is recouped in any way?

Mr. BANNON: We have no objection if the answer is given direct to the Committee by the accompanying officers. In Committee B, I understand that at the moment all questions are being answered by the appropriate officer.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Olsen): In accordance with the Sessional Orders of the Committee, it is appropriate for the Committee to put questions to the Minister. It is then at the discretion of the Minister at the table whether he answers those questions or whether he invites his advisers to answer directly. The matter is at the discretion of the Minister.

[Sitting suspended from 12.31 to 2 p.m.]

Mr. GLAZBROOK: In the breakdown of staffing positions in the Library Services Board, I was asking the Minister whether he could state what duties the library support services staff performed and whether the drivers and the librarians of the mobile library came from this staff.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: No.

Mr. GLAZBROOK: What percentage of any cost of running these mobile libraries is recouped from local government?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: There are only two mobile libraries which are paid for by the State Government.

Mr. GLAZBROOK: Are the mobile library services still being instituted, or are shop-front static libraries being pursued on a more decentralised basis?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It simply depends on the circumstances; particularly in country areas the mobile

libraries are found to be advantageous. There are some places in the metropolitan area where the static or shop-front libraries are more suitable.

Mr. HEMMINGS: I think it is safe to say that Mr. Edmonds's reputation in the field of local government was beyond reproach. He was thought of very highly by his peers, and, from what I have been able to ascertain, his position in the Department of Community Development, before it was abolished, was very good. The Minister told us earlier that the Government was prepared to use his services as a consultant for one calendar year. Will the Government be making use of Mr. Edmonds's services over the next calendar year?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: No, no arrangements have been made other than for the 12-month period from the time of his resignation. As I sensed from the question a particular commendation of Mr. Edmonds, let me join the honourable member and say that I hold Mr. Edmonds in the highest esteem. He was an excellent officer.

Mr. BANNON: On the question of local government administration, allowance is made for Director, Deputy Director, various administrative staff and so on. The former Department of Community Development comprised a number of units which have since been severed from that department, in effect. The Department of Arts is a separate department, the Department of Recreation and Sport is now part of the Transport Department (very appropriately, of course), and areas like the Museum, Botanic Gardens, the community development boards and the Youth Bureau, have all been sent in various directions. In view of those transfers of functions, we are left with a Department of Local Government which in essence comprises the old Local Government Department and the libraries and has had added to it ethnic affairs, although at one stage that was related to the Department of Community Development. What in fact does the Director of Local Government do and to what extent are his functions duplicated by the former Director of Local Government who, I presume, is now called the Deputy Director? I am asking about the duties and workload, under this reorganisation, of Dr. McPhail and Mr. Lewis, who was the Director of Local Government.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Dr. McPhail's responsibilities are those of Director of the Department of Local Government, which is divided into areas of local government administration, State libraries, public libraries, management services and ethnic affairs. Housing also comes within his general oversight. The situation in regard to Mr. Lewis is that he is Deputy Director of that department and his role is simply that of Deputy Director under Dr. McPhail.

Mr. BANNON: Mr. Lewis's responsibilities would cover a general oversight of libraries, ethnic affairs, housing and those other areas?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Yes, only as directed, of course, by the Director. He does tend to concentrate in the local government area, because there is a great deal of inquiry from local government generally for advice on other issues relative to local government in the field.

Mr. BANNON: Who is the most senior specialist officer in local government?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I look on my Director as being a specialist director.

Mr. BANNON: The Minister has already indicated a very wide range of functions or responsibilities over which he expects Dr. McPhail to have oversight. Mr. Lewis apparently deputises as required. I am asking in terms of the local government function of the Department of Local Government, that is, the liaison relationship to local government and its role, what level is the highest specialist

officer with primary responsibility for local government?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: That is Dr. McPhail. Under his direction, his deputy operates in that area, more in that area, as I mentioned a moment ago, than in other areas in the department. At the next level down there is a chief AO3 officer, and then there are other advisory officers further down the line.

Mr. BANNON: What other roles or responsibilities does Dr. McPhail have outside his directorship of the department?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: He is Chairman of the South Australian Local Government Grants Commission, a very responsible office. I think that covers his full range of responsibilities.

Mr. BANNON: He is not a member of any boards or committees?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: No.

Mr. BANNON: In the event of the Ethnic Affairs Commission being established in the next 12 months to 18 months, what will its role be vis-a-vis the department, and in particular Dr. McPhail as Director of the department?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It will be a statutory body which will operate under Ministerial control. It will have the independence that goes with such a structure as a statutory body. The senior officer of the statutory body will be the Chairman of the commission, who will also be the chief executive officer, if the Bill proceeds in its present form.

Mr. BANNON: Will he report directly to the Minister, or to the Minister through the permanent head?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: No, he will report directly to me, the chief executive officer and Chairman.

Mr. BANNON: What is the situation with the South Australian Housing Trust? Does the Chairman and the head of the Housing Trust report direct to the Minister?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Yes, the General Manager reports directly to me. I have involved Dr. McPhail in some discussions in that area since we have come to office. As far as direct responsibility is concerned, the board of the trust and the General Manager have direct access to me.

Mr. BANNON: In the case of the State Library, we have not only the State Librarian, but an equivalent position as head of the Public Libraries Division. Do these officers report to you directly or through the permanent head?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Through the Director, Dr. McPhail.

Mr. BANNON: I have some questions to ask specifically on libraries but other members may wish to ask their questions first.

Mr. BECKER: Referring to the allocation of \$15 000 for the office of the Minister, can the Minister give a detailed breakdown of the administration expenses, minor equipment and sundries in this figure? Is it possible to provide a comparison of those expenses over the past three years?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: If the honourable member wishes to have statistical information covering the past three years, I shall be quite happy to have that prepared for him. I have not got it with me at present. The category to which he is referring involves all the operating expenses of the Minister in relation to the portfolios of Local Government, Housing, Arts, and Assisting the Premier in Ethnic Affairs. The main items of expenditure include \$1 881 for entertainment, and perhaps that should be broken up, bearing in mind that the former Minister of Community Development held office for a portion of the year, to show \$411 for that period. It should be noted for the record that the election was on 15 September 1979, so the amount for the present Minister of Local Government is \$1 470. Under the second heading, there is an item of printing and stationery, \$714, and the third heading covers travelling expenses and conferences, \$10 405. There were confer-

ences in New Zealand on housing and local government during that period. Only one member of my personal staff attended each of those meetings. Arts and ethnic affairs conferences were held in Perth and Darwin. We have included a figure of \$15 000 for the present year, because it is known that there will be at least one conference in New Zealand.

Mr. BECKER: I understand that the Minister has a personal staff of two. How does that compare with the staff of the previous Minister, and what were the duties of the previous staff members?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: When I came to the office there were four personal staff members of the former Minister. I have two personal staff members, one of whom, a press officer, has just been appointed. Before that appointment I shared a press officer with another Minister whose office was in an adjacent building.

Mr. BECKER: What were the duties of the staff of four of the previous Minister?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I do not know that I can give that in great detail, because I was not there at that stage. Generally speaking, I think they were in the areas of Ministerial assistant and press officer. Mr. Bannon, who was the former Minister, has indicated that there was only one press officer. I do not know what other activity they were involved in. Understandably, they left at the change of government, and therefore did not work under me, and I was not involved with them.

Mr. BECKER: There was nothing left for you to know what they were doing?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I did not really investigate what they were doing.

Mr. HEMMINGS: The Minister said that he was not aware of who were the officers attached to the former Minister of Community Development. Can the Minister describe the duties of his present staff within his office generally?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: One is Ministerial assistant, and simply assists me in any work that I place with that officer. The second person is a press officer, who deals generally with the press and media in release activity. Each is a specialised officer pursuing those areas of responsibility.

Mr. HEMMINGS: This morning the Minister said there were only two staff members in the office, one being a Ministerial assistant and one a press officer. Can the Minister tell us who does his typing and normal clerical duties?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The answer that I gave this morning (and I trust that it was correctly based on the question that was asked) dealt with those two specific Ministerial appointments to whom I have just referred. Also, of course, there are public servants in my Ministerial office: one is my Secretary Mr. Herrmann, who is at the table with me, and there is a typist who has just taken up office only in about the last week. There is also an appointments secretary who is, of course, a public servant.

Mr. SLATER: With regard to "Ethnic Affairs", I note that last year we voted \$246 007 and that the proposed figure for 1980-81 is \$429 000. Obviously there will be an increase in staff; can the Minister tell us in what capacity they will be employed?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: First, there is the question of the national wage and clerical increases, which is really in regard to the previous year. In the current year, there will be carry-over effects of awards. Additional funds have been provided for the appointment of five interpreters/translators and one clerical officer, and six information officers, as a Government initiative to strengthen the interpreting and translation services and the information services. The Commonwealth Government is assisting

with funding of these programmes until June 1982, with a 75 per cent subsidy in 1980-81 for the interpreters and translators and a 50 per cent subsidy for the information officers. Also, provision has been made for the appointment of the Ethnic Affairs Commission Chief Executive Officer and three support staff (probably two project officers and one steno-secretary). As honourable members know, legislation concerning the commission is before the Parliament at the present time. The estimated reimbursement from the Commonwealth is \$180 000—\$120 000 for interpreters and translators and \$60 000 for information services.

Mr. BANNON: What progress has been made in regard to revision of the Local Government Act?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I am informed by the officers who are working on that matter that they are making extremely good progress. Their progress is, indeed, much faster than both my departmental officers or I anticipated. Major submissions have been received from the Institute of Municipal Administration. I am very satisfied with the progress that has been made.

Mr. BANNON: How many officers are involved in that activity, and who are they?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The committee is chaired by my Director, and it includes the Deputy Director, Parliamentary Counsel, and an officer from the Crown Law Department; Mr. Edmonds, the consultant to whom I referred earlier, has been involved. The Parliamentary Counsel is Mr. Eyre, and the Crown Law officer is Mr. Bowering.

Mr. BANNON: The Minister has indicated that he is satisfied with the progress being made; when will the committee report and when will legislation come before the House?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: In August next year.

Mr. BANNON: Does that date apply to the legislation or to the report?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The report: when the report is approved, the Government will give high priority to legislation.

Mr. HEMMINGS: Bearing in mind the expertise of those on the committee, can I take it that, once the report is introduced into Parliament, there will be no chance for public discussion on that report before the Government legislates?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The method by which the Government will treat the report when it is received will be a matter of Government decision at the time, but I point out that there will be a lot of input from those involved in local government, because the matter will be referred to the Local Government Association. I see no reason why, prior to the introduction of the legislation, there would not be considerable public involvement so that the best possible legislation is achieved.

Mr. BANNON: Is there a representative of the Local Government Association on the committee?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: There has not been, up to this point, but the work of the committee has now reached a stage where it is proposed that a representative of the Local Government Association be invited to join in the work.

Mr. BANNON: Does the Government intend to alter the voting system for local government elections in accordance with the suggestions made prior to the last election and, if so, when?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: No, the Government has not yet considered that matter.

Mr. BANNON: Does the Government intend to do anything about property franchise in local government voting?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: No, that matter has not yet been considered.

Mr. HEMMINGS: I note that actual payments for administration expenses, minor equipment and sundries were well below what was voted in 1979-80, and in 1980-81 there is an even greater decrease; is that decrease due to economies, or has the Government decided to cut down in that area? The proposed figure is \$99 700.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The reduction is the result of the Government's policy to discontinue direct financial support to Community Development Boards now being operated through local government. Major items of expenditure are likely to be similar to those in 1979-80, except in that area.

Mr. BANNON: I refer to page 345 of the yellow booklet that outlines the local government programme, together with the financial and manpower resources. I note that, regarding advice on legislation and policies, there has been a reduction of two in the manpower budget as well as a substantial reduction in revenue. Could the Minister state the reasons for that?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: This reduction was also involved with the question of Community Development Boards. Community development officers on staff at the change of Government have been reduced in number.

Mr. BANNON: To what extent does the Department of Local Government provide advice and assistance for the establishment of Community Development Boards?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Two officers and two community development officers are involved in this activity.

Mr. BANNON: They are involved full time?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Yes.

Mr. BANNON: How was the reduction of two achieved in this area?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Two went to local government, and are now on staff at councils; that is the reduction.

Mr. BANNON: Regarding the general function of advising local government departments, which was an important function of the old Local Government Office, what resources are being devoted to that, and how do the functions differ from those provided previously?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Does the honourable member mean other than the advice in the area of community development?

Mr. BANNON: Yes.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It is unchanged. We have a Chief Local Government Advisory Officer and three others.

Mr. BANNON: What is the level of demand in that area? Is there a backlog of inquiries?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: There is no backlog. It has a heavy work load, but the officers are coping.

Mr. BANNON: I notice also a reduction in the Loan allocation to the public parks programme; in effect, a 10 per cent reduction, in real terms, on the revenue component. Can the Minister outline what has happened there?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It is simply part of the general tightening and reduction in our allocations.

Mr. BANNON: Does it in any way reflect a diminishing demand for this programme?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: We have found that demand has diminished, and we expect this current allocation to meet that new demand.

Mr. HEMMINGS: In the light of the Local Government Association's success during the last local government elections in informing South Australians of their rights and obligations to vote in local government elections and the success of the elected members' training programme, does the Minister intend to give financial support to the association to increase the number of people taking part in

the programme and to encourage more people to vote in local government elections?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: We did support the original project. We have not as yet had any request for further support for next year, but if such a request is forthcoming we will seriously consider it.

Mr. HEMMINGS: That answer rather surprises me. Do I take it then that, if the Local Government Association does not request additional financial support, that support will not be forthcoming? One would have thought that in light of the very poor response to elections in our third tier of Government the Minister would be actively encouraging the Local Government Association and the people of this State to participate even more.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It was a Local Government Association initiative; it was not an initiative of the Minister. I do not know of any Minister of Local Government who has initiated a plan of that kind. I would therefore prefer to leave it with the Local Government Association and wait upon it.

Mr. LANGLEY: Earlier the Minister referred to vacancies and he said that some vacancies have not been filled. Is there any difference between the number of people working in his department in 1979-80 and the present financial year? Has there been a reduction, an increase or has the number remained the same?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: One of our difficulties in answering this question quickly is that we have the Libraries Division and the State Library included in our total departmental staff. We have a ceiling at the moment of 360, and we have planned by June 1982 to get that down, hopefully, to 351.

Mr. BANNON: It would certainly expedite matters if the Minister would allow questions to be answered directly by his officers because it is really delaying the Committee unduly for him to have to check with his advisers in this way.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Olsen): Prior to the luncheon adjournment the Leader raised this matter and I indicated then that, in accordance with Sessional Orders, it is the prerogative of the Minister to invite his advisers to respond or to respond directly to the questions himself. That is a matter for the Minister.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I prefer to answer the questions myself, Mr. Acting Chairman.

Mr. LANGLEY: Provision for terminal leave seems to appear in all Ministers' votes. When these people have left, are they replaced? A provision is made under the line for "Management Services Division" for terminal leave, and it appears on several other occasions, for example, under Local Government Administration.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The position is that, if there is a resignation and the number is within the ceiling, that person is replaced. I notice that the estimated figure for 1981 (on page 62) is \$68 000, and that relates very closely to the actual payments of the previous year which total \$68 482.

Mr. LANGLEY: The present system of the Government is certainly to scale down the number of public servants in almost every Government department.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: In some departments we are certainly not making replacements when we have retirements and resignations, but each department has been given its target ceiling.

Mr. SLATER: I seek information regarding the community development boards that are to be instituted at local government level. How many councils have instituted boards, how many have not, and how effectively are they operating?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Under the Government's

community development plans, 40 boards are now operating, involving 49 councils. In other words, there is some evidence of regionalisation between councils having the one board. That number is gratifying to me, and the system appears to be working very well.

Mr. HEMMINGS: Can the Minister say whether it is Government policy actively to support regional organisations?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It depends on what one means by regional organisations. It is not Government policy to support any local government regionalisation if that plan for regionalisation is imposed on local government, but it is our policy to support regionalisation if regionalisation begins from local government itself and is a voluntary joining together in association. Several regions have developed under the present Government, and that form of regionalisation, which is operating at the moment wherever local government seeks it and requests it, has our total support.

Mr. HEMMINGS: Can the Minister say what the Government policy is, especially in my own area, towards the claims and counter claims regarding the movement from one local government area to another.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The situation in regard to the honourable member's region, where one local government body is seeking to withdraw, is that there appears to be no power under the Act for them to withdraw, and I hope that the matter will be resolved locally, by much further discussion between the councils within that region. Then I would be very pleased to consider representations from the region in regard to their deliberations.

Mr. BANNON: Is the Minister satisfied with the general organisation of local government boundaries and the number and size of councils?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: No, I am not totally satisfied personally in regard to some local government boundaries. I think that in some areas adjustments ought to be made in regard to boundaries, but I hasten to point out that I want to make every endeavour to encourage the councils concerned to sort out these problems themselves. I believe that no simple rule or system can be laid down as indicating an ideal size for a council. For example, in terms of resources and revenue, the District Council of Carrieton is either the smallest or one of the smallest in the State and I think it is an ideal local governing body.

Similarly one goes into very large areas, such as Tatiara, where resources are spread and communities are spread, with townships having great distances between them, and yet a council such as that body operates exceedingly well. So, on the question of the size of local government, there is not any theoretical plan, in my view, that one can lay down as being ideal.

Mr. BANNON: In view of difficulties that have been experienced under existing legislation, even as modified, by councils seeking to amalgamate or alter their boundaries, does the Minister have any proposals on further amendments to the Local Government Act to enable these opportunities to be more readily available to local government?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: We have no particular propositions of that kind under consideration at the moment. We utilised one section of the Act when we amalgamated council areas at Melrose, Wilmington and Port Augusta and readjusted boundaries there in regard to those three areas, and also Kanyaka-Quorn. The machinery in the Local Government Act was adequate for those adjustments to be made, and to be made very satisfactorily.

Mr. BANNON: What is the legislative position?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It was done under section 23 of the

Local Government Act which provided for a Governor's proclamation to follow Parliamentary approval of the proposal by the Select Committee.

Mr. HEMMINGS: In view of the fact that there has been almost total rejection by local government bodies throughout the State to the proposition by the Government that local government should not tender for work using day labour, does the Minister intend to issue a further directive or further suggestion to councils asking them to revert back to the *status quo*?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I do not accept the proposition that there has been very widespread opposition to the Government's proposals to local government in this activity. Indeed, my department has letters of appreciation from some councils who support the proposition that optimum work should be done by the private sector. I do point out that in the situation that existed previously, where local government was doing work itself for private ratepayers, that really was contrary to the Act, because local government could not proceed and collect its debts if the private individuals refused to pay. Situations like that should not be allowed to continue. However, generally speaking, the new proposal is now known to local government. We are not running around policing the situation. We simply have brought the matter to the notice of councils, and I think it is in their interests, as well as the State's best interest for them to do their best to comply with that letter that went out.

Mr. BANNON: I would like to turn to the libraries area, and note that the total vote does represent an increase over last year's expenditure. It is very pleasing to see in the local government libraries area, the public libraries system, that there has been a considerable increase which seems to sustain or maintain the initiatives which the previous Government undertook following the Crawford committee's report, and I certainly congratulate the Government on continuing that programme. However, that situation is not totally rosy because, if one removes that increase of expenditure in the public libraries section and looks at what is left for the State Library, one finds that there is a quite considerable reduction in the amount allocated to the State Library.

A further analysis of that, I think, is probably best set out on page 340 of the yellow book, and it indicates, I would imagine, just where those cuts are being made: reference services, lending services and library support services in particular have been cut. Will the Minister comment on the reasons for these cuts? Is it in fact a result of lesser needs in the State Library, a down-turn in demand for the service, or a catching up of a backlog of work, that has enabled these cuts to be made?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: There has been a 3 per cent decrease in actual expenditure in some of these areas. Comments have been made in regard to the periodicals. The board made a decision in regard to the question of those periodicals. There has been some improvement in the past few days in the area of the index to Australian book reviews, in that the Australia Council has offered a grant of \$5 000 and the library is investigating ways in which this index can be continued. However, in the general area of transfer to libraries for library purposes, which shows an increase from actual payments last year of \$696 500 to \$713 000 anticipated expenditure in the current year, the total grant reflects the general tightening which the Government has had to impose right across the board generally speaking, and the Government hopes that, with a very careful split-up of its moneys, the board will be able to achieve the degree of service, except for some of those periodicals which will not be available at the library, but, in some cases, are available in other libraries

at the universities and at the South Australian Institute of Technology. We feel that the service to the public overall will not be adversely affected, compared with the position in previous years.

Mr. BANNON: What the Minister is saying then is that these cuts are a result of Government policy, not reduced demand or need. I draw his attention to an article that appeared recently reporting on Australian Library Promotion Council publication *Focus on State Libraries*, as follows:

It is too easy to balance the budget by limiting the funds available for books and other materials. It is also the easiest way to reduce the State libraries to ineffective historical monuments. Past experience has demonstrated that inadequate funding has harmful long-term effects.

It goes on a bit later:

Thus, short-term economic problems are no excuse for avoiding long-term responsibilities.

It calls on the public to exert influence to ensure that State libraries receive adequate support. Is the Minister saying that in the budget provision it is making this year, the Government is rejecting that concept of the role of the public library?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: This question must be viewed in the light of the overall assistance to libraries, not only the State Library but of course to local government libraries and libraries in the suburbs and throughout all the country areas.

As the honourable member knows, because he was involved with part of the early planning (and I give him credit for that), a very strong thrust developed in subsidies to local government libraries. It would be easy for the Government, on the one hand, to continue to increase amounts to the State Library for its services and, at the same time, not continue that thrust as it should be pursued. So, if we look at the funding to libraries in totality, we see a considerable increase. I have not got the figures in front of me, but I recall that at one stage I calculated the overall increase at about 17 per cent from last year, so this is an issue which must be borne in mind when one specifically selects one item, such as the State Library, and makes criticism in regard to that.

Mr. BANNON: I suggest that it is not an insignificant item, but, to get down to a specific, I refer to the cut in publications or periodicals being subscribed to by the library. I understand that a number of those titles have been collected from the time of their publication, that the library has complete sets of a number of publications, including chemical abstracts and one or two other publications about which there has been publicity. Now, apparently, that collection is to be discontinued. Does the Minister have any concern about that, or any suggestion as to how that situation could be avoided?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: There is some doubt, even though the records go back for many years, that those old issues are ever referred to by the public. That is a point which the Libraries Board had in mind when it decided to cancel 65 periodicals for this year. That involved a cutback in the book fund of \$44 000. In all cases, the periodicals cancelled were the least used of all in the collection, and in most cases were available at the other institutions to which I referred a moment ago. Only 11 of those periodicals were not held elsewhere in South Australia. In relation to public reaction, I think the only title that has caused deep controversy is the chemical abstracts, and that is held by both the Adelaide University, which of course is situated quite close to the State Library, and the Flinders University. It should be noted that most academic libraries are making cuts in their periodicals collections because of financial stringencies, and the board no doubt had this in

mind in reaching its decision.

Mr. BANNON: The Minister is suggesting that the availability of these publications depends as a general rule on the degree of use, either past or present.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: That is a consideration the board has in mind, specifically the general use by the public. In many cases it was found that the staff were using them, and not the public.

Mr. BANNON: What access do members of the public have to the university libraries and their collections as mentioned?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: This is more restricted than in the public library, but the Libraries Board believes that it is still adequate.

Mr. BANNON: The Minister is giving an assurance that a member of the public who wants to use some of these publications that are discontinued can get access to them from the universities?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: That is so.

Mr. BANNON: Are there any formal agreements between the Libraries Board and the libraries of the universities and colleges of advanced education as to the use by members of the public of those library resources?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: No.

Mr. BANNON: Are steps being taken to make such agreements?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: There are some unwritten understandings regarding this matter.

Mr. BANNON: I would have thought that, if part of the justification for discontinuing periodicals and indeed, I guess, for the holding of certain books, and so on, is that they can be made available elsewhere, there is a responsibility to have some fairly sound guidelines established so that those resources are available.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: This matter can be noted, and I will undertake to take that point further.

Mr. BANNON: In relation to publications and periodicals generally, what is the situation with the general public borrowing such items?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: They were unable to borrow them from any of the institutions.

Mr. BANNON: And actually remove them?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: That is right. Photo-copies can be made available in some instances.

Mr. BANNON: I understand that a directive recently from the State Library suggested that that practice was to be discontinued.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: That is right. It is true that there was a directive issued recently that those periodicals will not be lent out any longer. The main problem seems to be the cost of replacement in the event of some being lost.

Mr. BANNON: What is the situation in relation to lending material from the research services, the Reference Library?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Some material is still available for loan. There has been no change in that policy.

Mr. BANNON: Some time ago, the board was ascertaining public response to the question of whether borrowing from the Reference Library should be prohibited, as is the practice in other States. What sort of response did the board get?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Most of those asked about this matter when the investigation was carried out indicated that they were in favour of the present policy that periodicals were not to be borrowed.

Mr. BANNON: I am talking about volumes from the reference collections.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The old policy continues in regard to them.

Mr. BANNON: Is it still under consideration, or has the

board made a formal decision that the old policy shall continue?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The board has formally decided on this question.

Mr. BANNON: One of the areas in which cuts seem to have occurred is in the support services. Can the Minister indicate the situation in relation to cataloguing—books supplied, how long they are taking to reach the shelves, and what is the backlog?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The only backlog is in the South Australian collection, and that is a backlog of about 12 months.

Mr. BANNON: In terms of books borrowed, there has been a continuing problem of chasing up overdue books and keeping a record of books which have been stolen or are missing. Can the Minister say what steps are being taken to automate the cataloguing and lending process?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It is admitted that the present system is unsatisfactory. The library hopes to establish a computerised system.

Mr. BANNON: It has been hoped to establish one for a long time. Can the Minister say what concrete steps have been taken? For instance, it is well over 12 months ago that a comprehensive report was presented on this matter.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: At the moment a proposition is before the Data Processing Board with regard to that matter. Discussions are being held next week between my Director and the Acting State Librarian in regard to this general matter. There is some possibility that change will be achieved next year.

Mr. BANNON: Can the Minister indicate the estimated annual cost of books stolen or missing from the libraries?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Approximately \$100 000 annually.

Mr. BANNON: Does this not suggest to the Minister some urgency in automating or in some way improving the lending process?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Well, it most certainly does, and, as the honourable member knows, discussions and propositions have been going on for some years in an endeavour to achieve change. As I said a moment ago, we are working on that, and I hope that change can be achieved next year.

Mr. BANNON: There have been recent reports about a fairly alarming and continuing deterioration of the newspaper collection. What extra resources are being provided to ensure that that situation is fixed up?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The Libraries Board is in the process of purchasing a new microfilm camera out of Government funds. The staff in regard to that matter will be employed out of trust funds. That item of purchase is dealt with on page 63 under the heading "Purchase of office machines and equipment", and the honourable member will see that there was an expenditure last year of \$6 310 and that it is expected to spend \$25 700 in the 1980-81 year.

Mr. BANNON: Does the fact that the allocation from the previous year was unspent suggest that this purchase was in fact provided then and not made?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Yes, it was provided for last year but was not utilised.

Mr. BANNON: Can the Minister explain the delay?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It was due to the lateness of ordering.

Mr. BANNON: With regard to the Archives Division, what is the current situation concerning plans to upgrade the archives, and in particular to provide adequate storage and retrieval space for the State Government archives, that is, the Government documents?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Discussions are in train now regarding the acquisition of space in the Philips plant at

Hendon in an endeavour to deal with this matter.

Mr. BANNON: Is that to be on a lease or rental basis, or is the Government purchasing a building?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The proposal is that it will be on a lease basis.

Mr. BANNON: What other steps are being taken in relation to the management of the archives?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: A Cabinet submission is now being prepared on the whole subject of Government record management. I am afraid that I cannot give any further details about that submission, but I can assure the Leader that the matter has reached that stage.

Mr. BANNON: Is there any estimate of the cost of space presently taken up by individual Government departments for storage of records which are no longer used because of the lack of central archival storage space?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Apparently, that matter is under review. The Libraries Board has refused taking material, and obviously some action must be taken in regard to such departmental records.

Mr. BANNON: Can the Minister provide information as to the amount of Government space that is being used for this purpose at present?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: No, I cannot provide that at the moment, but I shall be only too pleased to obtain a report on the matter and let the honourable member have it.

Mr. BANNON: Does the Government intend to separate the archives into a Government document archives and a historical archives?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: That is one of the proposals under consideration at the present time. The matter is dealt with in the archives submission to Cabinet to which I have just referred.

Mr. BANNON: Would that be affected by the proposal in the Edwards Report for a historical museum?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Only marginally, it would appear, at the present time. We have not received the final Edwards Report yet.

Mr. HEMMINGS: I refer to the line "Library services for the disadvantaged". Can the Minister say exactly what is meant by the term "disadvantaged"?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: This provision for disadvantaged persons deals with such items as hear-a-book, cassettes, large print books, and books for ethnic persons. Expenditure last year for some of these items (and I would expect that there would be similar expenditure this year, because the amount of money in totality is the same) was: for hard-back books, \$6 096; large print books, \$4 602; hear-a-book, \$12 091; foreign languages, \$5 586; periodicals, \$786; cassettes and records, \$839.

Mr. HEMMINGS: That is very commendable, but one would think that, as in 1979-80 \$30 000 was voted and completely spent, the proposed amount for 1980-81 would have increased somewhat. Under "Ethnic Affairs" there has been a considerable increase, and under "Contract interpreters and translators" there has been a considerable increase. As this is a well-used part of the library's services, can the Minister say why there is not an increase for 1980-81?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I can understand the honourable member's raising the point, because the appropriation for the current year is the same as last year's provision, but further down under "Subsidies to Local Government Libraries", which is what I might call the big basket of \$3 951 000, \$40 000 involved there is for the purpose about which we are speaking.

Indeed, some subsidised libraries have acquired a considerable range of ethnic books in particular, and this also comes into this general area. We are not limiting ourselves only to the same expenditure of last year; more

money than that is being spent in the subsidised library system.

Mr. HEMMINGS: Would the Minister not agree that, although there might have been an increase in subsidies for local government libraries, that does not necessarily mean that there will be any increase for Government libraries. One would have thought that the State Government would set an example to the local government library service by increasing the allocation.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: My departmental officers advise that the actual provision of these services is ever-increasing in the local government subsidised libraries, and it is under that line that the expansion is taking place. The demand in those local government libraries is far stronger than any increase in demand through the public library.

Mr. HEMMINGS: I note that between the amount spent last year and that proposed this year there has been a reduction of about \$100 000 for the libraries division; can the Minister explain this?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: A reduction of 11 staff positions right across the board has had an effect on the figures. There is also one less pay day in this current year and, generally, more rationalisation and reorganisation is planned as a result of the Government's policy to endeavour to reduce costs.

Mr. HEMMINGS: Why were those 11 positions abolished?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Generally speaking, they were abolished because of the Government's policy of a 3 per cent reduction.

Mr. HEMMINGS: Could the Minister explain whether this reduction of 11 positions, which is due to the 3 per cent reduction, cuts across the repeated claims of the Government that there will be no retrenchments?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I did not mention the word "retrenchment". The Government does not intend to retrench any of these people.

Mr. HEMMINGS: Where have those 11 positions been reallocated?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: They have been effected by natural attrition; four positions were held by public servants and seven by weekly paid officers.

Mr. HEMMINGS: Without going into specifics, why did those people leave voluntarily?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Some decided to get married and not continue to work. There were the normal resignations for seeking other employment, and so on. They were the normal reasons that people leave an employer.

Mr. HEMMINGS: Has the abolition of those 11 positions in any way affected the efficiency of the libraries division?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: No.

Mr. GLAZBROOK: Are any statistics kept as to the percentage of lenders over the total community?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Yes, the percentage is about one-third.

Mr. GLAZBROOK: Are young people's services attached to all libraries at present and, if not, is it intended to ensure that they will be?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: They are not attached to all libraries, but it is the board's intention that ultimately they will be.

Mr. HEMMINGS: Does the Minister say that, prior to the 3 per cent cut and because of the fact that these 11 positions were abolished through normal attrition, the libraries division was overstaffed?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It would not be fair to say that the division was overstaffed, but it is believed that it will work with the same efficiency as previously with the adjustment

in numbers.

Mr. HEMMINGS: By the term "it is believed", the Minister intimates that he is not quite sure; will the Minister assure the Committee that this division will be looked at possibly in six months, and that a reallocation of those 11 positions or part thereof may be undertaken?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Departmental efficiency is under constant scrutiny and, if in the future, as a result of such monitoring, it is felt that further changes are necessary, such changes will be made.

Mr. LANGLEY: I am concerned about unemployment and the fact that these staff members were just told to go.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: No, they were not just told to go. They left employment by the process that we call natural attrition: that is, through a process of the employee's indicating his desire to go.

Mr. LANGLEY: All seven did that?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Yes, not only the seven weekly paid employees but the four public servants as well; 11 people were involved. I point out that the division has about a 15 per cent annual turnover in staff and, when one considers that figure, one can well understand how it is possible for a group of people of this size to leave by natural attrition.

Mr. HEMMINGS: Regarding subsidies to local government libraries, the Minister, in reply to a question I asked on library services for the disadvantaged, said that, whilst there was no increase in the \$30 000 allocation, there was a \$40 000 allocation in the \$3 951 000 sum. If, say, some of the local government libraries have ethnic groups in their council boundaries (perhaps I can speak with some authority on the subject, being a member of an ethnic group), would other money be available, or is there only \$40 000 available for ethnic groups?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The sum can be varied in response to demand. We have some examples of councils, such as at Thebarton, Woodville and Hindmarsh, where there is a policy to acquire a far greater proportion of books for ethnic people. Whether the Elizabeth council adopts the same policy, I am not certain, but I think that there would be ample literature there for the honourable member.

Mr. HEMMINGS: Perhaps being a member of an ethnic minority group, I cannot understand what the Minister is saying. He said earlier that \$40 000 was available for ethnic books, cassettes, and suchlike, whereas he has just said that the \$40 000 is flexible. What sum under "Subsidies to local government libraries" is available for ethnic groups? Is it either \$40 000, \$50 000 or an open-ended cheque? Can the Minister inform the Committee exactly how much it is?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: On past practice, it has been \$40 000 but, indeed, it is flexible. If the demand for these books increases greatly, overall it will increase. In some areas, the demand might decrease. So, there is some play as to the ultimate sum. The sum I quoted previously was based on past practice.

Mr. BANNON: Is the State Government moving to ensure that at least 50 per cent of the capital establishment and operating costs of public library services is met by the State Government by way of subsidy and, if so, how far towards that aim has the Government gone?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: There is still a maximum on capital of \$130 000.

Mr. BANNON: Is that sum under review?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It is reviewed every year.

Mr. BANNON: Has it been increased this year as a result of such a review?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: No.

Mr. BANNON: Can the Minister say why not?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: We have to get as many new

libraries as we can, and therefore we have not been able to increase it this year.

Mr. BANNON: I understand that the subsidies to be provided have been approved on a schedule from the Treasurer. Has any variation been made to the schedule, as presented, for funding of libraries?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: There have been increases in those headings to which the Leader has referred. Subsequent capital has gone up 10 per cent; subsequent books, etc., has gone up 15 per cent, and administration has gone up 14 per cent.

Mr. BANNON: Have any individual libraries been given subsidies in excess of those originally approved?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: There were three last year, namely, Burnside, Tea Tree Gully and Brighton.

Mr. BANNON: Could the Minister advise the basis of that increased allocation?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It was considered that they were meeting particular needs.

Mr. BANNON: What particular needs?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The use of those libraries was substantially above the use of others.

Mr. BANNON: It was in consequence of this that the extra allocation was made?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Yes.

Mr. BANNON: Is there any explanation why those libraries were above the use of the general run of library?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: They have been established for some time, and it seems that in those areas there is a strong demand.

Mr. BANNON: Was there a strong demand for any other libraries that did not receive an increased allocation?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Yes, there was, but none of those was above the subsidy limit.

Mr. BANNON: Is it therefore a principle that, if there is a higher than expected demand above the subsidy limit, the Government will increase the allocation?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: No, it is decided on a year-by-year basis.

Mr. BANNON: Is that done by the head of the division, the permanent head, or the Minister himself?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It is done by the Libraries Board.

Mr. BANNON: Does the recommendation require assent by the Minister?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The assent is required from the Treasurer.

Mr. BANNON: On the recommendation of the Minister?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Yes.

Mr. LANGLEY: In future, will the binding of books and periodicals be done by the Libraries Division staff or by private-enterprise contractors?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It has been done by library staff, and it will continue to be done by library staff.

Mr. LANGLEY: The Minister mentioned certain libraries that had been able to obtain additional money, because they were being well used. The Minister no doubt knows about a new library in the Unley council chambers. There must have been a reasonable sum to help establish that library.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Unley obtained its maximum subsidy.

Mr. LANGLEY: Unley has a large ethnic group, and you have mentioned other areas such as Thebarton. Has an application for money for ethnic groups in that area been made?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Yes, money would have been provided for those special ethnic groups.

Mr. LANGLEY: A lending library has been operating on Unley Road for many years. Is that still functioning?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: As far as I know, it is. I believe it is one of the old institute libraries.

Mr. LANGLEY: I believe that at one stage a move was made by the Government to try to amalgamate institute libraries with the State Library. Will the Unley Institute library be so amalgamated? It seems to me that it is not really such a great asset to the public as is the State Library.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It is under consideration at the present time, but we have not as yet made any decision about it.

Mr. GLAZBROOK: I refer to page 343 of the programme papers and the ethnic affairs programme. In the proposed 1980-81 expenditure the line "Interpreting and translating services" has a notation which indicates that the figure does not include about 150 contracted interpreters. Can the Minister state the average hours a week worked by these contracted interpreters, what rate of pay they receive, and whether they are on call?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: They most certainly are on call. I have not got figures with me concerning the hours that they work. The rate of pay for interpreting is \$9 an hour with a minimum payment of \$27. For people who do translating the rate varies according to the language, for example, for Greek the rate is \$9 per 100 words, with a minimum payment of \$27, and for Italian it is \$7.50 per 100 words, with a minimum payment of \$22.50.

Mr. GLAZBROOK: Has any analysis been made to ascertain the extent of the use of this service by nationality, and the main purpose for the use of the service?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: We keep close records and a close watch on this service, and I can assure the honourable member that there is a strong demand for it.

Mr. BECKER: At what stage have negotiations and planning reached for the proposed community library at the Streaky Bay school?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I believe that it is on the list for 1981-82. We are endeavouring to assist people at Streaky Bay. I was pleased to receive a deputation of people from there a month or two ago in regard to the matter. If that date can be improved, it most certainly will be, but it will appear on our present planning that is when that will be achieved.

Mr. BANNON: The Minister foreshadowed earlier that the proposed Ethnic Affairs Commission would be established. What effect will it have on the lines and budgeted amounts that we have before us today—in other words, the provisions of \$429 000 for staff and \$137 000 for contingencies? Are they to be transferred to the Ethnic Affairs Commission, or will there be a separate allocation within the department for ethnic affairs administration and contingencies?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It will be transferred to the Ethnic Affairs Commission.

Mr. BANNON: Will all these officers currently employed in the ethnic affairs area be transferred to the commission?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I expect that the commission will offer them all positions, and I would assume from that that they would want to transfer over.

Mr. BANNON: An offer will be made to all personnel—at what level?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It will be at the levels applicable at the time the commission is established.

Mr. BANNON: What is proposed to be done about the position of Ethnic Affairs Adviser?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: We have not finally decided that yet. There may be a need for the Minister to have an Ethnic Affairs Adviser, as has been the situation in the

past, both during the term of this Government and in some of the term of the previous Government, or alternatively, we may seek other arrangements. We have not finally decided that question, nor do we intend to decide it until the commission is formed.

Mr. BANNON: Would it then be on the recommendation from the commission rather than a Governmental decision?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: We will no doubt seek discussions with the commission in regard to that matter, but the final decision will be mine.

Mr. BANNON: Following the change of Government there was considerable controversy surrounding the transfer of certain individuals out of the then Ethnic Affairs Division into other sections of the Public Service, or in fact anywhere so long as it was not in what were described as "core departments" of the Government. While my colleague in another place, the Hon. Mr. Sumner, has been pursuing that, I think it is fair to say that despite intensive questioning and considerable correspondence we have never really satisfactorily received answers as to what took place then and on what basis. The Hon. Mr. Hill said in the Legislative Council that various officers were advised that they could not be transferred to core Public Service departments, and he named the Treasury, the Auditor-General's Department, the Public Service Board and the Premier's Department. Later, this ban on certain individuals being in core Government departments was apparently retracted, but meanwhile the officers had been transferred out. Were certain officers advised after 31 October that they could not be employed in some departments, including the core departments?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I am not certain that they were advised along those lines. I can recall that there was considerable discussion at the time, and the Leader has made some points in regard to that. To the best of my knowledge, the Hon. Mr. Sumner continued his investigations into that matter. I can recall that the Premier gave him the right to discuss the matter with the Chairman of the Public Service Board and, as I recall, the Premier now deems the matter closed.

Mr. BANNON: In the Legislative Council on 23 October the Hon. Mr. Hill explained the reasons for these transfers as being "for the more efficient operations of the Ethnic Affairs Branch". Those transfers took place under section 57 of the Public Service Act, whereas section 77 is the appropriate section of the Act which would apply if this was a situation of efficient operation. Could the Minister clarify this situation? Were these transfers done under the correct section of the Public Service Act, consistent with the reasons that he gave publicly?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I just cannot recall the section under which they were transferred, but it was made perfectly clear at the time by the Premier in correspondence with the Hon. Mr. Sumner under what section they were transferred. Indeed, Mr. Sumner was informed of that section by the Chairman of the Public Service Board.

Mr. BANNON: I have just confirmed that it was section 57. I have copies of the transfer notices which were supplied to the Hon. Mr. Sumner here.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: If the Leader has the correspondence there and if it is section 57 which is stated in that correspondence, that is the situation.

Mr. BANNON: Then why did the Minister say that they were transferred under a different section of the Public Service Act, which of course implies that there were different reasons than those stated?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I cannot recall quoting any other section under which they were transferred.

Mr. BANNON: The Minister made it quite clear at the

time that the reasons for these transfers were not any of those that were alleged or suggested other than the more efficient operation of the branch, and this is specifically provided for in section 77 of the Public Service Act, yet these persons were not transferred under that section.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The reason given was a generalisation, but I did not ever quote, to the best of my knowledge, any particular section, and, if the Leader can produce evidence where I have quoted any other section, I would like him to provide it to me.

Mr. BANNON: It is part of the whole unsatisfactory nature of this matter, that the Minister has been less than forthcoming in his public statements as to the precise reason and nature of those transfers. He may well be right when he challenges us to find reference to a specific section in that he was not prepared to disclose one. The fact is that it was under section 57. He refers to correspondence with the Hon. Mr. Sumner on this matter. The problem is that the Premier refuses, as from the end of July in any case, to correspond or answer any further questions on this matter. I believe that this Committee provides the opportunity for the Minister to put on record very clearly (and it should be well within his recollection) what were the reasons for those transfers and why those particular individuals were singled out and not other individuals, and to explain it clearly to the Committee, because it relates very much to the efficient working of this division.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I refer the Committee to correspondence by the Premier to the Hon. Mr. Sumner dated 30 July 1980 which, I point out, is many many months after this matter occurred. During that long period of time, questions were asked and answered in the House, correspondence ensued between the Premier and Mr. Sumner, and Mr. Sumner was given the opportunity to discuss his problem with the Chairman of the Public Service Board. I quote part of the last sentence of the Premier's letter to the Hon. Mr. Sumner dated 30 July 1980 in which the Premier says:

I can say in all good conscience that there is nothing further required to be said, and I do not propose to enter into further correspondence or discussion on the subject.

As the Leader of the Government (the Premier) has taken that attitude, and he having given the matter every consideration up to that time, I refuse to answer any further questions on this matter.

Mr. HEMMINGS: Under "Ethnic Affairs: Contract interpreters and translators", a significant increase is proposed for 1980-81. We see in the yellow book that there are approximately 150 contracted interpreters. Could the Minister inform the Committee where these interpreters are engaged from, and has it been considered, in view of the provision of \$76 000, to have people permanently employed in the Ethnic Affairs Branch?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: They are mainly a resource which is a back-up to the major languages. In other words, in a lot of cases they deal with minor languages and, of course, it would be too expensive to employ permanent interpreter/translators in some of those minor languages. That is the basic need for a wide range of interpreters on a contract basis. The increase in the sum to which the honourable member refers indicates expanded activity in line with Government policy to help as many ethnic people and as many ethnic communities as possible, particularly those in minority communities. Facilities of the Ethnic Affairs Branch, as the honourable member would probably know, are now also available to local government on a fee-for-service basis. One council (the Hindmarsh council) has taken advantage of this service by having its annual report translated into two languages. So,

generally speaking it deals with an expansion of the service to help ethnic people.

Mr. HEMMINGS: My final question was: has the Government considered employing interpreters and translators on a permanent basis? Whether the Minister answered that particular line first or not I do not know, but I did not pick up any answer.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Yes, we do now. The increased number of interpreter/translators who are about to be put on the staff were referred to this morning in some points that I made. These are the people who are going to be employed with the assistance of the Commonwealth Government. There will be five interpreter/translators, one clerical officer and five information officers under this scheme, in which both the Commonwealth and the State are in partnership.

Mr. LANGLEY: I was most surprised at the Minister's answer to the Leader of the Opposition. Ever since I have been in this place I can assure the honourable member that things have been brought up on many occasions and brought back to life. Even though the Premier writes to someone and says that that is the finish of it, it is not finished as far as members of Parliament are concerned. A lot of things have been brought back on many occasions. I am sure the Minister would know many of them. For ethnic affairs, the provision this year is increased to \$429 000. Could the Minister explain the reason for that?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I will repeat it again, Mr. Chairman, for the third time. I am quite happy to go through it again if it will help the honourable member. It simply deals with the general carry-over of awards and additional funds provided for the appointment of those extra interpreter/translators and other officers in the ethnic area who are to be employed in conjunction with the Commonwealth Government.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the vote completed.

Department of Local Government, \$2 230 000

Chairman:

Mr. G. M. Gunn

Members:

Mr. E. S. Ashenden
Mr. J. C. Bannon
Mr. H. Becker
Mr. R. E. Glazbrook
Mr. T. H. Hemmings
Mr. G. R. A. Langley
Mr. J. W. Olsen
Mr. J. W. Slater

Witness:

The Hon. C. M. Hill, Minister of Local Government.

Departmental Advisers:

Dr. I. McPhail, Director, Department of Local Government.

Mr. M. Herrmann, Chief Administrative Officer, Department of Local Government.

Mr. A. Gardini, Ethnic Affairs Adviser, Department of Local Government.

Mr. L. B. Kidd, Assistant Under Treasurer, Treasury Department.

Mr. OLSEN: How much money will the Outback Areas Trust be providing towards the construction of the Coober

Pedy airfield?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I understand that the Federal Government has proposed that the Commonwealth funding of that project be 50 per cent of the total cost, the Outback Areas Trust 35 per cent, and the local Progress and Miners Association in Coober Pedy 15 per cent. In relation to actual costs, I understand that, in response to a request from the Federal Government, the Outback Areas Trust recently forwarded four options, with estimates of total costs for each, to the Commonwealth Department of Transport. The Commonwealth department, as I understand it, is evaluating these options and considering the scheme at Coober Pedy for the airport in the light of the total grant available this financial year, which is \$2 200 000 Australia wide. Our Outback Areas Trust expects to be advised of the Commonwealth department's decision by the end of this month. The trust will be expected to pay 35 per cent of whichever option is selected, and I think this gets to the nub of the question. The estimate for the cost of a sealed strip is \$380 500.

Mr. OLSEN: Has the Minister had brought to his attention the incorrect statement made in the *Opal Chips* newsletter, and will he or one of his officers comment on it?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I have had the *Opal Chips* newsletter brought to my notice. I can assure the honourable member that it is worth reading. That paper, on its front page, indicates that the estimated cost of the airstrip (and this item is a very significant issue with local people in Coober Pedy) will be \$350 000, and that that figure does not include any sealing or night landing lights. It would appear to me that that figure is simply not true, in view of the information I have just supplied.

Mr. HEMMINGS: In the grant to local government for effluent drainage work, I notice a reduction in real money terms of more than \$100 000. Can the Minister explain why it is proposed to reduce this amount?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It is reduced by only \$100 000, from \$2 000 000 to \$1 900 000. The figure of \$1 900 000 is based on the actual applications for funds for the current financial year. If the honourable member would like to know details of each of the seven applications, I am happy to provide them. They are as follows: District Council of Kingscote, estimated expenditure, \$61 000; District Council of Kimba, \$353 000; Town of Jamestown, \$59 000; District Council of Meningie, \$214 000; District Council of Murat Bay, \$952 000; District Council of Meadows, \$200 000; District Council of Strathalbyn, \$61 000.

Mr. OLSEN: In the Estimates Committee's proceedings as reported in Federal *Hansard*, Mr. Williams indicated that Coober Pedy was to be included. He said that it was proposed to include Coober Pedy in the local ownership plan and that it would become an item under this appropriation. In view of the indication that the Commonwealth will include it in the appropriation for this year, can the Minister give an assurance that the State Government will make its funds available during the same financial year?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The South Australian Government will provide its necessary funds as soon as the final arrangements with the Federal Government can be concluded. One of the problems—and I think it was brought out in those remarks by Mr. Williams—was that it would appear that the Federal Government is seeking a contribution from the local Progress and Miners Association of 15 per cent of the total cost. This problem is worsened by the fact that the association cannot borrow funds without agreement of the people at Coober Pedy at a public meeting. I understand that a public meeting has

been arranged for Saturday 25 October and that the Chairman of the Outback Areas Community Development Trust will attend that meeting.

Mr. HEMMINGS: Under "Public parks", I note that there is a reduction of \$70 000. Perhaps I may be getting a little bit parochial, but I think it is necessary to raise a certain matter at this time. The Minister may be aware that I sent him a telegram yesterday because one local government body within my area is selling off its public recreation areas to the South Australian Housing Trust for housing development. Will the Minister be prepared to increase the proposed Loan Estimates for 1980-81, so that the local government body in my area can, by having some funding from the Government, get out of the rather awful situation of having to sell off its parks and recreation areas to the South Australian Housing Trust?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I do not know whether the local council in the member for Napier's district has applied for funds under this heading. However, this money is only for new public parks and for some improvement thereon. It is true that the Loan figure to which the honourable member has referred is \$330 000, against funding last year of \$400 000. That reflects the general approach of the Government to more stringent funding but, at the same time, I point out that we have already dealt with the other \$330 000 from the Revenue Estimates, so that a total of \$660 000 is available.

I pointed out, when dealing with the Estimates line, that there was some evidence of a slight decrease in demand for this money by local government. However, I can assure the honourable member that if, as the year progresses, applications come in from local government and if we get to a situation where all the money has been taken up, every possible consideration will be given to see whether it might be possible to obtain some funds from some other areas to satisfy unexpected demand. Regarding the honourable member's concern about his local council area, I think I shall simply have to follow that up myself and ascertain whether application has been made and, if it has been made, the department will most certainly consider it side by side with all other applications.

Mr. BECKER: Regarding public parks, I note that the Loan Estimates reference states:

Purchase of land for public parks and recreation areas, grants to local government authorities and other approved bodies for the purposes of public parks and recreation areas including development works and transfer to a deposit account of funds to be used for such purposes in the future.

Can the Minister say what is the current balance of the deposit account?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: There was a surplus last year of \$37 659 on the Revenue line, and on the Loan line there was a surplus of \$2 231.

Mr. BECKER: All of the money that is being allocated is being used each financial year?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: No, last year we did have a surplus.

Mr. BECKER: A very small surplus.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: A small surplus. Incidentally, I point out, in relation to the answer I gave to the member for Napier, that I quoted the figure of \$330 000 in regard to the Estimates provision in regard to parks, but that figure is actually \$300 000, so that in total \$630 000 is available, with \$330 000 in Loan money, which is a slight reduction on what was provided last year, plus the \$300 000 under the Estimates line, which is the same as the sum provided last year.

Mr. BECKER: Will the abolition of land tax on the principal place of residence make any difference in the sum made available for parks. I understood that there was

a component for a contribution for parks in our land tax.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I do not have any knowledge of that at all.

Mr. BECKER: The abolition of land tax on individual properties will not make any difference.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Of course, land tax was an item of State revenue, but I have no knowledge of any proportion of money collected for land tax being appropriated for public parks.

Mr. BECKER: When land tax was paid, was there not a cent in every couple of hundred dollars earmarked for parks?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Again, I have no knowledge of that.

Mr. SLATER: Can the Minister explain the purpose of the advance for capital purposes of \$1 500 000 for the South Australian Housing Trust?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: This provision for last year dealt with an amount of money that was involved to acquire land from the Simpson Company at Dudley Park.

Mr. SLATER: For what purpose did the Housing Trust acquire the land?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Arrangements were made during the past year by the Government with the Simpson organisation concerning the establishment by Simpson's of further industrial premises in South Australia, and part of that arrangement was that some of the original Simpson land be acquired by the State. This money is used for acquisition purposes, and I understand that the trust intends to build housing on the land so acquired.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Olsen): There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the vote completed.

Minister of Local Government and Minister of Housing,
Miscellaneous, \$3 379 000.

Chairman:

Mr. G. M. Gunn

Members:

Mr. E. S. Ashenden
Mr. J. C. Bannon
Mr. H. Becker
Mr. R. E. Glazbrook
Mr. T. H. Hemmings
Mr. G. R. A. Langley
Mr. J. W. Olsen
Mr. J. W. Slater

Witness:

The Hon. C. M. Hill, Minister of Local Government.

Departmental Advisers:

Dr. I. McPhail, Director, Department of Local Government.

Mr. M. Herrmann, Chief Administrative Officer, Department of Local Government.

Mr. P. Edwards, General Manager, South Australian Housing Trust.

Mr. SLATER: Who is the Chairman and who are the present members of the Building Advisory Committee?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I do not have a full list of the names of members of the committee. Mr. Stuart Hart is the Chairman, and Mr. Farrent is the consultant to the committee. I will obtain details of the membership.

Mr. SLATER: What secretarial, clerical and professional support staff is available to the committee?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Mr. Farrent is the consultant; his

fees for last year, which are included in the total amount of \$30 718, were \$8 405; members fees were \$6 090; there were travelling expenses of \$700; and there was some employment under contract that entailed an expenditure of \$14 840 for a professional engineer from the Public Buildings Department. The actual fees amount to \$14 000 per annum for the Chairman, \$14 000 for non public servants, and \$1 000 per annum for public servants. The full-time staff comprises one clerk and one clerical assistant.

Mr. SLATER: I understand that there was some utilisation of the services of the Public Buildings Department.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: That is the point I was making in regard to contract employment. An engineer from the Public Buildings Department worked full time with the committee for two years, I understand.

Mr. SLATER: How much of the \$239 000 provided for the Emergency Housing Office will be expended on staff and administrative expenses, and what amount will be available for housing assistance to persons in need?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Salaries amount to \$114 000. Under the heading "Re-housing assistance", \$70 000 has been provided, and operating expenses of \$55 000 have been allowed. There were seven staff as at 30 June 1979 and nine as at 30 June 1980.

Mr. SLATER: How many persons have been assisted through the Emergency Housing Office in the past 12 months?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I can obtain that figure from the Emergency Housing Office; I do not have that information available at present.

Mr. SLATER: Is the assistance offered to people in difficult circumstances in regard to housing in the form of financial assistance to meet immediate commitments, perhaps in the form of bond money?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Financial grants are given, which comprise such items as security bonds, utility bonds, rent in advance on behalf of clients, removal expenses, lease fees, and money for the purchase of furniture. Whilst there is no mandatory requirement for clients to repay to the office any expenditure that comes under those headings, every attempt is made to recover what is considered capable of recovery—for example, rent from clients or refunds of security bonds on termination of tenancies. The general functions of the Emergency Housing Office are, first, to quantify the need for emergency housing; secondly, to administer short-term emergency accommodation; thirdly, to establish and maintain a register of low rental houses available in the private sector; and lastly, to provide housing information, advice and assistance to people in need.

Mr. SLATER: The Minister referred to the availability of low rental private accommodation, and no doubt he is aware that I consider that this is not available. Does the Minister believe that the \$70 000 allocated for this purpose is sufficient to meet the needs, bearing in mind that at present there are some 18 000 applicants for housing assistance through the South Australian Housing Trust, and most of those people are (from my own experience as a member of Parliament) in urgent need for accommodation? Does the Minister believe that it is necessary to improve the opportunity for people to be granted emergency housing assistance in view of the fact that 18 000 people are awaiting Housing Trust accommodation?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The point should be made that the Emergency Housing Office puts the emphasis on the word "emergency". It is in cases of dire emergency that this organisation is used. The 18 000 people who are seeking

rental accommodation from the Housing Trust are, without any doubt, in serious need of accommodation, but they are not necessarily in emergency situations.

The Emergency Housing Office is housed within the Housing Trust itself, so there is a close liaison between it and the general trust organisation. In some cases, too, some of the 18 000 people seeking help are in very urgent need. After careful scrutiny, they are given some priority. It could well be argued that they are treated as emergency cases, though perhaps not to the same degree as are those who are helped by the Emergency Housing Office.

It has not, to the best of my knowledge, been put to my department by the Emergency Housing Office that an increase in the \$70 000 under the heading "rehousing assistance" is needed at present. Because of that fact and because of the close liaison between this body and the trust, it would appear to me that the partnership between the two works satisfactorily, and it appears that those who are in extreme emergency situations obtain the necessary service to help them.

Mr. SLATER: I appreciate the Minister's comments, but it really depends on the individual whether it is an emergency or otherwise, because, as I said previously, many people who come to us for assistance in making representations to the trust are, to my mind, in emergency situations. They may not be considered as such by the Emergency Housing Office or the Housing Trust. There is also the fact that a greater number of tenants and applicants are involved with the trust. Statistics in the trust's latest annual report indicates an increasing number of people who obtain a rental rebate. Consequently, the trust, from memory, provides about \$7 000 000 in rental rebates. The situation is increasing to the extent where the trust, as time goes by, is dealing with greater numbers in this category. The number has increased from 7 per cent in 1973-74 to about 35 per cent in 1978-79. What other aspects does the Minister consider in assisting socially or financially disadvantaged people with welfare housing, other than through the Emergency Housing Office?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: This opens up the whole question of trust policy and the availability of rental housing within that organisation. I agree with what the honourable member has put in his explanation: there is an increase in the number of tenants in relation to subsidised rentals and a vastly increasing number of applicants for rental accommodation who cannot afford to pay normal rents charged by the trust which, incidentally, are below market rentals. The trust, as the State's housing instrumentality, is involving itself more and more as a welfare housing institution (and it is in keeping with the policy of the Government that that is what it should do and that it should leave the optimum amount of building that can be carried out by the private sector in the sale house area to private enterprise). I fully appreciate the trust's involvement in this area of rental housing for subsidised rents, but I come back to the point in regard to the proposed expenditure for the Emergency Housing Office.

I believe that we ought not to confuse too much the roles of the two instrumentalities. The Emergency Housing Office deals with people who are in most desperate need. The degree of urgency for them to have a roof over their head is far greater than for those who simply put their name down with the trust for subsidised rental accommodation. As the two bodies are under the one roof, so to speak, the grey area in between can, I think, be sorted out. We therefore seek these funds this year for this specific purpose.

Mr. SLATER: The sales section of the trust has been most successful in providing houses for a wide section of the community in South Australia. I do not have the trust's

latest annual report, which has been tabled in the House, but I have had the opportunity to read it quickly. The sales section and other activities of the trust have been the means of allowing the trust to provide rental concessions amounting to about \$7 000 000. If it is to be an instrumentality only in regard to welfare housing, how is that compatible with the rents the trust will obtain in the future?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The proposal for the trust to concentrate on specialised rental accommodation is a long-term plan. I am not saying that there has been an immediate and total change in policy, but there is certainly a move toward it. One reason is that people do not want to buy houses to the same extent as in years gone by, when there was a strong demand in the fringe suburbs of Adelaide and in the Elizabeth area for trust purchase accommodation. If the demand is not there, it is foolish for any State instrumentality to go on building houses for sale. There has been a great change in emphasis and demand, due principally to our limited growth in population.

It was not the profit from sales of trust houses that subsidised rental accommodation; that subsidy comes from grants from the Commonwealth under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement. It may well be that various State housing authorities move the subsidies into areas as they think best, and as they are permitted to do under the terms of the agreement, but it is my view that the subsidies needed to provide low-rental accommodation for people in the low-income brackets should come, in the main, from the Commonwealth by way of grant money for this purpose.

Mr. SLATER: I understand that. The demand with regard to people purchasing homes is due not only to a declining population. I believe the demand still exists, but other factors are involved, such as the ability to provide the necessary deposit and, secondly, to pay the interest rate once they have acquired the deposit. I do not want to turn this matter into a debate, but it seems to me that the sales section and the rental-purchase scheme are of great assistance to people in a wider range of activities than a welfare housing instrumentality. This area has been a success for the trust compared to the position in relation to housing authorities in other States.

Other initiatives have been taken to provide housing for people on low incomes, and I refer to the leasing of private accommodation and the reletting of it to tenants. How is that scheme progressing?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I do not mind continuing the discussion generally, but I do think that the discussion of the Housing Trust and its policies is hardly relevant under the Emergency Housing Office. I do not mind answering the honourable member and going on with the discussion.

Mr. SLATER: I will let the Minister answer the question. I take issue with the fact that the Housing Trust is not involved in this area, because the Emergency Housing Office is closely related to the activities of the South Australian Housing Trust generally. I believe the questions I am asking are relevant to the activities of the South Australian Housing Trust.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I refute the point made by the member for Gilles concerning limited opportunities for people to purchase houses under the present Government's policies. It is true that the rental-purchase scheme of the Housing Trust has stopped; indeed, it was not stopped by the present Government but I am not going to argue that point. The present Government has channelled as much money as it possibly can into the State Bank where people on low incomes can obtain low-interest loans, so that they can afford to acquire houses and they can borrow money for that purpose, at what I describe as

most generous terms.

I believe it is not a question of finance which is limiting the demand for the purchase of houses, as the honourable member, I think, suggests. It is not the limited funds; other considerations cause people to pause before they venture into entering into a contract to acquire a house today. I believe that the present Government's policy of assisting people to purchase on generous terms through the State Bank is one which can do nothing else but assist the demand for housing.

Mr. SLATER: What funds were available from the Commonwealth to South Australia under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement for 1979-80?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The allocation of funds by the Commonwealth for 1979-80 was \$35 835 000, and in this current year that figure has been increased to \$37 295 000.

Mr. SLATER: Does the Minister realise that there has been a substantial reduction in Commonwealth funds over the past three years under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement, and that South Australia on average has been more badly affected than the other States? Can the Minister give comparative figures for the past three years of funds available for the South Australian Housing Trust?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I do not realise that there has been a continuing reduction of funds from the Commonwealth.

Mr. SLATER: There is a graph in the Housing Trust Report which gives some indication of that.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The total Commonwealth funding for 1978-79 for the whole of Australia was \$330 000 000; that went down to \$260 000 000 in the 1979-80 year; and in the current year of 1980-81 the figure has increased to \$270 500 000. I think I should also point out that a much greater proportion of those funds is now given by grant money rather than by Loan money, as was the traditional situation back in the years leading up to 1977-78. I think that is a consideration we have to bear in mind when we consider those total figures.

In regard to the claim that we have been treated badly by the Commonwealth, it is my view that we have been treated by the Commonwealth better than is any other State. I say that because we still obtain 13.8 per cent of the total Commonwealth money coming into South Australia and, if we look at ourselves on a population basis, as I recall our population now is down under 10 per cent of the total Australian population. If a State which has a population of less than 10 per cent is getting 13.8 per cent of the Commonwealth money, I think that State is being treated very generously by the Commonwealth.

Mr. GLAZBROOK: An allocation of \$6 000 has been made for "Scholarship and courses for senior local government administrators". Is there any provision of funds for training courses for local government officers in general, and is there a policy for training courses for newly elected councillors and aldermen?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The South Australian Local Government Industry Training Advisory Committee Scheme is funded by the Commonwealth under the National Training Council. That council has funded the local government members' courses to which the honourable member referred. In this State, we also provide two scholarships for local government administrators at Canberra College. Only one scholarship was awarded last year, and that is reflected in the figures before us. The amount sought for this current year provides for two scholarships; one has already been awarded and the other is yet to be decided.

Mr. GLAZBROOK: I understand that the South Australian Grants Commission consists of three members. I notice that last year an allocation of \$64 000 was voted,

and only \$42 000 was spent. I notice that this year the allocation is \$59 000. What further services might be provided for under this allocation? The Auditor-General's Report (page 334) indicates the payments from Consolidated Revenue for the Grants Commission. What is the reason for the difference between the \$42 000 spent last year and the proposed \$59 000 to be expended this year?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The increased provision reflects, first, the filling of a vacancy resulting in a full year's cost of salary and, secondly, the full effect of national wage and clerical awards.

Mr. GLAZBROOK: For the Keith Hockridge Memorial Scholarship, the voted expenditure last year was \$14 600 and the actual expenditure was \$15 797, with an allocation of only \$10 000 for this year. What is the breakdown of that memorial scholarship?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Yes, we had to pay for two in that last year, resulting in that figure of \$15 797. There were two scholarships: one was won by D. J. McCarthy from Henley and Grange council and the other by D. J. Williams from Salisbury council. One scholarship is awarded annually but, as I said, two were paid for in 1979-80. The honourable member will see that the figure proposed for the current year reflects the provision of one scholarship. The recipient has not yet been chosen; applications close in November 1980.

Mr. GLAZBROOK: Under "Grants", \$40 000 is provided for ethnic organisations. What are the criteria for these grants and where will they go?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: These grants for ethnic organisations are to assist in the provision of advice and assistance to the ethnic communities. I have details of the split-up of those, if the honourable member wants them. In regard to the current year's requirements a similar provision is sought, as was sought last year. The grants are recommended to me by the Ethnic Grants Advisory Committee, which is chaired by Mr. A. Gardini.

Mr. GLAZBROOK: "Grants to organisations" were previously shown under "Miscellaneous", and an allocation of \$22 700 is provided for this year. What is this sum for?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: These figures have to be considered alongside other lines where adjustments have been made, and there are footnotes to indicate that. There were grants previously to the Astronomical Society, the Historical Society, the Library Promotion Committee of South Australia, the Royal Geographic Society, and the Royal Society. In the current proposal for the \$22 700 this year, it is estimated that these grants will be: Astronomical Society, \$500; Historical Society, \$1 000; Library Promotion Committee of South Australia, \$1 000; Royal Geographic Society, \$5 000; and Royal Society, \$5 200. A new initiative was a grant to assist the Libraries Board to establish a maritime collection, and that was involved with a plan to establish a Paul Maguire Maritime Library. There was recent publicity when a public appeal was launched for that purpose. The Government agreed to give \$10 000 to that appeal. Those amounts total the \$22 700 to which the honourable member has referred.

Mr. GLAZBROOK: Regarding the Local Government Assistance Fund, I notice a considerable increase in proposed expenditure for this year, compared with the actual payment of about \$362 000 last year. What is involved in this increased expenditure?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The increased provision reflects the Government's support for the changed operation of local government in relation to community development boards. We are able to allocate more funds than previously for this community development work within the various council areas. It has also been increased with a

view to endeavouring to seek matching money from the authorities and institutions who will apply because, by that means, we will spread it out to a greater number of applicants. We have found from experience that there is a very strong demand for this community development money, and we want to help as many of these groups and individuals as we possibly can.

Mr. BECKER: I refer to the transfer to a deposit account of funds to be used for the purchase of land for public parks and recreation areas, and grants to Government authorities and other approved bodies, for the purpose of public parks and recreation areas, including development, \$330 000. Earlier, I stated that when we made our land tax payments there was a levy. I refer to the book *Land Tax Guide to Legislation*, which states:

In addition to the rates of tax in paragraph 11 [that is, land tax] a levy is payable in respect of land within the metropolitan area at the rate of 1 cent for every \$20 or part thereof of the taxable value of the land. The metropolitan area is that area of the State comprised by the metropolitan planning area within the meaning of the Planning and Development Act and the municipality of Gawler. The purpose of this levy is to provide funds to assist in the provision of parks and open space areas and the development of facilities for such areas.

In relation to the amendment of the Land Tax Act in November last year, I find no provision in the Bill repealing that levy. Section 12 (5) of the Land Tax Act provides:

There shall be an additional levy payable in respect of land within the metropolitan area of 1 cent for every \$20 or part thereof of the taxable value of the land.

However, the Parliamentary Counsel advises that the definition of "land tax" covers all taxes, and I assume that a levy can be classed as a tax. This financial year we find that the Government will receive approximately \$16 000 000 in land tax, and page 11 of the Estimates of Revenue shows that local government will receive through fees, charges, recoups for services and sundries, \$800 000. Where has that levy been going that property owners have been paying over the years; is it part of that \$800 000 income that the department expects to receive?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: This is a matter for Treasury. Departmentally, within my department, the money comes from Loan money as far as the \$330 000 is concerned, and from revenue funds as far as the \$300 000 is concerned. That money comes through Treasury to us for distribution to applicants for funding for the acquisition of parks and improvement of parks. We have no direct channel from which we collect money by way of land tax. If the matters stated by the honourable members are correct, it is a matter for some apportionment within Treasury, but, with due respect, it does not concern my department.

Mr. BECKER: With respect, I do not agree. I was hoping that, through these Committees, we could get to the issues of situations in which the ratepayers of South Australia are levied a tax for parks. There is a section within the Department of Local Government, and I refer to page 121 of the Auditor-General's Report which states, in relation to public parks:

On the recommendation of the Public Parks Advisory Committee, appointed under the Public Parks Act, grants are made to local government authorities and approved public bodies towards the cost of acquiring land for public parks purposes and towards the cost of developing land acquired, on or after 1 July 1970, for public park purposes. Acquisition grants equal half the cost of purchase with a maximum of one-half of the Land Board Valuation of the land. Development grants are generally one-half of the actual cost of approved development.

The Auditor-General goes to the apportionment of funds, as follows:

Funds provided for these purposes in 1979-80 were \$940 000 being \$400 000 from Loan funds, \$300 000 from Consolidated Revenue, and \$240 000 brought forward from 1978-79. Payments to 27 local government authorities totalled \$660 000, leaving \$280 000 carried forward to 1980-81.

I asked earlier how much would be carried forward, and was given the impression that it was a small amount, a few thousand dollars. I am concerned that property owners in South Australia have been paying a levy which has been specifically designated, and the booklet put out by the State Taxes Department states clearly what it is for, and that is the reason linked up with the explanation the Minister has given in the Budget documents at page 64, and the Auditor-General's comments. I would have thought that the department would be asking Treasury how much it received in that levy, and would have received the whole of that sum, which I assume would be more than \$300 000, although I do not know. Somewhere along the line, I believe it is the responsibility of the department of the Minister of Local Government to ensure that it gets the whole of the levy.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I will ask the Minister whether he wishes to comment. Basically, the Committee is looking at estimates of payments, and whilst they are indirectly linked with the Revenue Account, the basic purposes of the Committee is to look at estimates of payments. The subject raised by the member for Hanson is in the area of Treasury.

Mr. BECKER: No, it is not.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I ask the Minister whether he wishes to respond and to take advice from the Treasury officials available to him.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: While the member for Hanson has been speaking, I have spoken with an officer from the Treasury Department, and the officer informs me that the money that comes in from land tax collections simply goes into the revenue of the State, and it is in the general mix of the general revenue of the State. From that total sum these allocations from revenue, namely, \$300 000, come into the lines of my department for distribution for public parks.

Mr. BECKER: That is what I want to know.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The answer to the second matter raised by the honourable member is that the \$280 000 carried forward and mentioned in the Auditor-General's Report in the fund is in fact credit money, but it is money that is committed, because arrangements are made with councils to provide them with funding, both for acquisition and for improvements, but it is not all handed out at one time. When they need it, they get it, and it must be reserved for the purposes for which it has been promised.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: It has been the custom of the Committee to allow a questioner to continue with a line of questioning. The honourable member for Hanson.

Mr. BECKER: I want to be assured that the \$300 000 allocated on page 64 of the payments from revenue is the \$300 000 or links up with the amount of money Treasury receives from this levy under land tax.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It does not link up with it at all. It is simply, I repeat, a matter of Treasury's collecting that money. It becomes part of the general revenue, and from the general Revenue Account the Treasury provides my department with \$300 000.

Mr. BECKER: Will the Minister or his officers undertake to obtain from Treasury the actual amounts diverted under this levy?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I shall take up the matter further with the Treasury and advise the honourable member.

Mr. BECKER: I make this point because it is no good charging it as a levy on taxpayers if the whole amount is not transferred for the purpose for which it has been paid. The same thing happened with the Hospital Fund year after year, and it is about time these moneys went to the purpose for which they are intended. The \$300 000 could be the exact amount, but I wish to be assured that it is. If it is not, I think the Minister of Local Government has a good claim on Treasury for an additional amount.

Mr. SLATER: A sum of \$310 000 is to be allocated to the South Australian Housing Trust for control of rents and housing improvements. Can the Minister give any information about the activities of the section of the trust which administers the Housing Improvement Act and has control of rents and housing improvements?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: This was formerly shown under the Treasurer's vote. The first function of the South Australian Housing Trust in this State is to inspect substandard housing owned by the private sector and to set upper limits on rentals charged. The second function is that of inspecting Government used housing and setting fair rentals. The trust records show 7 500 Government owned homes which at present are inspected every three years. Thirdly, the trust acts as a consultant to the Government for all housing occupied by employees of the Crown. Expenditure in 1979-80 included \$198 165 for salaries, the balance being for operating expenses. Staff levels were 21 at 30 June 1978, 15 at 30 June 1979, and 17 at 30 June 1980.

Mr. SLATER: Part V of the Housing Improvement Act gives the housing authority power to provide housing to persons of limited means. To what extent is that part of the Act administered under the Housing Trust? Can the Minister give me any information in regard to any activities that might occur in this regard under the Housing Improvement Act?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The specific reference is outdated. The whole of the Housing Trust's operation is concentrated on the provision of housing for people of limited means.

Mr. SLATER: I noticed that provision in the Housing Improvement Act, and I wondered to what extent that section of the Act was utilised by the trust. I appreciate that the trust works in that regard anyway, but what the Minister is telling me is that the Act is outmoded.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: What I am saying is that there may not be any need for that provision within the Act.

Mr. SLATER: What action will be taken to amend the Act? It has not been amended since 1973. Do you have any intentions in that regard?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I will undertake that, when that Act comes up for revision, that point will be borne in mind.

Mr. SLATER: I refer to a reply the Minister gave to my question regarding the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement funds. If I remember correctly, the Minister said that South Australia was being well treated in regard to finance from the Commonwealth in regard to public housing. Can the Minister reconcile this with the fact that the number of dwellings completed by the South Australian Housing Trust last year was 1 408, being 508 less than the previous year?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The money to which the honourable member has referred is used not only for the construction of houses.

Mr. SLATER: But it is indicative.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Not necessarily; there is an ever-increasing demand for subsidised rentals and, as I said earlier, that Commonwealth money is channelled into the subsidy that is required by such tenants. Also, the trust is

involved in the area of acquired houses, as distinct from constructed houses.

Mr. SLATER: How many houses were acquired?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: In 1979-80, 343 houses were acquired, and, in 1980-81, 475 houses were acquired—of course, for the current year these are estimates. I point out that one of the reasons for this proposed increase is that many of the tenants who are on low incomes should not be housed in fringe suburbs where the trust can build, it being much better from the social point of view to make every effort to house such people in more settled areas and to spread them through the community at large because it is more socially acceptable to them and it also allows many private individuals to help them with their problems, their handicaps, and so forth. This is a resource which is very acceptable to the unfortunate individuals concerned and also, of course, the State.

Mr. SLATER: Is it the policy of the trust to increase the number of houses purchased in this way rather than complete new dwellings?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The trend is to increase the number so acquired, as is evidenced by last year's actual result and the proposal for this year.

Mr. SLATER: Is it also the policy of the trust to make available for sale some of the older type dwellings for tenants of long standing? I understand an announcement was made by you a few months ago. I expect that it is a bit early to be able to assess those activities.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It was a Government policy initiative to offer the detached homes to tenants, and we began with a scheme of taking the long-standing tenants because we thought it fairer to do it that way, and also because we wanted to test the water, so to speak, to find the extent of the demand, because we knew it might create a pressure on funds for purchase by such people. To date there have been about 500 inquiries from tenants to purchase those Housing Trust houses. Of course, they will not all obtain funds through the State Bank, and that means that some of the purchase money will be channelled by the trust into acquisition of new construction for prospective tenants who are on the long list of 18 000 people who are waiting.

One of the problems as far as some delay is concerned is that there has been a situation whereby the trust was not staffed for such negotiations; properties had to be valued, and special valuations had to be made of improvements which existed on those Housing Trust properties and which were the property of the tenants. Also, in many cases there is a need to rearrange the sewerage piping so that each title will have its own sewerage service. These negotiations and time-consuming factors have slowed up the programme somewhat, but we are doing our best to assist those 500 people to see whether they wish to complete their acquisitions.

Mr. SLATER: Is there a time limit on the options regarding these inquiries? Tenants make inquiries and these factors of which you have spoken take time from the trust's point of view. Is there a time limit for the tenant to make up his mind in regard to purchase or otherwise?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: There is not any limit at all until such time—

Mr. SLATER: Valuations can change; is it a permanent valuation or is there another valuation after 12 months?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: There is no limit as far as the negotiations and the work of the trust is concerned. Once the price has been assessed by the trust, the tenant is given three months in which to accept or reject the offer.

Mr. HEMMINGS: I refer again to the Housing Trust, and I think this is the only line under "Miscellaneous" which we have been able to pursue in questioning. Can the

Minister inform me how many vacant blocks are owned by the Housing Trust which have not yet been sold within the northern area, taking in the Salisbury, Elizabeth and Munno Para local government areas?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I will find out that information and let the honourable member know.

Mr. HEMMINGS: The reason I asked that question is that I would like to know whether it is Government policy that the South Australian Housing Trust should transfer long-standing lease agreements with sporting bodies and such in the areas of Whyalla, Elizabeth and Salisbury with the local government bodies concerned?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: At the moment there are some negotiations in train with the city of Elizabeth concerning the possibility of obtaining some surplus reserves from the council in exchange for which the Housing Trust may give some ovals and other sporting areas.

Mr. HEMMINGS: Could the Minister enlighten the Committee as to what are known as surplus reserves?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: They are reserves which, in the opinion of the council, are no longer required as reserves.

Mr. HEMMINGS: Why is the council now seeking an opinion from the residents whether these reserves should be transferred to the Housing Trust in view of the fact that the majority of reserves are used by the community and, therefore, could not be seen as surplus to requirements?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: If the council is referring issues of this kind to the people for an opinion, I highly commend it.

Mr. HEMMINGS: The Minister has not answered my question. If, in the City of Elizabeth, there are undeveloped blocks that are owned by the Housing Trust (about which I hope the Minister will supply details in the next few days), why is it necessary to transfer reserves that are classified by the Minister and the trust as surplus to requirements but not classified as such by the Elizabeth council or the community?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The Housing Trust is of the opinion that the City of Elizabeth is rather keen to dispose of some of this land. This is a question of opinion, but that is the view of the trust at present. The second point I make is that, if it is possible for the trust to build in areas in Elizabeth where the demand is strongest and where people will be closer to services and other facilities, then quite naturally, and I believe, quite properly, the trust should concentrate its construction in those regions. Most of the trust's vacant building blocks, within the boundaries of the City of Elizabeth and nearby, are some distance to the north of the principal facilities, and it may well be that more suitable building land can be obtained by the trust with, I point out, full agreement of the council and, I hope, full approval of the ratepayers.

Mr. HEMMINGS: Perhaps the Minister has been ill advised, but will he explain why, in most areas, the reserves that are being offered to the Housing Trust in exchange for a sporting reserve are close to Housing Trust owned undeveloped blocks, which are as close to the existing services as those reserves that are currently being offered to the trust? The area to which the Minister refers is the area north of Munno Para, and I am dealing with the areas bounded by the City of Elizabeth.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Without exact detail concerning each reserve that may be under consideration, a survey as to its location compared with facilities in the town, information concerning the extent of the trust's holdings, and details in regard to the exact position of these holdings, there is no great point in developing a debate with the local member from that area.

Mr. HEMMINGS: With all due respect, whilst I may be the local member, I am also a member of this Committee

and I believe that it reflects a distinct change in the policy of the Government and of the South Australian Housing Trust that this action should take place. The Minister should refrain from describing this matter as a purely parochial decision. As far as I know, the same thing could be happening in Whyalla, Mount Gambier, or anywhere that the South Australian Housing Trust has undeveloped blocks ready for building, so I do not believe it is a parochial issue. The Minister should try to treat this matter as an issue concerning members of this Committee. Is it the policy of the Government and the Housing Trust to purchase, transfer or negotiate the transfer of land owned by municipalities to the Housing Trust for housing development whilst there exists nearby undeveloped blocks owned by the South Australian Housing Trust that could quite easily be used for housing development?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I point out that local government reserves cannot be transferred to anybody or to anyone without my consent as Minister of Local Government. Regarding the Government's and the trust's policy, this is only one of the many initiatives that the Government is encouraging the Housing Trust to take. The trust's policies are greatly changed from those of a few years ago, because the whole ball game of the purchase of great volumes of trust houses out in the fringe suburbs by people seeking trust accommodation to purchase has changed. As has been explained, the increasing demand by low-income people for rental accommodation which has caused the waiting lists to increase to about 18 000 indicated the great changes taking place and the challenges that confront the trust.

In these circumstances, the Government gives the trust a lot of flexibility and encourages it to use its initiative to look at every possibility of assisting people with rental and sale housing requirements, and quite obviously, this action is one of the initiatives that the trust is taking. If there are unwanted local government reserves anywhere, the trust is interested in acquiring them, not by any compulsion but by sitting down and talking to the council concerned, and in this case it would appear, from what the honourable member has said, the council is referring this issue to its ratepayers. Nothing in an initiative of this kind by the trust deserves criticism. It may well be that a lot of people who are in need of rental accommodation very close to the town centres and to the facilities will be housed because of this initiative, and that is the trust's main object—to get roofs over the heads of people so that people can live in the best position, not out in the sticks where they will be a long way from the facilities that they need and deserve.

Mr. HEMMINGS: I am pleased that the Minister has shown such interest in this matter. I take it that council-owned reserves cannot be transferred to any other authority without the express permission of the Minister.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: They must be dedicated reserves, which I assume these would be.

Mr. HEMMINGS: I take it that, if there is a groundswell of opinion by the ordinary people in the community against such a transfer, the Minister would think twice about giving his approval.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I will certainly sense public opinion to the best of my ability.

Mr. HEMMINGS: The Minister made a rather spirited speech about housing low-income people as a result of the transfer of these reserves for housing development. If these reserves existed in R1 or R2 zones, will the Minister make the same spirited plea to the Minister of Planning that consent use be given to erect low-rental housing accommodation in these areas?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I have already concluded negotiations with the Minister of Planning, who is in

charge of the administration of local government zoning, in endeavours to have local government zoning relaxed. The principal purpose of this scheme is to house such people in these most suitable areas.

Mr. HEMMINGS: Does the Minister mean that he will encourage the building of low-rental accommodation in R1 zones?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: You cannot build more than one unit of such accommodation in an R1 zone at present. We are negotiating with local government to allow what are best described as granny flats to be built in R1 zones. They are not permitted at present. That indicates the relaxation in relation to R1 zones that we are endeavouring to achieve, again in the interest of housing the elderly, pensioners in many instances, and other low-income people in such flats. Naturally, the tenants would be related in some way to the owners of the houses.

Mr. BANNON: When was the report of the working party into youth housing received by the Government?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The Youth Bureau is under the Minister of Industrial Affairs; that report has gone to the Minister.

Mr. BANNON: Does the Minister, as Minister of Housing, have any input into that report, and does he have any knowledge of its findings?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The housing adviser within my department was on the committee, and the trust was represented on the committee. So, we were involved in those two ways.

Mr. BANNON: Can the Minister advise whether and when the report will be released publicly?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: No. I will refer that question to the Minister of Industrial Affairs and obtain that information.

Mr. LANGLEY: Can the Minister say what are the functions of the Building Advisory Committee?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It advises me on all matters relative to the administration of the Building Act.

Mr. LANGLEY: I am aware of a committee that examines houses and advises the owners on design matters. Does that work come under the Building Advisory Committee?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: That work is not carried out by this committee.

Mr. LANGLEY: The rent of many elderly people is not high. Do the trust's officers collect rents at appointed times?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It appears that rents are collected fortnightly, but some tenants prefer to pay weekly and they are, I think, permitted to do so.

Mr. LANGLEY: I can understand that. I received a complaint the other day that an officer had not called for five weeks. Perhaps sickness was involved.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Perhaps the occupant was away from home at the time the collector called.

Mr. LANGLEY: Can the Minister inform me what types of tenants are housed in the established homes the trust has purchased?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It could relate to people of different ages and income groups, but some tenants need to be near certain facilities such as hospitals for out-patient treatment, and that kind of thing. The trust endeavours to satisfy such requirements. The general principle is that the trust endeavours to achieve a mix of population rather than a system under which people in similar circumstances are grouped together.

Mr. LANGLEY: I have no complaint about what is being done. I have established homes in my district that are occupied by elderly citizens. Are such properties upgraded and sold?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: They are upgraded to an

acceptable standard of accommodation prior to the tenant's moving in. It is possible for tenants, if they are able financially to purchase the home, to negotiate with the trust to acquire the house.

Mr. LANGLEY: I ask next about people who apply to the trust for rental accommodation. They may be renting a home at the time and, as members have often said, there is no guarantee that they will be there all the time, because circumstances change. When the time comes for the person to receive the notice to go into a Housing Trust property, he or she may be willing to stay where he or she is living, whereas in a couple of years time he or she may be asked to quit the home. Is the name kept on the list so that there is no loss of priority?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The applications are treated from the time the application was originally made.

Mr. LANGLEY: The person is still in line as from the time of lodging the original application.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Yes.

Mr. GLAZBROOK: Although there is a shortage of rental accommodation for the needy and underprivileged, there are certain tenants who could well afford to pay more or live in private flats and developments.

Appreciating this, is there any method, or is the trust looking at the question of housing the more needy people and asking people who can afford to pay more, whose circumstances may have changed greatly from the time when they were first housed under the system, perhaps to look elsewhere? It is a delicate point, but we are in delicate times and there are more and more needy people. It has been put to me quite forcefully that, although at the time people went into trust homes their circumstances were much lower, they have over the years developed to a stage where they could well afford to move out.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The Government's present policy is that rents shall be fixed at approximately 80 per cent of market rates. The Government increased its rents at the beginning of this year to reach that figure, and it was hoped that, in some circumstances where people could have afforded to pay that and yet were not paying it previously, they might have been encouraged to move out into the private sector because of that. Another consideration which we must bear in mind in this State is that the Government wants to give all the support it can to workers in industrial activity and in factories, and in the housing areas in which those people live, which are relatively close to their factories, they deserve every possible consideration, and they should not be overcharged in any respect for rent. By retaining that 80 per cent, the Government feels that it is making some contribution to bettering the lives of people whose wages, we know, are simply in accordance with award rates, and there is not a great deal to spare at the end of the week, if I could put it that way.

We also police fairly closely situations where people can afford to pay a little more, perhaps because their children have grown up but are still at home, although they may be working, and the family therefore should be able to afford a little more. They are asked by the trust, as the landlord, in such circumstances to pay more, and regular reviews of such situations are carried out.

I acknowledge the point that, if it is possible for people who have been in trust accommodation for a period of time to move into the private sector, that helps in alleviating the lot of those on the long waiting list who deserve State housing and who simply cannot obtain housing in the private sector because of the relatively high rents prevailing. Whilst I sympathise with the honourable member in his concern in raising the point, and whilst theoretically a strong argument can be developed along

those lines, we must never forget that we are dealing with people whose social life has developed around their location, whose children in many cases have friends in that location, and all the other institutions which assist the womenfolk with meeting places and the children with sporting and recreation and school facilities are located there. To force them to move out simply for the sake of getting them out into the private sector and providing that accommodation for a new tenant on the waiting list must be a policy handled with great care and caution.

Mr. BANNON: Can the Minister explain why the amount voted for the Local Government Assistance Fund was underspent in 1979-80?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: As the Leader knows, we came to Government during the financial year, and not at the beginning of it. Changes in policy in this area were implemented, and part of those changes involved a splitting up of authorities and institutions which the Government thought should be funded through my department, which was then the new Department of Local Government, and the Department for Community Welfare. So, part of the money which was voted in 1979-80 was transferred to the Department for Community Welfare for distribution by that department, and to establish a system whereby such institutions would thereafter be under the control or care of the Department for Community Welfare. The figure of \$362 999 was, I understand, the balance left under the administration of the Department of Local Government for distribution, and that was, in fact, all distributed.

Mr. BANNON: To what extent did applications for funds exceed the funds available in 1979-80?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: We did not have total control of the \$362 999 for distribution to new applicants, because there were ongoing commitments which meant that portion of these amounts had to be apportioned to those applicants. That committed sum was \$228 244. When we came to grants for new applicants, we had the figure of \$134 795 left for distribution. We had an enormous demand for that money. The total sum involved for applications which the department received was about \$3 000 000, and the number of applicants was about 500. We had to apportion that \$134 795 in the fairest possible way as a result of that very large body of applications.

Mr. BANNON: There is an increased provision in this year's Budget. Can the Minister say what amount of that is committed to recurrent projects and what amount is available for distribution to new projects?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: About \$250 000 is available for new applicants.

Mr. BANNON: How were the grants determined last financial year?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: By priorities established by local councils within the guidelines we gave them. Those guidelines include the fact that projects exceeding \$10 000 were to receive low priority owing to the limited funds. There was to be no funding of projects for new physical construction owing to the limited funds, for example, roads, ovals, and toilet blocks; no funding for ongoing salaries or salaries which duplicate existing services; no funding of projects appropriately funded under other Government grant schemes; no funding of projects which are of a fund-raising nature; no funding of poorly defined projects for which specific costs or proposals are not provided; no funding of projects which do not have some general benefit to the community; no funding of projects committed or under way before the grants have been approved; and projects supported by the council were to be given priority.

Mr. BANNON: Who made the recommendations to the

Minister on the allocation of grants in terms of those priorities?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It was done internally by a small committee of my officers.

Mr. BANNON: Does the Minister intend that this year's grants be used to establish some sort of advisory committee, or will it again be an internal exercise by his officers?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I intend to do it internally. I find that the officers are very reliable in this respect, and, of course, once one establishes a committee of this kind there is funding involved. Last year \$1 500 was voted for a community development fund advisory committee which we did not spend because we did it ourselves. I am satisfied that the officers who are very close to local government and who are very responsible officers can be relied upon to advise me very properly in this respect.

Mr. BANNON: Can the Minister tell the Committee the names of the committee members?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The Director, Mr. Williams, Mr. Brunner, and Ms. Fallon.

Mr. BANNON: I think the Minister would concede that it is normal practice throughout Government, including the Department of Local Government and the Department of the Arts, for grants of this size and scope to be determined or initially recommended by a committee which does have some input from those who are not necessarily just within the Public Service. It means, of course, that the committee and the grants are totally subject to Ministerial discretion. I ask the Minister whether in fact he does have such discretion, or whether he simply puts into effect those recommendations made to him by the committee.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: So far I have simply put into effect the recommendations of the committee.

Mr. BANNON: How much of the allocation for this coming year will be devoted to information services?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: At this time I cannot say, but there will be some emphasis on the question of information services.

Mr. BANNON: Has the Minister considered the report of the committee on information services, and what is the Minister's reaction to the various recommendations the committee makes?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: After I received the report, it was made public and distributed to people who we thought would like to make some comments or contribution in regard to it. People responding were given to the end of September to advise me of their thoughts in regard to the report. As yet, I have not had time to deliberate further on it, although my officers are working on it at the moment; I really cannot say any more than that at this stage, but the matter will be under my very serious consideration in the near future.

Mr. BANNON: Will funding for existing community information services be maintained this year?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The funding will be maintained in accordance with undertakings that have been given to particular information service organisations.

Mr. BANNON: If the committee recommended that an information services grant fund be established and administered by a committee, how is it intended in this financial year to fund new information service initiatives, or are there to be none?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: This matter is involved in my deliberations on this report, which, as I said a moment ago, are not concluded as yet but which will be concluded in the very near future. My present thinking on this point is that we will take a sum of money out of this fund and distribute that sum, especially in regard to information

services.

Mr. BECKER: I refer again to the Housing Trust. Is there a break-down of tenants on the current waiting list for Housing Trust accommodation? Are there statistics as to what categories these prospective tenants might fall into, such as single parents, etc.?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Yes, such statistics are kept.

Mr. BECKER: Can I have them, please? I inquire because I wonder whether this throws up a trend of the problems that the trust experiences at the moment.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The question is dealt with in some detail. The following information may satisfy the honourable member: 28 per cent of the applicants are lone parents (that is, single-parent families); 11 per cent are age pensioners; 11 per cent are unemployed; 4 per cent are invalid pensioners; and the balance, generally speaking, are low-income applicants. The lone parent family group increased to 28.5 per cent over last year's figure of 24.5 per cent.

Mr. BANNON: Why is there no allocation this year for The Parks Residents Committee?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It did not ask for an allocation, but some assistance is being provided through the Local Government Assistance Fund, and we expect that figure to be \$2 060.

Mr. BANNON: How much of the line "Community centre projects", is devoted to The Parks Community Centre, and what is it intended that the balance will be spent on?

[Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.]

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The Leader asked a question I have not answered before the adjournment. I think, from memory, that question was about the division of the \$1 583 000 under "Community Centre Projects" between the Parks Community Centre and Thebarton. The amount that will be allocated to Parks is \$1 483 000. That leaves \$100 000, which will be provided for the operation at Thebarton. The operation of the Thebarton Community Centre has now been transferred to the Thebarton Council. That council will be provided with a grant of \$100 000, divided into salaries of \$79 000 and operating expenses of \$21 000, to assist with the running of the centre. All staff members were transferred without the loss of benefits. The former manager is now employed in the Department of Local Government undertaking duties, *inter alia*, as a community arts liaison officer. The division of the large sum to The Parks Community Centre is as follows: gross expenditure, legal services, \$15 000; salaries and wages, \$1 226 050; operating costs, \$492 500; capital, \$100 000; making an aggregate figure of \$1 833 550 from which revenue of \$350 550 is deducted, leaving \$1 483 000.

Mr. BANNON: As far as the Thebarton Community Centre, what is left of it, is concerned, is that amount to be made available regularly, or is this the last year in which anything will be provided for that project?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: There will be continuing funding, which will be subject to discussion with that local government body. It is my hope that, eventually, the local governing body will take it over. In the interim, we will provide sufficient funds to keep those staff members employed.

Mr. BANNON: Is any money to be made available to ethnic broadcasters this year from State resources?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: That provision has been transferred to Arts under "Community radio" and \$60 000 has been provided. Portion of that \$60 000 will be considered for Ethnic Broadcasters Incorporated.

Mr. BANNON: What does the amount of \$3 000 for 1980-81 for "Ethnic Research" refer to?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: That is a national research project into aspects of ethnic research at a total estimated cost of \$60 000. South Australia's contribution will be \$3 000. That will be administered by the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, which is responsible jointly to the Commonwealth and State Ministers. A study of newly arrived settlers, including occupation, housing, income and mobility of new, skilled, migrants is in progress. A similar project is being considered for newly arrived settlers with regard to family reunions and aged migrants.

Mr. BANNON: There is a proposed reduction this year for "Institutes Association of South Australia". This is consistent with the gradual winding down of institutes' activities. Does that amount include the institute libraries' grant, or is that just for the association's activities?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It is for the institute's libraries. That reduced provision reflects the decreasing requirements as the number of institutes has decreased by 13 during 1979-80 as a result of the thrust towards establishing municipal and school community libraries.

Mr. BANNON: Could the Minister reconcile that line and allocation with page 341 of the yellow book which shows "Institute Libraries" as drawing \$154 000 from revenue this year, as opposed to the \$87 000 provided?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: That figure of \$154 000 includes the salaries component, which is charged to the libraries.

Mr. BANNON: So all five persons listed there are employed by the library and not by the institutes.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: That is right.

Mr. BANNON: A decreasing allocation is shown, and the Minister has said that this is due to decreasing institutional activity in libraries, and that goes hand in glove with the public library programme. Why then has the manpower allocation been increased by one?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: That was a vacancy; there have always been five positions.

Mr. BANNON: So there is no increase in allocated manpower, but there will be five persons?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: That is so. They are now sharing their duties with the public libraries as well.

Mr. BANNON: How many institute libraries are likely to either close or amalgamate with public libraries in this financial year?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: We estimate that it will be about 10.

Mr. BANNON: Could I have further details supplied about that at some stage?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Yes, I will obtain more details about that for the Leader.

Mr. BANNON: Is the Minister satisfied with the progress in this area, of the gradual closing or amalgamation of institute libraries and their replacement by full free public library services?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Yes, I am satisfied. It would appear that we are right up to the schedule laid down by the original working party regarding this changeover.

Mr. BANNON: Where has the South Australian Waste Management Commission been transferred in terms of budgetary allocation, because nothing is provided this year?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: No provision is required under this current year as the income now received under the South Australian Waste Management Commission regulations will be the income of the commission and there will be no need to appropriate funds. It is hoped that the commission will be financially self-supporting.

Mr. BANNON: In 1979-80, \$100 000 was voted for the

South Australian Waste Management Commission and \$99 836 was actually paid. The Auditor-General's Report (page 351) states that during 1979-80, the South Australian Government contributed \$100 000 to the commission; various payments were made, but the amount was not spent in total and there was a balance of \$64 000 as at 30 June. What happens to that amount? Is it returned to Treasury?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It is held in Treasury, but it may be utilised for some of the operations in this current year.

Mr. BANNON: If that sum has not been spent, why is nothing shown in the line?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It is a carry-over from the previous year.

Mr. BANNON: It is not recalled from the commission; in other words, it is shown in the commission's funds.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It has been paid to the commission, but it is being held in Treasury for the commission's use if there is a need for it.

Mr. BANNON: If, in this financial year, the commission will be fully funded and last financial year it failed to spend \$64 000 allocated to it, why is that money being held in the Waste Commission fund?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It is a question of changeover from the organisation that was gearing up during the previous 12 months. The first regulations that were proclaimed came into effect on 1 July this year, and naturally there was an initial period during which the income of the commission was uncertain. That sum was being held as a source of funds, if needed, in view of the time and procedure necessary for the commission to have some cash flow in its operations in this current year.

Mr. SLATER: Have the fees of the members of the Housing Trust Board increased, or is it intended that these fees will be increased in this current year?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: There has been no increase for at least two years, and the Government has no request before it for an increase of fees.

Mr. SLATER: The Auditor-General's Report (page 324) shows board members' fees for 1979 as \$24 000, but the sum allowed for 1980 is \$28 000; can the Minister explain the difference?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The General Manager of the Housing Trust cannot immediately recall an explanation for that difference; I will ascertain information for the honourable member.

Mr. SLATER: What is the fee for each board member and the Chairman?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I cannot give the exact figures. Apparently, there are seven board members, so I could strike an average. I will obtain that information, also.

Mr. SLATER: I believe that the Minister said earlier that the discontinuance of the rental housing scheme was not the fault of the present Government, and I accept that, but I refer to the Housing Trust Annual Report of 1979, which states:

Unfortunately, reduction of Commonwealth funding limited the sale of houses under the rental-purchase scheme to 197, which is 47.6 per cent less than in 1977-78, and it is with regret that the trust records the end of its rental-purchase scheme due to changes in funding made by the Commonwealth in the Housing Assistance Act, 1978.

Does the Minister concur with those remarks?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It is factually correct that under the previous Government the trust did not obtain funds in that category. I add that my remarks earlier in regard to that matter indicated that the scheme stopped during the term of the previous Government, and that is true.

Mr. SLATER: That is true, but I took the inference that it might have been the fault of the previous State

Government, so I brought to the attention of the Minister that that was not the case—the scheme was stopped because of a reduction in Commonwealth funds.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I did not say that; the honourable member may be a little over-sensitive.

Mr. HEMMINGS: I notice that there has been a reduction from \$2 000 to \$1 000 for the Ethnic Festivals Grants Advisory Committee; does the Government intend to downgrade that advisory committee?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The reduced provision envisages that the Ethnic Affairs Commission would have some responsibility in making recommendations to the Minister, and that it would also be involved in expenditure as a separate statutory body. There is no intention to downgrade the area of funding for ethnic festivals.

Mr. BANNON: Will the ethnic organisation grants be handled through the commission?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: This proposal seeks the same funds as those voted in the previous year. I would assume that the commission will consider the Ethnic Grants Advisory Committee in both membership and principle, and I cannot say what the commission will decide in that regard. I would go so far as to say that this committee system has worked very satisfactorily and, in principle, it would be supported by me.

Mr. BANNON: In the case of the Ethnic Grants Advisory Committee, none of the members is paid, presumably. Is that why there is an allocation for the Festivals Grants Advisory Committee, but not for the committee giving grants to organisations?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: This committee is not remunerated.

Mr. BANNON: Despite the successful operations there, the Minister is still unpersuaded that such a committee would be valuable in relation to local government assistance grants?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Local government assistance grants is in its infancy. It is evolving step by step, with caution, because we want to be extremely fair to applicants for funds. This might mean that eventually we will go over to an outside committee being involved in it, but at present we have not made a decision in regard to that point.

Mr. HEMMINGS: Can the Minister advise the Committee of the membership of the Ethnic Festivals Grants Advisory Committee?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The Chairman's name is Mr. Hank Siliakus. I have information that five other members are on the committee, but I do not have details of the membership.

Mr. HEMMINGS: It seems to me that, when we talk about ethnic groups, especially ethnic festivals, we are dealing with areas other than the United Kingdom. As I am a member of an ethnic group, can the Minister advise me if we wanted, say, to promote a festival of Morris dancing, whom we would approach for funding or advice through this committee?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The Morris dancers, as an association, should apply to the Ethnic Affairs Branch in the same way as the Cornish Festival committee applies to that branch, and every consideration would be given to such an application. I think perhaps some help could be given.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions, I declare the examination on the vote completed.

Arts, \$1 304 000

Chairman:

Mr. G. M. Gunn

Members:

Mr. E. S. Ashenden

Mr. J. C. Bannon

Mr. H. Becker

Mr. G. J. Crafter

Mr. R. F. Glazbrook

Mr. T. H. Hemmings

Mr. J. W. Olsen

Mr. K. H. Plunkett

Departmental Advisers:

Mr. L. Amadio, Acting Director, Department for the Arts.

Mr. R. Wright, Administrative Officer, Department for the Arts.

Mr. L. Mackenzie, Administrative Officer, South Australian Museum.

Mr. BANNON: What increase in cost does the Minister estimate that the formation of a separate Department for the Arts has meant in administrative and other facilities?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Hitherto, there has not been any increase in costs. The staff employed by the previous Government have been retained, and there has not been any expansion of that group. So, regarding outgoings, we are carrying on with the same organisation.

Mr. BANNON: Is there a Director of the department?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: No, there is an Acting Director, and that is Mr. Amadio.

Mr. BANNON: Why is there still only an Acting Director after 12 months?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: We have not rushed into the situation of appointing a Director. We have been very happy with Mr. Amadio and the arrangements concerning his office. At some stage we will be making a move regarding a Director, but we have not done that as yet.

Mr. BANNON: Do I understand from the answer that Mr. Amadio is not eligible for consideration as Director?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: No, the Leader must not assume that in any way from the reply I gave.

Mr. BANNON: It was the remark that the Minister is quite happy with Mr. Amadio at the moment, but he is only in an acting capacity. The position has not been called?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The position has not been called as yet.

Mr. BANNON: Does the position attract a higher classification and rate of pay than that of Director, Arts Development, the substantive position Mr. Amadio holds?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Yes; we have made some increase in Mr. Amadio's salary since he has held the office of Acting Director.

Mr. BANNON: At what level will the position of Director of the Department for the Arts be advertised?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: That will be subject to recommendations from the Public Service Board, but we have not made application to it as yet for an opinion on that matter.

Mr. BANNON: Can the Minister explain more specifically why a department has been created but, more than 12 months later, no move has been made to create the position of Director?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It is a general situation in which all officers within my portfolios have been working extremely hard and well. We have been able to make some changes, but as yet our full programming has not been completed in

regard to the changes which we invoked when we came to office. There is no specific reason why we have not as yet proceeded.

Mr. BANNON: When does the Minister intend to proceed?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I would hope that within the next 12 months we will have a Director appointed.

Mr. BANNON: Is it not a difficult situation for a department to develop a programme and establish itself as a new department when it has only an Acting Director in a position that has not even been created?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It has not presented any difficulties, either theoretically or in practice, to my knowledge. Mr. Amadio was the senior officer under the previous Administration, and he remains the senior officer under the new Administration. If any problems had arisen during the last nine months which had appeared to me to necessitate earlier action in regard to such a change, I certainly would have taken action to invoke that change, but everything has been going along most satisfactorily and I have not seen the need to give it the priority that I would have given it had I seen a need for it earlier.

Mr. BANNON: I think one interpretation that could be put on that is a sort of industrial exploitation, that it is possible to get people to work hard in acting capacities and use their services to the full without giving them the benefit of holding substantive positions, and that I do not think is worthy of any Administration.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I refute that implication completely. Some increase in remuneration has been given to Mr. Amadio. The reason for that increase was that I considered him worthy of a higher salary than he was being paid by the previous Government, and I took action to provide that higher salary for him.

Mr. BANNON: I am not in any way disputing that it is appropriate. Has there been a consequent upgrading in either permanent or acting capacity of other members of the division or the new department?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Yes, the officer immediately under Mr. Amadio has also had an increase in classification commensurate with the increased remuneration given to Mr. Amadio, to which I referred a moment ago.

Mr. HEMMINGS: The Minister said that he saw no priority for the appointment of a Director, that he thought that Mr. Amadio, as Acting Director, was quite sufficient, and that other members of the department were being paid additional salary. Can the Minister give some explanation of why there is no priority? If the Department of the Arts is to work to the best of its ability, surely a Director should be appointed at the earliest opportunity, and also a deputy?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I can appreciate the honourable member's taking that view, because he is looking at the matter theoretically. However, in practical terms, the new Administration came to Government and there was an organisation there, the personnel were working very well, and, with a minimum of fuss, we simply transferred those people into the first Department of the Arts that this State has had, formed by the present Government. In the early stages of settling down within the new Administration, I saw no reason to rush in and create the appointment of a Director. It obviously would have meant that applications would come from far and wide. It might have had some unsettling effect within the new department, not only at the top level but amongst the very loyal staff who worked there.

I think it was wise and prudent not to rush into change. I agree that in time a change must and will be made, but so far I have not taken any steps to introduce that change. I have already indicated that in due course I will, and in my

view there are no other circumstances or factors in regard to this matter that need explanation.

Mr. GLAZBROOK: In view of the objectives listed on page 352 of the yellow book, does the Arts Development Division have a section set aside for arts for youth, or is it mainly concerned with the adult population?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Of course, the arts cover youth as well as all other age groups and sections of the community. There is some concentration of youth performing art out at Carclew where plans are in train to further investigate special services for youth. It is more in that Carclew area that there is some specialised activity, but generally speaking the festivals that are directed towards youth are supported, and, as I say, in all areas youth is considered in relation to arts development.

Mr. BANNON: Regarding the Museum Division, can the Minister advise the Committee of the progress of the redevelopment study, which I assume refers to the exercise being carried out by Mr. Edwards? When does he expect to have the final reports, and so on?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I hope to have the final report, and the matter, as a result of that final report, before Cabinet in November.

Mr. BANNON: Has any provision been made this financial year for the initiation of proposals following that redevelopment study?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: There has been a great deal of planning other than that being done by Mr. Edwards. The Public Buildings Department, in particular, has given considerable time to planning arrangements and has been in very close liaison with Mr. Edwards and the various institutions affected in the proposed scheme of Mr. Edwards.

Mr. BANNON: Will the report be made public and, if so, when?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The treatment of the report is something about which I am unable to forecast or make decisions on. The first step that will be taken will be for Mr. Edwards to present his report to me. I have no doubt that at some stage the report will be made public, but I do not know whether it will be made public immediately or whether in the first instance Cabinet may make some decisions on it.

[Sitting suspended from 8.15 to 9 p.m.]

Mr. BANNON: What is the progress of the macerating plant at Bolivar?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I cannot advise the honourable member what progress has been made. Only \$19 000 has been expended in the year ended 30 June 1980 and, as the Leader can see, \$300 000 has been set aside for the 1980-81 year, so I imagine work has either just been started or is about to be commenced. Planning has been in train for about six months. At that time Cabinet approved the development, so satisfactory progress should be made in this current year. I find, from my information, that work is due to be completed in September 1981.

Mr. BANNON: In anticipation of Mr. Edwards's study, has any thought been given to providing any more resources to the museum, particularly staffing resources, for conservation activities in relation to the museum's collection?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: We are, in effect, awaiting Mr. Edwards's report as the foundation for change and reorganisation as well as reconstruction, and we do not believe that we should make our plans too quickly, because his final report is not yet in our hands. We have been cautious in regard to the question of new staff at the museum, but we are very determined that, once the report

is accepted, proposals within it will be implemented and, undoubtedly, they will involve some expansion in the general staffing.

Mr. BANNON: Are any special efforts being undertaken within the museum in relation to conservation of various artefacts? The problem is that the situation has drifted on for years (and the previous Government of which I was a member was involved in allowing that situation to deteriorate, because its priorities were elsewhere and sufficient funds were never put into the museum) and the Edwards Report will highlight, and some earlier references have highlighted, the need for some urgent action. If it is the Government's intention to wait until the Edwards Report is completed and a time table for development adopted, we may be losing valuable time. I wonder whether any contingency plan has been drawn up by the museum and whether the Government is willing to put resources into the museum, so that the urgent action that is necessary can be taken.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: As the Leader has said, the present situation has obtained for many years. It is still thought that the best policy is to wait for the Edwards Report and to treat the general area as a holding operation until we know exactly where we are going.

As the Leader knows, the staff are concerned, and are doing their best in the circumstances in regard to conservation. We believe that in his report, Mr. Edwards will place special emphasis on conservation, and facilities and staff for such conservation plans will be organised in accordance with his recommendations that are accepted. I am afraid that we are in that holding period at present. When we fully appreciate the problems facing the museum, we will fully appreciate that there remain some dangers in regard to the artefacts and exhibits and all the materials under the care and control of the museum, but we believe that the next few months, indeed the last six months or so, has been a period when we have had no alternative but simply to hold ground and wait for the proper advice for change which, I am sure, will come in the Edwards Report.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Olsen): There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the vote completed.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It has been suggested to me that perhaps the vote for Minister of Arts, Miscellaneous, which involves the officers at the table at present, might be taken next, and the Art Gallery vote be taken as a separate matter after the miscellaneous items on page 67 are considered by the Committee.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Is there any objection by the Committee? I am happy with whatever the Committee wants.

Mr. BANNON: I agree that we should leave some time for the Art Gallery.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: That being agreed by the Committee, we shall proceed to the next vote.

Minister of Arts, Miscellaneous, \$8 348 000

Chairman:

Mr. G. M. Gunn

Members:

Mr. E. S. Ashenden

Mr. J. C. Bannon

Mr. H. Becker

Mr. G. J. Crafter

Mr. R. E. Glazbrook

Mr. T. H. Hemmings
 Mr. J. W. Olsen
 Mr. K. H. Plunkett

Witness:

The Hon. C. M. Hill, Minister of Arts.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr. L. Amadio, Acting Director, Department for the Arts.

Mr. H. Bachmann, Chairman of the Arts Finance Advisory Committee.

Mr. K. Earle, General Manager, Adelaide Festival Centre Trust.

Mr. R. Wright, Administrative Officer, Department for the Arts.

Mr. BANNON: Referring to the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust, can the Minister give details as to the reason for and the results of the report he commissioned into the operations of the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The report has not yet been completed. I was hoping, when the committee was established, that its deliberations would have been concluded by this time, but it has been unable to complete its work, and I have agreed that it should take further time. I am hoping now to get the report in November.

Mr. BANNON: Will that report be made public?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: That will be a Cabinet decision, and I must take the matter to Cabinet for an answer to that question.

Mr. BANNON: I noted in the Auditor-General's Report (page 182) that, after the application of the Government grant against the operating deficit, there was a net deficit of \$224 000 in the 1979-80 financial year. There had been a deficit of \$117 000 in 1979. What is the estimated deficit for this year's operation of the Festival Centre Trust?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Is the Leader referring to the current year?

Mr. BANNON: The Government is providing in this year's Budget a lesser amount than that provided last year, an amount of \$2 000 000. I am drawing the Minister's attention to the net operating deficit of the trust in the previous two years and asking whether, in effect, that grant will be sufficient if there is another estimated deficit and, if so, what happens to those deficits?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The proposal this year to allocate the sum of \$2 000 000 to the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust from our Revenue Account must be compared with the figure of \$2 312 000 last year, which in effect means that there is a reduction of about \$300 000 in the Government's allocation from its Revenue Account this current year. We have not been dealing with the State Government's allocation for debt servicing, which is included in the figure of \$3 602 000 that was mentioned by the Leader. Therefore, the reduction in the grant of \$300 000 has been proposed because it is hoped that in this financial year the trust will have succeeded to a greater extent than it has succeeded in the past in regard to entrepreneurial activity, and I particularly refer to the results that we hope the trust will achieve in promoting the musical *Evita*. So, in anticipation of a better result this year than last year the Government thought that it was not unreasonable to ask the trust to try to continue its operation successfully with \$2 000 000 in lieu of the \$2 300 000 that it was granted last year.

Mr. BANNON: I would certainly make clear that I think that, in terms of the value that the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust returns to this State, any amount of money that is provided by the Government is extremely well

spent on behalf of our community. There are various other tests that could be applied to the value of that money in terms of tourist traffic generated and the general role that the trust plays in enriching the quality of life in South Australia.

The Minister referred to the entrepreneurial activities of the trust. Of course, these have been subjected to some criticism over the years, in fact, most stringently by the Minister himself when in Opposition. In the case of *Evita*, to which he has referred, the daily press, in particular the arts editor of the *Advertiser*, has made some very derogatory remarks about the nature of that investment and its possible value. Can the Minister give us some details on the predictions of the trust's entrepreneurial activities and, particularly, some details on what the *Evita* Australia Enterprise is yielding to the trust?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Of course, the results of *Evita* are by no means finished yet because it is still showing in Melbourne and is yet to go to Sydney, but from information that has been given to me, which is in very broad terms, the trust is very happy indeed with its involvement. As far as entrepreneurial activity generally is concerned, that is one of the matters which the committee of inquiry is investigating, and so the Government does not intend to take any special action in regard to the trust in its entrepreneurial activity until it has that report of the investigating committee.

Mr. BECKER: In most years, the Auditor-General has always reported that there still is a dispute between the trust and the builder, and he makes reference again to this on page 185 of his Report. I understand a considerable amount of money is involved in this dispute which involves A. V. Jennings Industries as the builder. Is the Minister able to say what stage this litigation has reached? It is unfair that this thing has gone on probably about seven or eight years.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: That matter is still being pursued. Action is being taken through the courts by the trust in an effort to bring it to a conclusion. We are now awaiting the date of the court hearing.

Mr. BECKER: That is what the previous Minister told me, I do not know how many years ago. I feel that this is one of those unfortunate situations that has gone on for far too long. I hope that the matter can be expedited once and for all.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: As I said, the trust is waiting for a hearing date. It can do no more at this time than wait.

Mr. BANNON: Regarding the splendid new convention facility opened at the beginning of this year, can the Minister advise us on the degree of use to which that facility is being put, and on its success or otherwise?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It is being used on the basis of 75 per cent usage during the first six months. The trust is very pleased, indeed, with that.

Mr. PLUNKETT: Why is such a small amount of \$171 000 being allocated to the Jam Factory Workshops?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The reason is that the Jam Factory has had reserves which have not been used. It was thought proper that some of those reserves should be utilised for its operational expenses, which we anticipate will be about, in aggregate, \$310 000, the same sum as last year. In other words, the Government will be funding \$171 000 and the Jam Factory will be utilising cash reserves, taking the total amount to \$310 000. That will keep the Jam Factory on approximately the same financial plane as it was on in the previous year.

Mr. HEMMINGS: Why is there no allocation this year for the Progressive Music Broadcasting Association?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The Progressive Music Broadcasting Association is the 5MMM station at

Norwood. The Government was pleased to give \$30 000 last year so that the station could continue its operation after its establishment in the previous year. There is no allocation for 1980-81 under that line. That is now included in the line "Community Radio", a little further up the page, where an amount of \$60 000 is allocated. All community radio will be considered under that allocation of \$60 000, and 5MMM will be one such station.

Mr. BANNON: Does that mean that the Progressive Music Broadcasting Association will receive a \$30 000 grant, or something of that order?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: No, it does not mean it will receive \$30 000. It means that it will be one of the FM stations which will be considered for aid, along with the others that will be applying.

Mr. BANNON: Last year, \$30 000 was allocated to the P.M.B.A. and \$20 000 was allocated to Ethnic Broadcasters; there is now a total allocation of \$60 000. What other applications are there likely to be for moneys?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It is likely that there will be an application from Salisbury, one from the Barossa Valley and one from the South-East, and there may be more, but those I have just mentioned will be on a smaller basis than 5MMM in size and also on a smaller basis than 5EBI, but I point out that these grants by the Government for community radio will not be continuing grants equal to grants that had been given during the early years of establishment of some of these stations.

In other words, the Government is satisfied to provide fairly large grants where there is a need for a station to be established so that the station can get on its feet, but, by means such as sponsorship and membership contributions, the Government is hopeful that there will be a considerable input of self-motivated funds by these stations, and I would hope that more emphasis can be placed in the area of Government aid to newer stations at their commencement. I make those comments which bring the suggested figure of \$60 000 a little better in proportion to a picture in which it may be thought that the same fairly large grants that are given in the early stage of establishment will automatically be continued.

Mr. HEMMINGS: I am a little disappointed at the Minister's answer, because if one looks at the allocation for community radio, one sees that the proposed sum is \$60 000. However, the Minister said that the Progressive Music Broadcasting Association would receive \$30 000, but he said that there is no allocation for this financial year in this regard under "Community Radio", so I can only see a 50 per cent cut in the allocation. Will the Minister explain exactly what this means in regard to Progressive Music and also the area that was covered under community radio?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: A sum of \$60 000 is proposed in 1980-81 for community radio. All those involved in community radio, if they seek Government aid, will make application this year, and a committee that is in the course of being established will consider those applications and will cut up the \$60 000 cake as it thinks fit. The only guidelines that I will lay down to that committee are those to which I quite properly referred a moment ago—that we are not a bottomless well out of which money can be drawn.

Where there is a need to establish community radio stations, the Government wants to help in that establishment. We may well carry the stations for a year or two after initial establishment with larger than normal grants, but we hope and trust that, once established and operating and after all teething troubles have been gone through, the stations will be able to do a great deal to help themselves, and at the same time we will consider giving

them further moneys.

Mr. HEMMINGS: I do not think it needs the Minister to tell the Committee that the Government is not a bottomless well.

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister is entitled to answer any question in any manner he wishes.

Mr. BANNON: He got a bit excited.

Mr. HEMMINGS: All I was repeating was the Minister's statement that this Government was not a bottomless well, and we accept that.

The CHAIRMAN: Repetition is out of order. I suggest that the honourable member ask any questions he may have.

Mr. HEMMINGS: I suggest that the Chairman is getting a little testy at present, as is the Minister.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I warn the honourable member that he must not reflect on the Chair; otherwise, he will not be here for the remainder of the proceedings.

Mr. HEMMINGS: Is the Minister saying that, in effect, there is a 50 per cent cut in community radio services by the Government?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The answer is "No".

Mr. BECKER: Will the Minister clarify the situation? The Progressive Music Broadcasting Association is a separate association that made a separate application to the Government for a once-only, one-off grant for the establishment of that radio station, which has nothing to do with community radio. It was to enable this group, which was successful in applying for a licence, to fulfil the requirements of that licence. What the member for Napier is carrying on with is misrepresenting the facts.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It was a separate grant for equipment, but that does not preclude the Progressive Music Broadcasting Association from applying for more money this year under the community radio allocation. The bodies to which I referred earlier are not the only ones involved in this area, because there is the Czechoslovakian Club Incorporated, the Over-60 Radio Association Incorporated, the Hills Community Radio Subcommittee, and the University of Adelaide Radio Station 5UV, which also come under the heading of community radio. Quite a number will be involved in this very exciting area of community radio.

Mr. BANNON: Will the Minister outline the current position of the Birdwood Mill Museum? I note that it did not need its allocation last year and none is proposed for this year. Is the museum, which is Government owned, in a credit situation as regards its revenue?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The financial situation at the Birdwood mill is that the mill has endeavoured to pay its own way, on the request of the Government. It has fallen a little behind financially and is in the course of seeking some further funds from the South Australian Development Corporation, which body is, in effect, financially backing the company which owns the mill, the company in which the Government has the two shareholders. The final approval for that extra funding has not yet been granted, and negotiations are in train at present generally to assist the mill financially and to help it a little further in its general structure.

Mr. BANNON: The State Opera of South Australia is recorded (page 67) as having required a special extra allocation in the last financial year and is to receive a further increase this year. Can the Minister say what happened last year?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: There was \$79 000 over expenditure, caused by an indexation adjustment of \$34 000, and an additional allocation for a \$45 000 deficit. That deficit was incurred after the State Opera's cash reserves had become depleted, largely through some

overspending on the festival production of *Death in Venice*.

Mr. BANNON: What is the basis of this year's grant of \$885 000?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: That is an increase of \$111 000 over the previous year, and it is provided to meet the necessary operating expenses for the proposed programme of State Opera for this year. The company does not have the reserves which could be utilised to reduce the size of the grant, and the grant to the Opera Company has been assessed by the Arts Finance Advisory Committee, under the chairmanship of Mr. Bachmann.

Mr. BANNON: Referring to the Auditor-General's Report (pages 366 to 369), dealing with the State Opera, reference is made to an operating deficit of \$1 396 000. I take it that that includes the capital cost, depreciation, and so on, of the Opera Theatre itself. Is that a debit against the company?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Yes.

Mr. BANNON: But, as I understand it, the Opera Theatre, although the home of the Opera Company, is used for other productions, and is a venue that is generally available both to entrepreneurs and the Festival Centre Trust?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The Opera Company does benefit by the rentals when the theatre is leased out for other ventures. That is shown near the top of page 366—theatre hire and associated income for the past year was \$110 120.

Mr. BANNON: In terms of looking at the funding of the Opera Company, is that theatre aspect taken into account?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The interest debt on the servicing of the capital is not taken into account in the operating figures.

Mr. BANNON: So it could be quite misleading for anyone to look simply at the Auditor-General's Report, and attempt from that to gather the costs of the Opera Company?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Yes, to that extent that could be so.

Mr. HEMMINGS: Referring to the restoration of the Museum Archives, there is a drop in the proposed expenditure from \$39 332 to \$10 000 in 1980-81. Can the Minister say why that is so?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The project is nearly completed, and the \$10 000 is simply to take care of the final stages of completion.

The CHAIRMAN: I point out that the Committee has 20 minutes to deal with "Art Gallery". There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the vote completed.

Art Gallery, \$1 134 000

Chairman:

Mr. G. M. Gunn

Members:

Mr. E. S. Ashenden

Mr. J. C. Bannon

Mr. H. Becker

Mr. G. J. Crafter

Mr. R. E. Glazbrook

Mr. T. H. Hemmings

Mr. J. W. Olsen

Mr. K. H. Plunkett

Witness:

The Hon. C. M. Hill, Minister of Arts.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr. D. Thomas, Director, Art Gallery.

Mr. R. Appleyard, Deputy Director, Art Gallery.

Mr. G. Wilson, Administrative Officer, Art Gallery.

Mr. BANNON: Has the Government considered making the Art Gallery Department a division of the Department for the Arts?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: We are in the process of doing some preliminary investigation into that possibility.

Mr. BANNON: What effect will that have on the gradings and levels of the Art Gallery Department staff, from the Director downwards?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: We have not reached the stage of serious consideration of the whole issue. Therefore, we certainly have not gone into detail like that in our deliberations.

Mr. BANNON: In relation to the administration of the Art Gallery, what has happened to the various proposals for staff participation in Art Gallery affairs that were well under way at the time of the change of Government last year?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I have not involved myself deeply in staff matters of this nature, because I do not think it is my job to do so. I understand that the staff council operates, and I am in a situation whereby, if any proposals need to come to me as Minister, then I will be pleased to receive those and give full consideration to them. I do not recall having been contacted by the staff council at any stage.

I can recall that there were some deliberations when Parliament increased the number of members on the board, but since that time the matter of employee participation at the gallery has not been raised, as I recall, with me. I have certainly received no complaints or heard of any complaints by staff in regard to this general area. I heard that, at one stage, whereas a representative of staff had been invited to sit in at board meetings, the board some months ago gave consideration to whether that situation was beneficial to the staff and to the board. I am informed that the board has decided to continue the practice of alternating staff who sit in at board meetings until such time as all members of the staff who are eligible for such involvement have had the opportunity to sit in at board level.

Mr. BANNON: At any one time, the Art Gallery has a large number of paintings effectively on loan to public institutions and Minister's offices, etc. Has an inventory been prepared of those works of art and some assessment made of whether they are hung and housed properly with a view to their preservation?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The answer is "Yes".

Mr. BANNON: Have moves been made by the Government, as a matter of policy, to replace such original works of art with other suitable decorations for such offices?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The Director has made representations to me about this matter because it has concerned him, and I quite appreciate his concern. I have not, as yet, been able to find a satisfactory solution to the matter because, quite obviously, some of these paintings reside in places from which their removal and replacement with prints would not be particularly easy. One such place is Government House, and I mention that with all due respect.

I hope that, with the passing of time, a solution to the matter can be found, because I believe that we all agree that, if any of these paintings are being damaged because

they hang in places other than the gallery, this situation must be stopped. I am certainly not turning my back on the matter, but it cannot be brought to fruition by rushing the issue. I hope that some solution can be found whereby at least some of these paintings can be returned to the gallery and the people who hang them on their walls at present in Government buildings will be satisfied with the alternatives that have been suggested, and those alternatives are high quality prints.

Mr. BANNON: The question of security of such works of art is also involved, although, fortunately, in considering the taste of some of those who borrow such works, there is not a great demand for some of the works. Is a regular inspection and check made of the works on loan to ensure that they do not disappear?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Yes, a regular check is carried out.

Mr. BANNON: Can the Minister say what decorations he has in his office? Does he have paintings on loan from the gallery?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: No, except that in my office in Parliament House are two paintings that were there when I became a Minister and took over the office.

Mr. BANNON: Is the Minister taking any steps to return those to the gallery?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I have not as yet.

The CHAIRMAN: I think that the Leader would probably have to confer with the Joint House Committee on this matter.

Mr. BANNON: I do not think so, Mr. Chairman. Those paintings are the property and responsibility of the gallery board, and not of the Joint House Committee. I suggest that the Minister take more vigorous action in this area. Some special facility should be made available, through the gallery, for replacement works of art. At present, about the only things one can obtain from the gallery are posters.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The Government has acted in that matter. We are in the process of transferring into the ownership of the gallery a collection of paintings that were assembled in regard to the Monarto project. There are 43 paintings, which were owned by the Monarto Commission, and the Government has agreed that these shall be transferred to the gallery. The Government also required that six of them should remain at Murray Bridge, because of the closeness of Murray Bridge to Monarto, but the balance will be utilised for the very purpose to which the Leader has referred, namely, to replace some of the other paintings owned by the gallery which are out on loan at present.

Mr. BANNON: There is also the matter of purchase of works of art for public places, the allocation for which has remained the same for some time. I notice that the allocation has been transferred from the Art Gallery Department's lines to the miscellaneous lines. Does that mean that the gallery is no longer responsible for that programme?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: No; it simply means that there will be a wider input into the proposals for works of art in public places. We intend to involve the gallery in the matter of selection and choice and in advising on this matter; in other words, there will be a wider spread of responsibility than has occurred previously.

Mr. BANNON: I suggest to the Minister that the allocation is now, by dint of inflation, virtually only enough for one or two major items. If that is the intention, specially commissioned items would certainly swallow that sum. Has the Government considered increasing that amount?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: No, not at this stage. I am of the view that it might well be that in some years several small

items might be selected rather than the larger more expensive ones. Again, that would mean a wider variety and spread of such works throughout the community generally; nevertheless, that does not mean that at some later date, when we get a programme working with some continuity, if there is obviously a need to increase that allocation, the Government will not give full consideration to it then.

Mr. BANNON: I notice from page 46 of the Auditor-General's Report that the Art Gallery Bookshop's operations were in deficit to the extent of about \$10 000 last financial year. Receipts for bookshop sales amounted to \$56 840, whereas bookshop expenses amounted to \$66 932. I would have thought that that should be a significant revenue item for the Art Gallery. Can the Minister or the Director explain the operation of the bookshop, its current financial position, and prospects?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The bookshop sale receipts are shown further up the page, \$56 840, and the bookshop expenses, shown under "Payments", total \$66 932. I understand that this was the first full year of the new bookshop's being established at the gallery, and there was a considerable outlay for new stock. That is the principal reason why the figures are not more attractive from a business viewpoint.

Mr. BANNON: Taking into account the stock value, what sort of trading operation did the bookshop show in the first year?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It has made a profit of \$5 000 in the first six months of operation to 30 June.

Mr. CRAFTER: I refer to the Jam Factory Workshops, and the substantial cut in the grant—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! That question has been asked earlier by the honourable member's colleague. It comes under "Miscellaneous", and we are now dealing with the Art Gallery.

Mr. BECKER: On page 45 of his report for 1980, the Auditor-General states:

The checking of paintings, sculpture and furniture (referred to in last year's report) has been completed and the checking of coin, medal, and stamp collections is in progress.

In his report for the year ended 30 June 1977, the Auditor-General mentioned, in relation to collection stock checks:

During the year, it was necessary to refer to the board the fact that several collections had not been physically checked in accordance with the stocktaking policy. In addition, non-gold coins and medals have yet to be catalogued.

One of my colleagues asked many questions relating to the coin collection, and made allegations regarding the disposal of certain coins. As a philatelist, I am more interested in the stamp collection aspect. What is the policy of the Art Gallery in relation to regular checking or stocktaking and valuation of this side of its operation?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The policy is that such checking will always be completed quite properly by the Art Gallery if it has sufficient staff to do it. Previously, it has been a question of funding. I quite appreciate the honourable member's asking these questions and referring back to previous Auditor-General's Reports. It has been of great concern to the Director and his staff at the Art Gallery that this matter has been recurring in the Auditor-General's Reports. If the gallery does not have the staff, it cannot do everything, and this has been the problem. However, in the latest Auditor-General's Report, the honourable member will see that the checking of paintings, sculpture and furniture, referred to in last year's report, has been completed, and that the checking of coin, medal, and stamp collections is in progress. The reason for the change is that the Government was able to allocate staff to the Art Gallery to get on with the job. Some of the

work has been completed, as the Auditor-General reports, and the other activity is under control. I hope that, when the next Auditor-General's Report comes out, because staff are being allocated now for the work, that item will no longer be referred to in the report.

Mr. BANNON: The line "Purchase of works of art" has remained unchanged. It has declining value. In what way has the Art Gallery attempted to compensate for that declining revenue?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: First, in the allocation for the previous year the Government gave a considerably increased percentage vote under this line. That was soon after the Government came into office. Now we have maintained that figure on this occasion and, at the same time, we are prepared to allocate \$100 000 to the new Art Gallery foundation, which is to be established for the purposes of the centenary of the gallery, and the Government thought it was not unreasonable to maintain

the higher figure that was granted last year and to hold that figure without any increase. At the same time, the Government gave \$100 000 for the foundation.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The time has come for the Committee to adjourn. Before doing so, I point out that tomorrow and Thursday the Committee will be chaired by the honourable member for Rocky River, as I am going to Alice Springs to the opening of the railway line. My place will be taken on the Committee by the honourable member for Mallee. I thank the Minister for his attendance, and also those officers who have accompanied him.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10.1 p.m. the Committee adjourned until Wednesday 8 October at 11 a.m.