

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 14 October 1981

## ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A

**Chairman:**

Mr G. M. Gunn

**Members:**

Mr R. K. Abbott  
 Mr Lynn Arnold  
 Mr E. S. Ashenden  
 Mr R. E. Glazbrook  
 Mr K. C. Hamilton  
 Mr J. W. Olsen  
 Mr I. Schmidt  
 Mr J. P. Trainer

*The Committee met at 11 a.m.*

**The CHAIRMAN:** Does the Committee wish to allocate the time available today?

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I think that we would probably want to reach the Miscellaneous lines at the beginning of the after dinner session, commencing at 7.30 p.m., so that on this side we would envisage that the remainder of the lines would take between now and 6 p.m.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Is that the Miscellaneous Education line, or Miscellaneous Further Education?

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** Miscellaneous is separate from Education and Further Education. It is the third line.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The proposed sequence of lines for consideration by the Committee was as follows: Education Department (I have my departmental officers here); Department of Further Education; and then the four main areas, Childhood Services Council, Tertiary Education Authority, Office of Aboriginal Affairs, and Teaching Housing Authority, all of which are contained in the Miscellaneous lines.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I take it that Government members have no objection to that course. The procedure adopted by the Committee is that, at the beginning of each vote, I invite members to make a brief introductory statement. I shall also give the Minister that opportunity if he so desires. Does the member for Salisbury wish to make a brief submission to the Committee?

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** Yes.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I shall be granting the member for Rocky River the same opportunity, if he wishes.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** The strategy of the Opposition today is to elicit as much information as we can from the Minister about present policies of the Government outlined in the Budget, and to determine exactly where any such priorities have been altered and where staff reductions are envisaged. We have a great number of questions. Indeed, we have nearly 50 brackets of questions to ask, and it will not be our intention to explain them at great length, other than to provide the basic information necessary to the Minister. We hope that the Minister and Government members will pursue the same strategy, so that we can receive as much information as possible.

We appreciate that much of the information might not be able to be provided today and will have to be incorporated in *Hansard* at a later date. By and large, we are not opposed to that, because we believe that we may get more explicit information, but we ask that the information on this occasion be provided somewhat earlier than was the case with last year's Estimates Committees, when questions raised by us did not elicit an answer from the Minister until

4 June this year. We want this information for ongoing consideration of the Budget, and we feel that a period of four weeks would be the maximum. However, we would appreciate the Minister's advice on that.

The other feature that we will be wanting to have explanations from the Minister on relates to the areas in which he feels that the Liberal Party's election promises at the last election have been contained in the present Budget. I take it from your comments, Mr Chairman, that you will invite comments on each major line. Is that correct?

**The CHAIRMAN:** On each vote.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I have other comments to make at a later stage, but that is all I want to say now.

**Mr OLSEN:** We see the Estimates Committees as an opportunity to question the Minister at the table specifically on the expenditure lines placed before the Committee, and not so much as an opportunity to discuss the policy or philosophy basis behind the decisions made by the Government. Therefore, we hope that the opportunity will be used specifically to look at the lines contained in the Budget papers and in the Estimates of Payments from pages 52 to 55.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Before calling on the Minister, I point out that during answers to questions the Minister may state that he will obtain information and at a later date supply it to the Committee. That information should be in a form suitable for incorporation in *Hansard*. Does the Minister wish to make any introductory comments before I invite questions?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Certainly, Mr Chairman. First, I am pleased to receive the assurance that the Committee intends to work as was originally proposed by the Premier when he brought in this remarkable and innovative programme performance budgeting method of analysing the State's resources and the allocation of those resources. I believe that my departmental officers will be extremely well equipped to handle the vast majority of questions that are raised in the course of the day, and I am hopeful that not very many questions will have to be attended to at a later date. I believe it would be in order for me to give the assurance that, if anything is hanging over from today, it will be promptly attended to by the department and the data will be available for inclusion in *Hansard* subsequently, much earlier than was the case last year.

There was certainly one issue that I intended to raise, and that was the fact that the Programme Estimates on pages 148 and 150 (particularly page 148) contain data that had been worked out on a differential basis from the preceding two years. I believe that by this time the Committee will have been given the additional information on the Parliamentary Estimates Committee sheet, which refers quite specifically to the Programme Estimates, 1981-1982, Minister of Education, Education Department. I do not propose to read out that information to that Committee. Copies will be made available for *Hansard*. I point out that the release of this sheet, as a belated entry to the Budget papers, is an effort on the part of the Minister to clarify the staffing proposals for the Education Department as shown on pages 148 and 150 of volume I of the Programme Estimates for 1981-82.

I am quite sure that honourable members will be aware that the Treasurer, in his summary of the major proposals during his 1981-82 State Budget address, stated that enrolments in Government schools are expected to decline by at least a further 4 750 during 1982, on top of the fall of 22 000 in the past five years, and to maintain the present pupil/teacher ratios, this would be consistent with a reduction of 250 classroom teachers. In addition, he said that there will be a reduction of 45 in the number of seconded and advisory teachers achieved in central office and not in

the classroom, and a reduction of 20 in the number of release time scholarships offered. Ancillary staff will be reduced by 60 in accordance with the existing formula, and public servants employed in the Education Department will be cut by 23.

The programme performance budget papers on page 150 demonstrate these figures in the following ways. On page 150, under the heading 'Employment—average of full-time equivalents' for total programmes, the 1980-81 outcome figure is 18 469.3 and the 1981-82 proposed figure of 18 095.3 (at the bottom of the first column, total programmes, the second and third columns) shows a difference of 374. In the support service category, which is the next bracket of figures below those subtotals, the difference between 537.7 for 1980-81 outcome and 513.7 for 1981-82 proposed is 24, with a total reduction of 398 shown by the figures at the base of the page, being the difference between 19 007 and 18 609. They are the figures in the bottom two right-hand columns.

This total of 398 equates with the Treasurer's statement of 250 classroom teachers, 45 seconded and advisory teachers, 20 release-time scholarships, plus 60 ancillary staff, together with 23 public servants. Finally, the figures expressing the change on the basis of 30 June actuals for 1980-81 papers to an averaging in this year have not allowed a simple comparison to be made. I ask members to turn back to page 148 and to refer to the table on the bottom right-hand corner of page 148. It has not allowed a simple comparison to be made between the table on page 148 and the figures on page 150. The significant difference is a very wide fluctuation of teaching staff over the financial year of approximately 1 200 due to the employment of temporary teachers engaged on contracts. I point out to members that it is perfectly obvious when looking at the figures of June 1980, June 1981 and June 1982 that there is a substantially different decline, a much larger decline in staffing than is indicated on page 150. The reason for that is that during the preceding two years, that is at June 1980 and June 1981, the figures were taken at 30 June, actual figures, and they included the month of June, which has very nearly the highest teaching population in this State, plus a loading of relief staff who are replacing those who are still on the pay roll but who are on long service leave. So, these earlier figures of June 1980 and June 1981 would have been inflated upwards considerably above the actual figures.

The Public Service Board and the Treasury have decided that a more realistic figure for this year would be to average the staffing figures, and I believe that the average is taken on the February figures which of course are much lower than June-weighted figures, plus there is some weighting for those people who are on long service leave. So, they are not the same figures that we are looking at for comparative purposes; two different methods of calculation have been employed. The figures on page 150 are those to which the Premier was referring, and the actual reductions intended are accurate on page 150. I hope that that dispels any doubts that members may have had when they looked at the two different pages and did their own analysis.

Education, \$411 450 000

**Witness:**

The Hon. H. Allison, Minister of Education and Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

**Departmental Advisers:**

Mr J. R. Steinle, Director-General of Education, Education Department.

Dr P. I. Tillett, Deputy Director-General of Education (Resources), Education Department.

Mr G. W. Bleckly, Chief Finance Officer, Education Department.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination and I ask members whether they have any questions. To make proceedings easier, perhaps we should work through the individual headings commencing on page 52 of the Estimates of Payments, such as 'Office of Minister', for which there may be a number of questions. We shall deal with those questions and then move on to 'Director-General's Office' and to 'Personnel Directorate' and so on, if it is the wish of the Committee.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** My first question relates to the administrative and clerical staff of the Minister's office and of the office of the Ministry of Education. The office of the Ministry of Education is a new office established this year. Will the Minister outline the functions of that office; and what support role it has, first, to the Minister, and secondly, to the Education Department in general?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The establishment of the office of the Ministry of Education, which is headed by Mr Barry Grear, the Director, was really an outcome of the first report on the first three terms of reference by the Keeves Committee of Inquiry. Members may recall perusing that document in great detail, I am quite sure, and they would recall that the original intention of the Keeves Committee of Inquiry was that a much more substantial department should be created alongside the Ministry, and that, in fact, it would be accompanied not only by that nucleus, the Minister's office, but also by a large research department. We decided against that recommendation for a variety of reasons, not the least of which being that we felt that a large department being established in such a way alongside the Minister's office was inappropriate. So, in order to assist the Minister in liaising between the large number of organisations other than the Education and Further Education Departments, the Office of the Ministry would be established.

One of the first tasks of the Ministry is to begin obtaining information from other organisations relevant to the Keeves Committee of Inquiry recommendations, and also to assist the Minister ultimately in implementing the various recommendations which are acceptable from the Keeves Committee of Inquiry. Of course, that inquiry is still going on, and the major thrusts into curricula areas still have to be reported at the end of the year. So the inquiry is still incomplete. Nevertheless, the department has been working very solidly towards getting a consensus or, if the opinions are not consensus opinions, at least a variety of opinions, as to the implications and the practicability of the Keeves recommendations. No doubt, the work of the Minister's department will be much more obvious over the ensuing months.

The office of the Minister of Education now, therefore, comprises two sections. Under the Public Service Act I have a personal secretary, Mr Cliff Burleigh, who is an AO3. I have a clerical officer, John Eitel, who is a CO4; a clerical officer, Ms Mead, who is a CO2; a steno secretary, Ms Willsden, who is a grade 4 steno secretary; a clerical officer, Ms Carruthers, who is a CO-1D; a clerical officer, Mr Mark Keough, at the same level; and a clerical officer, Ms Whitford, who is at the same level again.

In Ministerial appointments, I have Lynton Crosby, who is a Ministerial assistant, and a press secretary, Elizabeth Blieschke. The new office of the Ministry of Education comprises one executive director, Barry Grear, at EO4

level; one deputy executive director, Doug Shaw, at EO2 level; an administrative officer, John Sangster, at AO2 level; a clerical officer yet to be appointed at CO2 level; and a steno secretary, Ms Wheadon, at MN2. Incidentally, the positions for the office of Minister of Education are not new ones, but the positions for the office of the Ministry of Education were created at the expense of other positions which were forfeited within the Education Department; they are not additional appointments.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I understand that a feasibility study has been called for with regard to the possible amalgamation of the Education Department with the Further Education Department and that that has an impact on the decision up to date not to appoint a Deputy Director-General for the Further Education Department. Is it envisaged in the vote here that any extra money is provided to the Deputy Director-General of Education to possibly take into account the extra work load which may result from the feasibility study if the amalgamation goes ahead?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I think there is a false assumption inherent in what the member for Salisbury says, and I will clear that up first. The feasibility study is in fact not into the possibility of amalgamation of the two departments, but it is mainly into the question of co-operation and co-ordination, and certainly there will be a close examination of the possibility of using single facilities for a range of different operations which are carried out at present quite separately by the two departments.

I cannot predict the outcome of that inquiry, but I think it must be obvious to all members of the Committee that this is a common sense approach and, in fact, the Chairman of the Keeves Committee of Inquiry drew the Government's attention to this possibility when he brought down the report on the first three terms of reference. Among the possible areas where co-operation might be achieved is certainly personnel in the accounting section, possibly in the planning of buildings; and the work which goes on in the Education and Further Education Departments may be co-ordinated to some extent. I suppose that inherent in an inquiry of this nature is the fact that there may be some rationalisation by better use of existing manpower, and possibly the ultimate loss of some of that manpower by attrition—certainly not by dismissal.

The possibility is certainly nothing that I can speculate upon for the time being, because it may be that amalgamation of the functions of one department with the other may still mean that the same work is simply being done in one location but that the volume of work requires the same staff. That is the other possibility. I am not going to try to pre-empt the findings of that committee. I simply say that it is going on and that it is a commonsense approach to see whether any amalgamation at departmental level might be achieved. The honourable member mentioned the fact, and rightly so, that there has been only one Acting Deputy Director-General of Further Education in John Mayfield for quite some time. Mr Mayfield left for some important O.E.C.D. work some months ago, but has returned. While he was away his temporary appointment was terminated. We have appointed another Acting Deputy Director-General of Further Education in Mr Lyall Fricker, who carries considerable expertise, both at State and Federal levels, in tertiary education. He is filling that position for the time being. We anticipate that decisions will be made in the not too distant future, but in the meantime we will wait for this report.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I understood the Minister to say in his first comments that there will be no amalgamation of the two departments, that it is merely the rationalisation of the use of resources and that the committee is not charged with the brief of amalgamating those departments,

but rather with the efficient use of facilities by those two departments.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Yes. Incidentally, I probably became more than a little incensed at the suggestion in the press that there was yet another leaked document which had come off of a State truck. In fact, the document was not leaked in any way: it was simply a statement that had been made by the Minister to the unions involved, the Institute of Teachers, Public Service Association and the Principals or Directors of colleges of further education. It was a straight-forward statement saying precisely what this committee was about. Of course, it is a Public Service Board committee, it has the Minister's blessing, and it has the Keeves Committee of Inquiry recommendation behind it; so to suggest that the document was leaked is ignoring the fact that it was a straight-forward informative statement that was made to interested parties. I have no objection to anyone knowing what it was about.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** The Minister has reiterated the proposal to reduce the teaching commitment within the Education Department by some 250 positions. I want to know how it is envisaged that those positions will be distributed throughout the junior primary, primary and secondary areas. I preface my question with a comment that was made in the Schools Commission triennial report on page 90, as follows:

Another misleading aspect of the calculation presented above—and that is their calculation of staff needs for numbers—is the fact that enrolment reductions and increases are not distributed in a way which facilitates savings of teachers.

The concept of that is that you do not end up with discrete classes dropping out of the system because of reductions in numbers. Those reductions in numbers go right across the board. I want to know where it is envisaged that that 250 reductions will take place and whether it will affect the efficient operation of the schools involved.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The honourable member seems to have ignored one salient point, namely, that the formula being used for staffing schools has not varied from the formula that has been used for some time, and never has that formula acknowledged the discrete formation of certain classes. For many years (I think since 1970, when the freedom in authority letter was sent out), school principals, councils and senior staff have had considerable rights in allocating the staff and establishing their duties within classrooms. So there are major differences, even in two relatively close metropolitan schools, for example, where one may have as many as 63 individual classes at Matriculation level and another school not too far away may have as many as nine or 10 matriculation classes.

The decision to broaden or narrow the scope of subject offerings is essentially a school-based decision and, irrespective of whether the numbers in education are increasing or decreasing at a rapid rate, there is no way in which the Director-General or the Minister would be telling schools to allocate certain numbers of students to certain classes. So I suggest that the issue has existed for a long time. Obviously we may sympathise with a school such as one metropolitan high school that had 500 students in 1970, with the number going to 1 500 in 1975, and coming back again to 500 in 1980.

I can imagine that, in their expansionary years, schools would have been finding life fairly easy but, with declining student numbers, they would have found it much harder to manage, with smaller professional and ancillary staff, to cope with what was virtually a school that had been built for 1 200 to 1 500 students. That problem would exist and be compounded across the State, but it is not a problem of the Minister's making. It is simply that not enough young-

ters are born in the State. We have declining student populations, plus a new factor introduced in 1981 of a further loss of about 2 300 youngsters to the independent schools.

I ask members to bear in mind that that problem has always been addressed at school level, not at Director-General level. The Committee may be interested to know that one of the findings of the Keeves Committee of Inquiry (I think it came out in a document compiled by one of the departmental officers, and I think it is known as the Morgan Report within the Keeves Report) showed that the entire range of secondary schools in South Australia was over-staffed according to the base establishment formula. They had more staff than that basic entitlement, so there has not been any extensive or deliberate pruning, or at least there had not been when the Morgan Report came out. I find that interesting, and the Committee may be interested to know that it concerned metropolitan high schools.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** The Minister implies, apparently, that it is not at the Director-General level but at the school level that these changes are initiated, yet he would be aware, as I am, of a number of schools having teaching positions that are not being filled, as a result of declining numbers, and it is clearly not a decision made at school level that replacements are not being provided. To give an indication of how the Schools Commission statement comes out in the wash, I read an extract from a letter that the Minister and I have received, as follows:

Although we are aware that our numbers are, at present, below the predicted level, these numbers fluctuate constantly due to the presence of a women's shelter in the area.

Leaving this year 7 class without a teacher means that a specialist P.E. teacher, at present taking non-contact time in all classes, has had to abandon his two-year sports schedule in order to take over the class. This will cause a major disruption and reduce preparation and marking time for all teachers. The only other feasible alternative would have been to distribute the year 7 class among the other years 7 and 6, thus bringing class numbers to over 30, to the educational detriment of all the children concerned.

That is a school level decision as to how they organise that within their own school, but the decision to take away the staff member was a departmental decision.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** That is so, but it is a departmental decision based purely on an existing formula, which was the formula I inherited. We have not changed that, either upwards or downwards. In cases where we establish a school and give it Matriculation status (I think Kadina might have been the last one) we are faced with the problem of a relatively small school with a small number of specialist staff, and the long-term prospect for a school of that nature is that it steadily increases in size, very much like the metropolitan one I quoted, which went from 500 to 1 500 and back to 500. Where schools are declining in population, this happens for a variety of reasons, because now that zoning is off people are making a choice and voting with their feet, in some cases, saying that they prefer one school as against another. Where these decisions are made, the number of students at a school dictates the number of staff. If a school is losing students, obviously it will have a narrower range of specialist teachers. It is obvious that, if we have a narrower range of specialist teachers, the teachers who are there are either asked to do more, if the great diversity of subject choices is to be maintained, or it becomes a school-based decision to reduce that number of subject choices.

This can be a very difficult decision to make if the numbers drop extremely quickly, as they have done in some metropolitan schools. When that happens, students who have embarked on one course of study towards Matriculation may be threatened at school level with the withdrawal of that course. This is not new. I can recall its having

happened a number of times in my teaching experience, even in an expanding school, where courses were varied, but it becomes more acute with rapidly declining numbers.

That is a problem facing metropolitan Adelaide. Country South Australia still finds itself, in most of the major country centres, in a slightly expansionary or at worst a stable situation. In some more remote country areas, there are declining numbers where people are moving to the metropolitan area, and in the metropolitan area we have had a decline. I can offer a little reassurance to members of the Committee, in that the Bureau of Census and Statistics figures for the past two quarters have shown South Australia in the black as far as population is concerned. It appears that after a long period, from 1975 in fact, when quarter after quarter showed a loss of population, we have in the past two quarters apparently turned a corner and are in the black. We show a net gain. This, coupled with the fact that one South Australian hospital recorded a much higher number of births, may be another factor which augurs well for the future of South Australian education as far as numbers are concerned, although that is in the longer term.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** The Minister has outlined that the present formula for staffing is being maintained, and that that formula has existed for some time. At the last State election, the Liberal Party went to the electorate, and one of its education promises was, as a matter of some priority, to reduce class sizes in the primary area, particularly in the junior primary area. That statement implies a change in the staffing formula, and yet we are told that the staffing formula has not been changed. Can the Minister explain why that has not been achieved in this Budget? If it is not proposed in this Budget to make those reductions, when is it proposed that they should be made?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The honourable member is referring to the policy statements of 1977 and 1979, for both of which I was largely responsible. They were predicated on the then financial situation across Australia. I think the honourable member will have to realise, as will other members of the Committee, that the State Government is like a large number of people in South Australia. I refer to those who are living in what we call the mortgage belt, for example, around the outer suburbs of Adelaide, who are having more trouble in meeting expenses. The State Government, like all other Governments, is now faced with the problem of having to pay full tote odds for the money it borrows. There is no cheap money. It borrows from savings banks or other organisations at full rates.

The present financial situation for South Australia has been made more difficult (I am sure that this point has been made by other Ministers), so that the best of intentions from the Party policy of 1979 has been to some extent stymied by those circumstances which have impinged upon the State Budget in the past two years. I refer to one or two of the issues. From 1975 onwards—and I referred to this a few moments ago—South Australia suffered quite a massive population decline. This naturally is followed by a diminution of wage earners and therefore by a reduction of money which is naturally and quite fairly due to South Australia by way of tax reimbursements from the Federal Government. That is a net loss to the State.

In addition to that reduction, we have had a reduction in birth rates. This is a Western world syndrome, nothing unique to South Australia. Our populations have declined, quite apart from that migration. During the past two years, the Federal Government has seen fit to further its policy of making available that single basket of money that is available across Australia. It has decided to make it available to the private sector. I can see the honourable member tapping his fingers on the back of the seat, but it is still

the truth. The private sector is being encouraged to borrow from that money which is available within Australia, and State Governments, of whatever political flavour, are—

**Mr TRAINER:** Are you just saying that your commitments are now inoperative?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Not at all. I am explaining how the situation has changed for the honourable member as well as for the Minister. The simple truth is that South Australia has less recurrent and capital moneys available this year. It is a very difficult year. The member for Salisbury said that he would be inquiring how many election promises the Government has met. I shall be pleased to list those, although it might be *ad nauseam*, because we have covered quite a lot of them. I will be pleased to list the promises that the Government has met, but this is one area, the key area in financial expenditure, which has been only minimally met. If any major criticism is forthcoming from members of the Committee, let me say that the Schools Commission figures show South Australia to have come from an inferior position in school staffing (South Australia having been about third or fourth for primary and secondary school ratios) to first position in primary staffing last year and equal first with Victoria in secondary staffing. I have deliberately omitted the two States which are not Parliamentarily governed, because Federal funds create an artificial situation there. I refer to the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory.

Of the Parliamentarily governed states for that time, South Australia came from behind to a leading position, so we have made improvements compared to the rest of Australia. Of course, the Committee would also realise that for every single teacher appointed to the primary schools (and we have several hundred primary schools), each 100 staff would involve about \$1 500 000 additional expenditure. The base figure for a qualified staff member, for example, in South Australia now is about \$14 300. That is an approximation, but it is not far away. That is the starting figure for a staff member. As well, there are hidden costs by way of the funds that are made available for long service leave and a range of other benefits. So, 100 additional staff would cost at least \$1 500 000. We have tried to achieve as many of the election promises as we possibly could. There are still some areas that will have to wait for an improvement in the economic climate across Australia.

**The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr Glazbrook):** The honourable member for Rocky River.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** Mr Chairman, I am still on my bracket of questions.

**The ACTING CHAIRMAN:** I remind honourable members that it is the practice of the Committee that, where an honourable member other than the honourable member who has been asking questions indicates to the Chair that he wishes to ask a question, questions are to be asked in brackets of three. The member for Salisbury has asked three questions and, therefore, I call on the member for Rocky River. The honourable member will have the opportunity to ask further questions.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** A point of order, Mr Acting Chairman. I believe that, in regard to Personnel Directorate, I have asked only two questions, and not three.

**The ACTING CHAIRMAN:** The Chair will correct that: the honourable member has asked three questions in this direction. I call on the honourable member for Rocky River.

**Mr OLSEN:** I acknowledge the Minister's comments and earlier explanations of the two tables that are shown on pages 148 and 150 of the Programme Estimates, which has alleviated some of the confusion in relation to those two tables. Is it the Minister's wish that next year we will have a consistent table that will provide a common bench mark so that adequate comparisons can be made from year to

year without the confusion that is generated by conflicting tables, such as those included on pages 148 and 150? It would seem to me that, in relation to the public debate that has been undertaken in the field of education, because of examples such as this where two tables are provided, selective quoting of figures has been enabled in a public forum on education issues, much to the detriment of the real facts behind the education debate. Therefore, will a consistent common bench mark be established so that we can accurately judge quickly and without explanation next year the basis of staffing?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I thank the honourable member for his question. Obviously, this issue has disturbed the Minister. The programme performance budgeting method of assessing how we are allocating our resources is still under trial. Each year there have been changes in some areas. We are still experimenting at Treasury and Public Service Board level in an attempt to obtain the best method of presenting statistics to the general public. While this Committee is a relatively small body, nonetheless we maintain that these figures are provided for the public of South Australia to peruse at its leisure, so that it can see precisely what is happening.

There are three words which I believed might well have been left out but which really demonstrate the background to the honourable member's question. It is stated that Government officers in good faith initially applied this averaging approach to the manpower reductions. The three words 'in good faith' should not be taken as any inference that Government officers do not generally work in good faith. In fact, the method of presenting these statistics was in question at the time that the papers went to press. It was a matter of some urgency that the papers be presented to members of Parliament. While the Minister was anxious that the three statistics should easily be lined up, they went to press with the new method of averaging already used.

For that reason, I chose to bring the additional paper before the Committee to show that two methods had been used. I agree with all members that the base used should bear simple comparisons that will enable members just to look down instead of for the figure to be artificially used. I suspect that the member for Rocky River fears that these tables may be misused instead of properly used, simply because they are Government documents and show a more substantial loss of staff than is the case.

**Mr OLSEN:** It certainly appears to me that figures in relation to the education debate have been misused in the past.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I also reassure the honourable member that we will look for a simple comparative set of figures next year.

**Mr OLSEN:** Regarding staffing, the Minister indicated that he anticipated that there would be a further reduction in student numbers of 4 752 next year. If the actual exceeds the expected number of reductions next year, will the staffing be set on the basis as programmed for the estimated figures and not the actual figures?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The staffing figures are allocated for 1982 on the basis of estimates received from South Australian schools. Schools currently are predicting the number of students who will enrol, based on the number of parents who are taking their youngsters to schools at this time of the year. Therefore, to that extent the figures depend on the accuracy of predictions at school level.

**Mr OLSEN:** What was the estimated down-turn in enrolments for 1981, and what was the actual down-turn? Was there an adjustment in staff numbers on the basis that the actual down-turn was far in excess of the estimated down-turn for 1981?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The Deputy Director-General of Resources, Dr Tillett, assures me that there was no reduction because of the greater reduction in student numbers. In fact, we anticipated approximately a 5 000 reduction last year, and there were about 2 200 or 2 300 additional, making a total of about 7 200. Dr Tillett tells me that those figures are slightly on the high side. They are figures that applied a few months ago. A substantial number of youngsters were moving from State schools to independent schools. We predict that about 4 750 fewer students will attend State schools next year. It could be that again there will be a margin of error. We have not been able to predict this with any accuracy.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** Returning to the point that I was making previously, I do not believe that the Minister was totally correct on his population drift from the State. There were population increases in 1976 and 1977. The Minister gave us an interesting treatise on the financial difficulties that are faced by the Government and how they impinge on education. I agree that there are a great number of financial difficulties. Some of the Government's promises have been fulfilled and some have not been fulfilled. We should be told why that is so. For example, the funding on per capita grants for independent schools has been increased significantly in this Budget, yet that has been against the same backdrop as in relation to the decision not to operate on this promise at this time.

The other point that we must consider is that the vote for education in the Budget has decreased from 25.8 per cent of the total recurrent spending to 25.2 per cent. All other things being equal, one must analyse why that .6 decrease has occurred, which I understand involves about \$8 800 000.

It may well be suggested by the Minister that that is due to falling student enrolments, but the information I have available to me (and I would appreciate the Minister's comments on this) is that if one averages out the fall in student enrolments from 1 July this year to 1 July next year and takes an average of the two, working on the very reasonable assumption that students leave throughout the year rather than all on one day, one would end up with a figure justifying a reduction in recurrent expenditure for the Education Department of more like \$4 400 000, not \$8 800 000. Would the Minister comment on that?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The fact is that we have been at great pains to maintain the teacher student ratios in the primary and secondary areas, and in some few instances I believe we might even improve them again this year by removing staff from other areas of education, for example, the advisory positions, some of which have been removed, and the teachers will be transferred back to the classroom. We have reduced the number of teacher release-time scholarships, for example, over the past two years. That means that we will still maintain the number of staff in the classrooms, while at the same time we will be exercising economies elsewhere in education.

The honourable member has made a feature, I think, of the expenditure of the present Government, but I think we should bear in mind that, comparatively speaking, the present Government, over the 1979, 1980 and 1981 period, that is the period of the preceding two Budgets, has increased both in cash and real terms the amount of money available for education. That is, we in South Australia exceeded the inflation rate across Australia. In the preceding two years (and there was very little furor over this), both in cash and in real terms the inflation rate was in no way equalled. In fact, the expenditure was about 5 per cent or 6 per cent in education, as against an inflation rate that was running at between 10 per cent and 12 per cent. This is not the first time that I have brought this point to the attention of

the House. The former Minister of Education raised this matter with me probably 18 months or two years ago, and the precise statistics are in *Hansard*. Incidentally, they have never been refuted by anyone in the House.

The Government has, therefore, been spending more, both in cash and in real terms, on education. However, of course, the point that we have repeatedly made is that, while we are spending more, we have increased the expenditure in education between the two Governments, over the past few years, from 26 per cent of the State's total Budget to the present figure of somewhere around 33 per cent; that is, we have increased the amount by one-third. At the same time, we have increased the amount that we must expend on the most important aspect of education, that is, our staff, from about 85 cents in the dollar to over 90 cents in the dollar.

So, the structure of the education dollar is changing steadily. More money is going towards the staffing and a diminishing amount is going towards the other many and varied aspects of education that still must be funded. This, of course, is one of the most difficult questions, namely, that of spending more money, an ever-increasing proportion of the State's Budget, but at the same time an increasing proportion of that money goes to the most important people, namely, the staff.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I am very reassured to have the Minister make that indication about staff being a very important element of education. There have been times during the year when I had the cause to worry about the Minister's attitude towards staff. It had been said on a number of occasions, somewhat vitriolically, that 95 per cent of the education budget was involved in salaries. I could never quite see the point of that statement, but now the Minister has indicated that indeed staffing is an important element in education, and that is quite correct. I wanted some indication as to how the Government worked out its reduction in priority to education; and of how it bases it on the falling student numbers.

The Premier indicated in his speech when presenting the Budget that falling student numbers were a factor in the education vote, and indeed, the Minister has done so himself, also. What I am after is the method of calculating those figures. Did the Government work out the presumptions of the amount to be spent on education, on those students who will be in the system as of 1 July next year, or was it on an average of 1 July next year and 1 July this year? If the Government did do it on an average of the two years, which is suggested from the figures that I have available from the report on school enrolment changes, that would give a reduction in current expenditure of only \$4 400 000, but in fact, there has been a greater reduction.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I must take issue with the honourable member in that latter regard. He mentioned a reduction of \$8 800 000 in his earlier question and I did not respond to it. I should have responded to that first, because obviously it is a major error on the honourable member's part. In fact, the reduction on which the Education Department itself has been working is \$4 500 000, and this is departmental mathematics. I am not sure where the honourable member obtained his figure of \$8 800 000, unless it was in a briefing this morning. The fact is that \$4 500 000 is the figure on which the Education Department has been working for the past several months. This Budget did not just occur over night; we have worked on it from the beginning of the year onwards. That is the accurate figure, so it is a difference of \$4 300 000, involving over a \$4 000 000 difference from the honourable member's mathematics. The staffing is based on the enrolments in February for the secondary education branch, and on September for the primary sector.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** Just to clarify that: the figure was worked out on the average of student numbers over the whole year?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** No, we are basing them on February enrolments for secondary and September enrolments for primary. Of course, another fact that emerged very clearly yesterday when I was perusing some documents from the Institute of Teachers was that either there is ineptitude in accounting procedures or there is a deliberate attempt to deceive. The Minister has on a number of occasions been accused of giving wrong figures.

The figures that the Minister has given repeatedly are those which are in the Auditor-General's statements, which we assume to be accurate, which have always been assumed to be accurate, and which Premiers over the years have praised, because we in South Australia have departmental officers who are recognised by other people interstate as being of very high calibre. They are from the budgetary papers that are presented on the floor of the House. I cannot afford to quote figures that are erroneous, yet yesterday, and on previous occasions, the voted figure has frequently been compared with the actual figure as at 30 June for the simple expediency of showing that the increases were far less than the Minister stated.

For decades Governments have always allocated a figure at the beginning of the year and expended a higher amount as a matter of normal procedure because of wage increases. Yesterday, a document went out saying that the Minister's figures were wrong and that his percentages were much lower than he claimed. I repeat once again that the allocated figure for 1980 was exceeded in education by somewhere around, I think, \$27 000 000 or \$28 000 000, because the money that was sitting in Treasury by way of round sum allowances was allocated during the course of the year for those salary increases.

Once again, the money which is allocated or which will be voted for in the House is a certain figure, and it is absolutely beyond contradiction that by 30 June next year that allocated sum will have been far exceeded, even if only by way of normal salary increases in every Government department. That round sum allowance is not sitting in the Education Department lines. Part of that money did sit there last year, but this year the entire round sum allowance is sitting in Treasury, and it will be allocated; it will be a considerably higher sum at the end of this financial year. I am quite sure that honourable members understand that. I hope that for comparative purposes honourable members will use the correct bases of allocation versus allocation, or expenditure versus expenditure.

**Mr OLSEN:** By under-estimating the reduction in student numbers, are we holding staff levels higher than they would otherwise be?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Perhaps I might ask the Deputy Director, Dr Tillett, to respond to that. He has confirmed what I was going to say.

**Dr Tillett:** The reduction in the number of classroom teachers is not proportional to the reduction anticipated in the number of students but, indeed, less than proportional. The effect, therefore, will be that the pupil-teacher ratio will again improve in 1982, as it has in 1981 and 1980.

**Mr OLSEN:** I understand you said earlier that the estimates are taken from principals, who give an estimate of what they anticipate enrolments will be in their schools; that is tabulated, and forms the basis for your assessment. Do principals, in fact, tend to over-estimate a little to ensure maintenance of staff numbers at their schools prior to actuals being enrolled at the beginning of the year, and have we consistently under-estimated the reduction in student numbers over recent years? My concern is that we

may continue to hold staff levels significantly higher than perhaps they should otherwise be.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** There again, I would ask Dr Tillett to respond, since this is directly in his field of work.

**Dr Tillett:** The department centrally looks at enrolments in total over the whole State in order to come to grips with the question of what appropriate numbers of teachers should be provided in the coming year. When the total number of teachers available for appointment in the coming year is known, a further step occurs in which enrolment estimates from individual schools are called for and appointments made to schools on the basis of those estimated enrolments—February in secondary schools, September in primary schools. It does happen that the estimates at the individual school level are sometimes in error, and the errors can occur both ways. During the first few weeks of every school year moves are made to try to transfer staff to allow the staffing level in the schools to accord with the actual enrolments where they differ from the estimated enrolments.

I believe that the estimates of enrolments for the State total have been over-estimates in the last two or three years, but the discrepancies have not been major until this year, when a greater move of students from Government to non-Government schools occurred than had been expected. In previous years the discrepancies between the estimated State total and the actual enrolments have been relatively small and ought not to give any concern at all that the level of staffing provided was inappropriate.

**Mr OLSEN:** Perhaps the Minister could indicate to us, therefore, in relation to that over-estimation what that means in terms of actual people employed, that is, the number of extra people who are on the pay-roll as a result of that. Secondly, does that reduce the funds available for grants to schools?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I do not know, in fact, just how quickly that sort of figure can be obtained, because we have to get the number of students from the schools in the course of the first term, and then that would be a much more gradual means of assessing whether we are over-staffed or just what the ratio was. It is not something we can produce as we promised within three or four weeks. It will be next year before we can determine the extent of over-staffing, and it will be the result of figures fed into the department in the course of several weeks. We can undertake to make those figures available just as soon as they become available to the department.

**Mr OLSEN:** In relation to over-staffing, does the extra money allocated to salaries mean that there is a reduction in funds available for grants to schools and the whole range of funding that the department provides for schools?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** If there is over-staffing *per se*, obviously the amount of money which has been allocated in the base Budget figure will be such that staff will be given the first priority, and the rest of the money has been allocated in accordance with budgetary priorities as listed. There will be another factor, of course, that if we are over-staffed, then the round sum allowances would automatically be made available for that over-staffing proportion as well as for the standard formula staffing, but it would be a difficult thing to assess earlier than, say, the end of term 1, the extent to which there may have been over-staffing, because the predicted figures and the staffing figures would emerge in the course of several weeks. That is not adequate, because I cannot give a set figure, obviously.

**Mr OLSEN:** It has been conceded that there was an over-estimation this year. That must mean that X number of people are over-employed and that less money is available for school grants.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Yes, I misunderstood; I thought it was being predicted, rather than quoting the over-staffing for this year. You asked earlier whether the staff was reduced: the Deputy Director has assured me that it was not and that the staff was maintained at the higher figure. We will undertake to obtain some close approximation of the sum spent for additional staff. You were referring specifically, I believe, to the figure which I quoted of about 2 200 children who were transferred to the independent sector. That may have varied since the estimate was given to me; it may be lower than that. But, even so, it would represent a considerable number of staff, if we accept the base for Schools Commission purposes of about 11.6 students per teacher in secondary and about 17.3 or 17.4 in primary; so wherever those staff were over-estimated obviously there will have been some additional maintenance of staff throughout the year.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I want to come back to the point referred to before when I suggested there had been a reduction of \$8 800 000. The Minister suggested that apparently at some briefing this morning I had been given the wrong figures, and that in fact it was really \$4 500 000. It was a particularly asinine comment because I made those suggestions about the \$8 800 000 in the second reading speech on the Budget. I am sure that at least if the Minister has not caught up with that, then his staff has. I want to go through the mathematics by which I arrived at that, because perhaps the Minister can show me where I am wrong. If he can, fine. The figure for the Education Department is \$411 450 000. The total recurrent payments before the allowances for increased wages and salaries and prices, etc., is \$1 626 900 000. That gives a percentage of 25.29. The actual payments last year for education were \$401 500 000. The actual payments of a recurrent nature in total were \$1 554 800 000, and that gives a percentage of 25.82. Using the 25.82 figure of last year's actual as against this year's proposed, we come up with a figure of \$420 090 000, a difference, and I acknowledge that I did in fact make a mistake, of only \$8 640 000. So it is still a lot closer to my \$8 800 000 than the Minister's \$4 500 000.

If we take the voted figures last year to see how that comes out, we find that \$371 980 000 as a ratio of \$1 423 700 000 comes out at 26.1 per cent. That gives, against this year's total recurrent figure, \$425 000 000, a difference of \$13 600 000. If there is a mistake in that calculation, I would appreciate knowing what it is.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The assumption I would have to make is that there is an additional factor that has not been taken into consideration, and that is the one the honourable member first referred to. The number of students is certainly related to the amount of money that the department would bid for in order to maintain its normal operations.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I have to come back to my second reading speech in the Budget debate where I worked this out on the school enrolment changes report that was tabled in this House by the Minister, calculating the reduction in primary and secondary students against the cost figures per student in the Public Accounts Committee report, updated by an inflationary estimate, and that on an average figure gave \$4 500 000.

**The Hon. Allison:** The honourable member asked that we provide prompt replies. Since there is an apparent discrepancy between my claimed statistics and the honourable member's calculated statistics, I will refer the matter as quickly as I can to Treasury and, if possible, come up with a response during the course of this budgetary session.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** My next question is directed to you, Mr Chairman. I thank the Minister for offering to have that matter investigated and ask that, provided we are

still on this vote, we be given the opportunity to come back to this line when those figures are made available.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I was taken to task for claiming that more money was spent on education last year than really was spent, simply because of that additional pay. We had 27 pays in the last financial year. This year we will have 26. It is unusual for an additional pay to come in.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** It is not unusual; it is cyclical.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Since the margin is such a substantial one, it is quite possible that that additional pay had to be presented in the statistics somewhere. I believe it would have been around the \$13 000 000 mark. It could be that the additional pay has, in some way, been compensated for in the finely balanced figures. That is the only explanation I can quickly think of for a major difference of that nature. It certainly was there last year. I did say to the House that in personal calculations I had deliberately left that 27th pay out in working out percentages. Obviously, the Treasury cannot leave those calculations out; \$13 000 000 has to be presented somewhere, so that is a possible solution. I will certainly have it checked for the honourable member.

**The CHAIRMAN:** In reply to the honourable member for Salisbury, if information becomes available from the Minister during any of the sessions, even this evening when we are on a different line, I am prepared to allow the Minister to provide that information to the Committee. However, I could not permit any questioning on it. The honourable member for Salisbury.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** Thank you, Mr Chairman. I imagine that if we are on the same vote, it would be different.

**The CHAIRMAN:** If we are on the same vote there is no problem at all.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** Thank you, Mr Chairman, for your indulgence in this matter. What is the allocation this year for multi-cultural education; how does it compare with last year's allocation; and what impact has that on staffing numbers?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I will ask the Deputy Director to give the Committee those statistics.

**Dr Tillet:** There are two programmes funded by the Schools Commission in this area, and there is frequent confusion between them. One is more properly known as migrant education, and funds for that are provided separately to Government and non-Government schools. This programme, in 1982, will be termed the English as a second language programme rather than the migrant education programme. The second programme in the area is called multi-cultural education and is a joint programme between Government and non-Government schools. I am able to give the Committee figures for the level of funding in 1981 and 1982, reminding the Committee that Commonwealth funds are provided on a calendar year basis in what the commission has called 1982 out-turn prices. With respect to the migrant education or English as a second language programme, the funds for South Australia in 1981 are \$4 044 000 and in 1982 \$3 718 000, a reduction of \$326 000. For the joint Government and non-Government programme, multi-cultural education, the 1981 allocation to South Australia was \$351 000, and the 1982 allocation \$329 000, a reduction of \$22 000.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** The second part of that question was what is the impact on staffing in schools.

**Dr Tillet:** It could be seen that a reduction in the level of provision of funds by the Commonwealth for those two programmes would warrant a reduction in the level of staffing provided to those programmes. The Education Department has not chosen to take that view, and the level of staffing in those programmes will be maintained at its current level, which represents a greater State contribution

to maintaining those programmes than would be the case in 1981.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** Can an indication be given as to what number of teachers involved in the sphere of multi-cultural education are contract appointments and what percentage are permanent appointments of the department?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** We can only provide an approximation immediately, so perhaps we can provide more detailed information later.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I have had complaints from teachers in multi-cultural education who find great difficulty in organising their programmes over a period of more than 12 months because they are contract appointments, in many cases, yet their programmes with children may, they feel, involve a two or three year individual programme which they want to be part of the planning of and for which they want to be able to undertake some forward planning. At the moment, they can plan ahead what ought to happen to a certain child regarding multi-cultural education and then find at the end of the year that none of that may be able to be carried forward into the following year. The obvious implication is that as funding is available, albeit on a reduced level, appointments under multi-cultural education should not be part of the contract basis of employment but part of the permanent staffing.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The honourable member has highlighted a long-standing problem in so far as programmes which are federally funded are generally staffed by contract appointees. There has, of course, been one major difference and that is in the area of childhood services where Federal funds have varied tremendously, and the discussion on that issue will occur on a later line.

Certainly, both in migrant and multi-cultural education programmes, a proportion of funds is available from Federal sources, and another proportion from State sources. The State-funded teachers are more permanent in nature, and the federally funded ones are on contract, which contract is generally renewed upon the reallocation of sufficient Federal funds. I think we had a reassurance from Dr Tillett a few minutes ago that the certain short-fall in Federal funds this year has resulted in the maintenance of contract staff on State charge, but once again I believe they would have been contract staff.

**Dr Tillett:** That is so.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** We recognise the problem of the insecurity of the staff. Because of the nature of Federal funding and the fact that the Federal Government not infrequently will fund a programme for a limited time and then drop out of it, leaving the State to carry the charge, the State has quite consistently over the years maintained the right to alter its staffing by ensuring that at least a large proportion of the staff are contractees rather than permanent.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** I wish to take up the point raised by the member for Rocky River, and I want to try to ascertain the cost to the department of senior staff surplus to requirements. I believe that in the Central Southern Region last year 100 senior staff members were surplus to requirements. Will the Minister say what cost this is to the department? How are those people utilised if they are surplus to the needs of the region?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The honourable member's statistic of 100 senior staff surplus to requirements in the Central Southern Region seems to me and to the Deputy Director-General rather high. That may be applicable to the whole of the State, but it has been a problem with declining student numbers that the proportion of senior staff to non-promotion position staff has steadily increased. This was further compounded by the withdrawal of a number of study positions over the past two years. That will not con-

tinue; it will only improve from now on, in that many of the people who were on study positions and who came back to teach were in senior staffing positions and did not automatically exchange with someone going out on study leave. I think we have reached the bottom. We will not have any more seniors coming in to be surplus to requirement in that way. Nevertheless, the proportion has increased steadily. If the honourable member is anxious to obtain some idea of the change in proportion, we will undertake to provide that, but it is not immediately available to the Committee.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** We see that in the area of full-time equivalent employment levels the proposed figure in 1980-81 was 311.2, the outcome was 309.1, and the proposed figure for this year is 309.1. The Minister might indicate again that that is due to declining enrolments, but I would have thought that declining enrolments and their impact on education would not impact as heavily on special areas, especially when they have not yet achieved the full staffing that we would want in an ideal situation. Why was there that reduction of 2.1 over last year's proposal, and why has that inherent reduction been continued on?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The reduction is such a slight one as to be very difficult to account for in any one area. It is a minimal change in staffing. The 1980-81 and the 1981-82 outcome and proposed are being maintained at that level. I cannot easily explain such a small difference. It could be in temporary staff or any number of ways. It is such a small reduction that it was not thought worthy of major comment.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I accept that, and I would not have commented on it had that outcome not been sustained in this year's proposal. The maintenance of that figure in this year's proposal is a comment in itself. That was quite adequate. That brings us to the wider area of staffing within special instruction covering not only migrant and multi-cultural areas but also the areas of disadvantaged, handicapped and gifted students. There has been some debate for some time about this matter. I raised it in the House, and the Minister responded about the aims of an organisation called Rights of Assistance to the Intellectually Disadvantaged. What commitment is there in this Budget to improve the support services available for the education of the intellectually disadvantaged?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The Education Department has in fact to some extent been penalised. I have been contemplating the honourable member's previous question, and this is partly the answer to the last two questions. The policy of the Education Department for some time has been to integrate handicapped children as far as possible and to absorb them within the normal schools. To that extent, the Commonwealth Government has seen fit to encourage the rest of the States to emulate a policy initiated by the previous Government (I am not taking credit for it) that we chose to perpetuate. We have lost, through Schools Commission grants to South Australia, between \$100 000 and \$150 000 which other States have been given on a pro rata basis by way of encouragement from the Federal Government to integrate the handicapped in normal schools. That may be a response to the slight reduction in employment levels in that area. Children are being readily and steadily integrated into a normal school environment. I am not saying that it is the answer, but it is a strong possibility.

The Schools Commission has been approached this year in no uncertain terms. I spoke to Professor Tannock, the new Chairman of the commission, and he assured me and the Director-General that next year he would bear in mind the leadership shown by South Australian Education Department officers, and make sure that we were not disadvantaged in the next financial year. We will pursue that further. That is one possibility. Of course, we have contin-

ued in the Education Department to encourage the opening of special schools. We had Christies, which was opened a few months ago, and another is being planned in a country area. This is part of the normal budgetary procedure. It is not being shown as something special. We are still encouraging special education.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I accept that the Minister was not able to say definitively whether integration of the children was the reason for the reduction to 309.1. I would hope it was not because, as I have indicated in the House earlier, whilst I strongly support the integration of intellectually disadvantaged children into the normal school system, I believe that that should be alongside of adequate support services being given to those children to assist their integration. I imagine those support services would reflect themselves in that figure rather than in some other staffing figure.

I think this is a critical area of education. I believe that special education has in one sense been perhaps a poor relation for many years, and in recent years we have realised how much it should have caught up and how much the extra services should have been available. Therefore I would have hoped that, were growth to be available in any area of education, this is one of the prime candidates for that growth to be allocated.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Part of the response lies not only within the Education Department. The honourable member no doubt will raise this issue again in the Miscellaneous area, because there was quite a substantial increase to a number of special education areas outside of the Education Department which we thought in some ways was a compensatory move, because the Education Department in South Australia is and has been for some time recognised as one of the leaders in State education in Australia in the field of special education to the extent that we were handicapped by not receiving the same Federal grants as other States have received with encouragement to integrate.

We acknowledge that, in this field where children are so sorely handicapped, it is almost an impossibility to guarantee that they would receive the sort of educational support that parents would like them to receive on almost a one-to-one permanent basis. That is very difficult to achieve. I believe that, over the years, the State has made considerable strides towards improving the special education field, both for the intellectually disadvantaged and the intellectually advantaged. There is another area of disadvantage which I am sure the honourable member recognises but which, generally, is left more alone on the assumption that very bright children will make progress whereas the disadvantaged, intellectually retarded and physically handicapped need more specific and long-term help.

**Mr OLSEN:** In relation to support services, a number of statistics are incorporated in volume two of the Programme Estimates (page 26). There are 18 095.3 full-time equivalents listed as staff under 'Programmes'. These appeared to include regional officers, resource centre staff, and staff engaged in the provision of physical facilities, transport management, and some administration. In addition, there are 513.7 full-time equivalents listed under 'Support services'. Will the Minister indicate how many full-time equivalent teachers are engaged in classroom work, resource centre and advisory capacities, supply or transport facilities and consumables, personnel management (that is, pay, leave, staffing, and so on), and administration. If that information is not available, the Minister may be able to supply it later.

**Dr Tillett:** I believe that a number of the figures that have been asked for appear in the Programme Estimates. The first line of entry in the table at the bottom of page 11 shows the effort towards the provision of transport for

students (on the first line), and the effort towards the management of staffing of schools (on the second line). Those figures are quite separate from and additional to the figures given on page 26 of volume two.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Is that the sort of information that the honourable member was seeking, or was he looking for something additional?

**Mr OLSEN:** I would have to compare the two graphs to establish whether my question has been answered. I gained the impression that perhaps the question was not answered in detail, but I will come back to that point.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** Page 9 of the Programme Estimates deals with the special education programme. What manpower is utilised for the follow-up of non-attendances? I notice that non-attendance is a growing problem in some areas. On the same page, under 'Activity', alternative annexes are listed. The point I refer to may not necessarily be covered by alternative annexes. Many comments have been made by principals and other educationists in the southern area that the department should be looking at providing an alternative school in that area, namely, the old, disused school on the corner of Beach Road and South Road, so that those children who have behavioural problems or who are prone to wanting to abstain from attending school for various reasons may be encouraged to attend the special school.

This would have a two-fold effect. The first is that properly trained staff could be utilised to encourage these children to stay in the school system and thereby gain some benefit from the system. The other benefit is that these children, who tend to be the most disruptive in the class, would be eliminated from the class, thus giving teachers a better run. Teachers would not have to contend with this disruptive element, thereby allowing them to give attention to students who are more able to fit into the normal structure of the school system. To what extent has that proposition been considered in the southern area? The corollary to that question is, what is the manpower usage for follow-up of non-attendances?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I will ask the Director-General of Education to respond to the honourable member's question, first in a general way, and then perhaps the Deputy Director may respond specifically in regard to the number of staff engaged in the follow up of non-attenders. I do not know whether that information is readily available, but we will check while the Director-General is responding.

**Mr Steinle:** We are alert to the problem referred to by the honourable member. The following up of non-attendance is now carried out regionally, from a regional office. The matter of providing opportunities for disinclined children to attend annexes of various kinds lies very much within the ambit not only of regional directors but of the schools. For example, the high schools in Whyalla have shared staff. The department assisted with the provision of a house. Such an annexe has been established where children who are unwilling school attenders can go until their attitude towards school is more positive. They then feed back into the school system. That action can be taken quite easily by schools without consultation with the central office. It can be done regionally and, in fact, it is done regionally.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Dr Tillett will respond briefly to the first half of the question, regarding attendance officers.

**Dr Tillett:** Within the department there are officers titled attendance officers, who follow up persistent absences of students from schools. Most of the attendance officers are regionally based, although these is still a small establishment in the central office. However, the task of addressing the problems that lead to the absence of students from schools is addressed not only by attendance officers; it is

frequently attended to by social workers who are employed in the Education Department and who are almost entirely regionally based. Finally, I point out that guidance officers in the Education Department, who again are mainly regionally based, from time to time work with students, teachers and parents to try to overcome the problems that lead to persistent non-attendance. I cannot state precisely the number of attendance officers, but it is about 10.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** Will the Deputy Director say how many social workers are employed and whether they are paid by the department or by the Department for Community Welfare?

**Dr Tillet:** I would prefer to provide precise information subsequently on the number of attendance officers and social workers, but I can respond to the second part of the question. Social workers are paid by the Education Department and not by the Department for Community Welfare. They are staff additional to those employed in the Department for Community Welfare.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** To what extent do these social workers work hand in hand with the Department for Community Welfare? Again, there is a problem where certain young children are not able to fit into the system. Unfortunately, these children are sort of palmed off from one foster parent to another, and there seems to be a great breakdown in communication between the Education Department and the Department for Community Welfare. I know from teachers to whom I have spoken on this problem that there is a certain amount of frustration there because they cannot provide that information to the Department for Community Welfare, or, more important, they cannot obtain from the department the information that they require to assist them with their dealings with these children. Therefore, I ask to what extent welfare workers are brought in on such cases, and to what extent the Education Department confers with the Welfare Department as a whole.

**Dr Tillet:** Generally speaking, there is very close liaison between not only social workers but also other officers of the Education Department dealing with behavioural problems of children, together with officers of the Department for Community Welfare. But, the extent of that will vary from locality to locality, and will vary with the nature of the problem being addressed. There is, furthermore, a problem that to some extent might be seen as unresolved concerning the confidentiality of information that is provided by parents or children to social workers and this may, from time to time, give at least the appearance, though it is not the fact, of a lack of co-operation between officers of the two departments.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** My next question is I suppose partly consequential on the type of work referred to by the member for Mawson in his question. What support is it envisaged will be made available to school counsellors to compensate for the removal of the position of advisory teacher for school counsellors? I have had some approaches on this matter, as I know the Minister has also. By way of explanation to other Committee members, I explain that the advisory position of consultant for school counselling was not readvertised in the *Gazette* of appointments for next year. It is only a one-off position, so its elimination means that no consultant service is available. I shall quote from a copy of a letter which was forwarded to the Minister by a school counsellor. In part, the letter stated:

... we are angry at the contemptuous treatment which we have received in that no consultation was engaged in with us. We have information from a variety of sources indicating that both the consultant and the P.E.O. concerned were as shocked as we were by the sudden and cavalier decision.

By way of outlining for other members of the Committee the value of the consultant school counsellors, I shall quote from a letter forwarded to the Minister of Education from the Student Counsellors Association, which stated in part:

First, we point out that a range of departmental officers, including the Assistant Director of Curriculum and regional P.E.O.'s have addressed various counsellors conferences in the last two years and all have emphasised a similar theme—that of an increased expectation—

I point out that phrase—

on the part of the education system for student counsellors to play a key role in assisting schools and their staffs to cope with both stressful economic times and continuing educational change. Whilst we are well aware that 'stress', 'moral' and 'professional development' are areas in which all advisory staff fulfil their support role, it seems particularly contradictory to remove the one adviser available to support staff within secondary schools. The very confidentiality of many in which counsellors are involved often makes it impossible for them to discuss those matters with other staff at their own school and now they are to be denied access to an experienced and readily available outside consultant.

What decision has been made on the consultant position for school counsellors?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** As the member for Salisbury has indicated, there has been correspondence between the Minister's office and the group representative of student counsellors in South Australia. I have discussed this matter at some length with the Director-General and a decision is, shall I say, imminent, regarding the position of advisory student counsellor. The department has examined at considerable length the nature of the work currently being claimed for the advisory student counsellor, and I am not in a position immediately to say yea or nay. Suffice to say that the first handful of student counsellors were appointed in 1969, and we have now reached the stage where the vast majority of secondary schools in South Australia would have at least one, and, in many cases, two or three student counsellors.

So, progressively over the years the work of student counselling has been augmented tremendously by the appointment of specific officers in our schools. This has been recognition of the nature of a variety of problems, both educational and socio-economic, together with other problems with which the student counsellors deal, and which are, and have for years been, present in our schools. To that extent I suppose that counsellors have taken from existing staff much of the old counselling role that used to be part and parcel of the normal stock-in-trade of the classroom teacher.

That again is an acknowledgement that the nature of the problems has, in some areas at least, increased. We acknowledge that student counsellors, if they do not have someone to co-ordinate their role from a school or a central location, will have to spread the load among the rest of the counsellors across the State, which used to be done in earlier days. Therefore, we will examine the matter and I will get a response to the honourable member as quickly as I can.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I thank the Minister for that. Perhaps I can make the comment that the wrong interpretation may be put on the Minister's statement that many schools have two or three student counsellors. I do not know of any that have three, and I do not think that the majority would have two; certainly, the majority of schools have only one, rather than many.

I refer to another point on the question of advisory appointments. I read some time ago that a Liberal backbencher said that the Minister considered that to have decreased the numbers of advisory teachers in some areas last year was a mistake and that some would now be reinstated, for example, in the zoo and in the botanic gardens (I am sure that he did not mean that that is where they would be sited).

**The CHAIRMAN:** Is the honourable member sure he is on the right line?

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** Yes. Given that there will be a reduction of 45 advisory teacher positions, if that statement is correct, where were mistaken reductions made last year, and at the expense of what other areas will that mistake be corrected?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The comments that the member for Salisbury made regarding an allegation made by a backbencher, simply echo statements made by the Minister on a number of occasions in public places regarding the method that the Government used during that first year for reducing advisory positions within the Education Department across South Australia. I believe that on a number of occasions, having conferred with the Director-General, it was felt that in some areas the reduction might not, for a variety of reasons, have been the wisest one. I am not going to highlight which of those reductions I was reconsidering at the time. However, details of the area of reduction for 1981-82 in the 45 positions is available in statistical form. I am quite prepared to read it out if the Committee would like me to do so; it will not take very long.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** Certainly.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Would the Minister like to incorporate them?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** They can be incorporated or I can read them.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I would not mind hearing them so that I might follow it up.

**The CHAIRMAN:** The Minister may proceed.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** With regard to the personnel area, we have one project officer in 'Choice and Diversity'; we have the Community Liaison Officer; we have .5 of a project officer in the C.W. radio project; and there are three teachers who were on short-term miscellaneous projects. In all regions there is a .5 reduction, a very small reduction, unspecified in nature because of its very small nature. With regard to 'Research and Planning', there is a reduction of three positions in the social development team membership.

In educational facilities there is a reduction of one project officer. In the curriculum area there is a reduction of 35 officers. They are: in administration, one; in transition education, three; in history, one; in art and design, four; in drama, one; in performing arts, five; the Women's Advisory Unit, one; outdoor education, one; physical education, two; film and television, one; health education, three; library, one; music, two; religious education, one; social studies, two; technical studies, one; and Educational Technology Centre, five.

Incidentally, I believe that that specified reduction list does answer the question that was raised a little while before. This is the latest list, and it excludes any reduction in the student counsellor area. So, we can take it that the student counsellor representative is still holding her position and will in 1982.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** Would it be possible, with that information, for the Minister to indicate what the total staffing commitment in each of those areas is so that we know exactly what impact the reduction indicated is.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** In all regions it was a reduction of .5. We have gone from 132.8 to 132.3, a .5 reduction. In personnel it has gone from 17.5 down to 12, a 5.5 reduction. In research and planning, it has gone from nine to six; in educational facilities, from eight to seven; and in curriculum from 164.5 to 129.5. The emphasis has been on central office reduction in that list.

**Mr RANDALL:** I am glad to hear that the student counsellor position as a consultant has been finalised, because I, too, was concerned about that and wrote to the

Minister. Indeed, that was going to be one of my questions, so I have one less question in this bracket at this stage. The question is also along the line of consultant, and that is the area of apparatus consultant. It has been put to me quite strongly from high schools in my area that that person co-ordinated the purchasing of equipment for high schools and in different situations the prices they got were way above the prices that one could get through the tender board system. Therefore, strong arguments were put forward regarding the maintaining of that position in the department. Can the Minister say whether the position is to be retained or dispensed with?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The honourable member has drawn my attention to this on previous occasions. This was one of the reductions that was effected during the past financial year. The Director-General assures me that currently that advice is being given by a departmental committee, so that the work of that single person has not been lost to schools entirely, as was claimed a year ago. That may account for the fact that there has been less criticism over the past several months.

**Mr RANDALL:** In the area of funding, the Public Accounts Committee recently brought out a report detailing the average cost per student in the primary and secondary area of education. Would the Minister like to reaffirm those figures, and say whether his department sees them as accurate. Also, how do they compare per student with interstate costs?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Perhaps I can present these to the Committee a little later. They are, in fact, not departmental statistics, but are independently obtained figures from the Schools Commission itself. I have the Public Accounts Committee's figures here, although it would take a few minutes to obtain them. I was thinking of the Schools Commission statistics, which are Australia-wide and which showed South Australia to be leading the rest of the field quite considerably in the field of primary education. Perhaps the two figures can be presented to the House for comparative purpose. They do support the claim that I made earlier that South Australia has come from an inferior position to a leading position, certainly in primary education. We were leading by some \$40 or \$50, from memory, over any other State in per capita allocations. Those statistics can be presented to the House.

**Mr HAMILTON:** I would like to follow on the question raised by the member for Mawson on problem children in schools. Can the Minister provide me with information in the various regional areas as to the breakdown and major categories of these problem areas with children, category by category? Also, will he say, what co-ordination is carried out between the D.C.W. and social workers as to the compilation of these figures?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I am not sure, but I think that the honourable member is asking for very complex data which is not readily available within the department. I do not know whether the department has ever closely categorised problem children. It is a sort of negative statistic. We know that we have problem children, but we do not try to pigeon-hole them.

Speaking from personal experience, I know that the liaison that is certainly present between the Department for Community Welfare and the Education Department, between those guidance officers and counsellors, is not always evident to the extent that statistical data is exchanged. I have found (and it is probably rightly so) that the Department for Community Welfare has been very protective of youngsters who have been put in its care, for whatever reason, and it has not been ready to exchange information regarding the nature of crime, offence or whatever else may have been the problem from which the child

was suffering. They have been ready to ask the schools to co-operate in assisting a child, but have not always been ready to divulge confidential and very personal information, which is generally retained at D.C.W. level. As I said, I speak from personal experience as well as from hearsay.

Perhaps if the honourable member is looking for a greater degree of co-operation, we would have to ask the Department for Community Welfare whether it was willing, and indeed proper, to disclose the nature of child offences so that they were available publicly to be categorised in a forum such as this. The error, if there has been any, has been on the side of protecting the child. It is certainly an issue that I will take up. I know that a number of student counsellors, for example, have raised this issue with me at the personal level on the basis that they have not always been able to get information back from the children's courts, which, of course, are attended by D.C.W. officers as well as by senior police officers, and that therefore they have been somewhat handicapped in the nature of the assistance that they have been able to give the youngster. It is a value judgment. I have never made an issue of it because I have always erred on the side of privacy and protection of the student. Of course, generally minors are involved.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I indicate quickly that the Opposition would be agreeable if Government members were to permit this session to reconvene at 2.10 p.m. so that the Minister could have an opportunity to address the kindergarten rally. I understand that he wrote a letter to the organisers indicating that he was not able to address the meeting because of his presence in this Chamber. The Minister said, 'I would not be able to leave the Chamber. It would not be possible for me to address the rally or discuss the issue with those who are in attendance on that date.' We are happy to reconvene at 2.10 p.m.

**Mr ABBOTT:** I second that.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! It is a matter for the Chair to determine. I would be prepared to seek the Minister's view.

**Mr HAMILTON:** Surely he would not object.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I will not have any reflections on the Chair's ruling; the honourable member will not be here. The Minister may comment if he so desires.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Certainly, I have no objection to addressing the meeting for a short period. I think it is in the Chairman's discretion if he wishes to change the Committee's sittings in such a way.

**The CHAIRMAN:** It is the Chair's view that the appropriate course of action is to recommence the sittings at 2 p.m. I am not really inclined to break the Sessional Orders. However, when the Committee resumes at 2 p.m. I will consider the matter.

*[Sitting suspended from 1 to 2 p.m.]*

**The CHAIRMAN:** Prior to the luncheon adjournment I was requested to consider allowing an adjournment for 10 minutes. It is the view of the Chair that this would not be appropriate. The sittings of the Committee have been laid down in Sessional Orders. The Chair is of the view that all concerned were fully aware of the sittings of the Committee, and it would not be appropriate.

**Mr TRAINER:** I refer to the list of school support staff reductions that the Minister circulated prior to the luncheon adjournment. I would like to ask a few questions about some specific reductions, particularly in the curriculum area. First, what connection is there between the reduction of three seconded teachers in transition education with the priority that I believe the Minister assured us he gave that area some time earlier this year?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The transition education team, as originally established, was a fairly large and wide-ranging team. The honourable member will realise that in the first few months, when the transition education programme was introduced at Federal initiative, the matter was largely experimental. We had a number of officers who were seeking advice and forming working parties for some several months. Now the whole programme has been fined down and streamlined. We have rejected programmes that were obviously non-productive and have now got a very strong working base for transition education. We have, in fact, submitted programmes to the Federal Government which were accepted some several months ago. The volume of work at the outset has diminished, but that does not mean to say that the effort in transition education is being reduced.

In fact, only yesterday we advised the Federal Prime Minister of the extent of our efforts in transition education. That was largely as a response to the Federal Government's insistence on earmarking funds which are normally funds that the State decides how to allocate. We have contested that as a principle, and the Federal Government asked us to substantiate our claims that we had a large effort in transition education. In case the honourable member is interested, we estimate that some \$6 100 000 worth of State money is currently being invested in school, technical and further education programmes.

**Mr TRAINER:** My question to the Minister concerns the person from the Women's Advisory Unit. What was that person's role, and how does that relate to the abolition of the Women's Adviser, both in the Education Department and, for that matter, in the Department of Further Education, and its reconstitution under a different name, namely, Equal Opportunities Adviser?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** There has been a reduction of one from the Women's Advisory Unit. I understand that those women are all categorised as librarians and that there are still two women in the Women's Advisory Unit, as the Director-General is still maintaining that staffing level.

**Mr TRAINER:** Can the Minister give any further information about the five people removed from the staff of the Educational Technology Centre?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The Deputy Director-General tells me that that is a reduction of five from a total of about 70 people involved in the educational technology area. We cannot specifically say where these people will be taken from or what specific work they were doing.

**Mr OLSEN:** I direct this question to the Minister on your behalf, Mr Chairman. Is it necessary to spend so much money in the area of research, planning and curriculum development, and why is that group involved in the sex education programme? Was it that group that recommended the open space design for schools?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** That goes back 10 or 12 years. The open plan concept for education would have been popular in Canada and Britain way back in the late 1960s. It was brought into Australia, particularly into Western Australia, as a first experiment. The open plan concept has changed quite considerably over the years. I think, from a position in Opposition, I would have been critical of the open plan concept in so far as originally it came in as a succession of very large open space units where seven, eight and probably more classrooms were situated in a large open building with a number of features that were highlighted as long ago as 1970 by an important Canadian report which emphasised that good teachers would be able to teach in any situation, but that teachers who were less than good would have all the problems in the world teaching in an open plan situation, particularly if it was a large unit.

Apart from that, it was difficult to get any number of people, particularly a large number of teachers, who were compatible enough to team teach in those large barn-like structures. I think, over the years, that the Education Department has fined down its appreciation of open space units so that now the clients of the Education Department, that is, the secondary and primary schools themselves, generally request that open plan units should not contain units larger than two, and in very rare circumstances larger than four, classrooms. Even there, we have quite consistently over the past two or three years built them in a new concept: what we call the flexible plan.

I am quite sure that people who have been in primary and secondary schools, dating back to the turn of the century, would be familiar with the double classroom with partitions. Nowadays, the concept is improved on because the partitions are pretty soundproofed, designs are modern, and teaching in those modern, open space, flexible plan units is far more attractive. It is an exciting prospect, whereas we are, in fact, putting walls back into a number of the older, larger, open space units. It is not always practicable to do that, but we have been doing that as a matter of policy. Certainly, that is one of the policy commitments which this Government made in 1979 and which it has been steadily fulfilling. The earlier part of that question related to the number of people involved in research and planning. I am not sure, but I think that some aspect of research and planning work was raised. However, there was a word that I missed.

**Mr OLSEN:** The question that the Chairman has asked me to put to the Minister is: in the research planning, equipment and development area, is it still necessary to spend so much in this area, why is this group involved in the sex education programme, and was it that group that recommended that open space design for schools be implemented?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I think the research and planning group would certainly have been involved in open space planning 12 years ago. That is before the Director-General's time. He was not familiar with what was happening as long ago as that. It was not the responsibility of the Director-General at that time, but I do not think that that is relevant in the light of what I have said, namely, that it is current Government and departmental policy to have much smaller flexible planned schools.

I am not sure of the relevance of the Research and Planning Department to sex education. That is essentially curriculum development, and there has been a departmental curriculum development team responsible for the health education programme, of which sex education is a small and fairly tightly prescribed component, for which Literature 2 is prescribed. The Curriculum Development Division has been responsible for the health education programme, and that comes under the Director-General of Education.

**Mr ABBOTT:** I ask the Minister whether any family impact statements were prepared by the Education Department on the effects that the cuts in staff and education funding would have upon the family, especially where children attend primary, secondary, special or disadvantaged schools in the low socio-economic areas.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** There is a misconception there surely, because earlier we heard from the Deputy Director-General that the teacher-student ratios would in some cases be improved upon and, in any case, they would not deteriorate, so the reference to cuts in staffing is really an improper one. The teacher-student ratios are being maintained so that no students are having a lesser classroom involvement with the teacher as a result of any initiatives that the Treasury has taken in education funding.

I also said that the decision as to how many youngsters to place in classes rests largely with the administration of the school, in that it is a school-based decision whether to expand on the number of courses on offer, given the number of staff, or to reduce the number of courses on offer. As I have said, if we have as many as 60 Matriculation classes in one high school, there is every chance that children in year 8 and year 9 will be in larger classes to compensate for the smaller classes at Matriculation level. That is a school-based decision.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** What criteria are used in choosing student counsellors? I believe that some time ago, when there was a growing demand for student counsellors, persons were taken from whatever profession they might have been in and assigned to the work of student counsellor. In the light of the problems that they face now with students, parents, and other teachers, one would hope that these persons were given at least a rudimentary, if not comprehensive, course in counselling. I am interested in knowing what is provided in that sector. It is good to hear that the consultant is being retained, but what provision is made for those persons regarding training, and what are the criteria for choosing student counsellors?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I do not think the criteria would have changed much over the years. When the idea of student counselling was originally mooted in the Education Department under Mr Harvey Gray, who has since retired, and subsequently under Dr Tony Shinkfield, who also has left the department, the criteria were varied slightly over the first two or three years but the appointments were unusual, in that academic qualifications were second or third in line, and the first criterion for a student counsellor was ability to relate to students at a close personal level and the general ability to be able to liaise with people in the local community. For that reason, the first and subsequent appointees have been a very mixed and varied group of people and, generally, it has been an assessment at local level, involving strong local recommendations for that person to liaise and help to solve problems.

**Mr ABBOTT:** The Minister may have misunderstood my question about family impact statements. I was not talking about the teacher-student ratio. It has been Government policy to have family impact statements made in regard to all Government decisions, and some important decisions have been taken in relation to education. Who in the Education Department prepares family impact statements, how many have been prepared and placed before Cabinet by the Education Department, and how many of those statements and decisions have been motivated by Cabinet?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The family impact statements that have been requested by Cabinet generally accompany a specific Cabinet recommendation, and to suggest that family impact statements accompany every single budgetary decision would be incorrect. Quite a massive amount of work would be involved. I do not think I have misunderstood the member. I may appear to have done but I was simply relating the need for a family impact statement to his question. By implication, he was saying that the present staffing of our schools merited a family impact statement because children would be adversely affected.

All I was saying was that we had heard from the Deputy Director-General that there would be no adverse impact on teacher-student ratios as a result of this Budget. If there had been, we might have considered it on that basis, but there has been maintenance of teacher-student ratios and an improvement in certain areas. A family impact statement has not been prepared because this matter did not go through as a formal Cabinet submission. It was simply a budgetary requirement and we did not think a family

impact statement was necessary, because we have not changed the staffing formula in any way.

**Mr ABBOTT:** I ask the Minister whether any cost is involved in the preparation of family impact statements and why no mention has been made in the Programme Estimates of any activity in relation to the statements.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Any family impact statements prepared for any Government department would be prepared by existing officers as part of normal work. There is not a family impact officer specifically allocated, and a number of people would be involved in any assessment, so it does not appear as part of departmental family impact care. We assume that every teacher and every officer has family impact as close to his or her heart as any parent has. Part of a teacher's stock in trade is to consider impact of anything on the family, whether in the case of the Director-General, with the curriculum, or a personnel officer, with staffing.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** The second part of my earlier question was not answered. What training is given to student counsellors?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The base qualification is the department's assumption that whoever is appointed has certain qualities which fit him or her for the student counsellor role. But, always in the course of any year there is a succession of in-service conferences which student counsellors attend. Frequently, in the early days counsellors were being appointed almost on an *ad hoc* basis, year by year, with a national or international authority in the field. Harry Geil from the United States was one of the early counsellors with a great deal of experience in the United States, and was one of the most exciting people to advise. That sort of expertise is perpetuated through the department, because counsellors continue to meet and exchange points of view.

Regarding formal student counselling—taking someone aside and saying, 'This is the way to counsel'—the fact that every counsellor is unique is one of the strongest points in the student counselling system. They are not stereotypes: they all have individual qualities. There has always been someone at the principal education officer level who has been responsible for the overall co-ordination of student counsellors. As I said, in the early days Harvey Gray started it, and a succession of officers have been responsible for in-service training.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** I was surprised to hear the member for Salisbury indicate that he did not know of any schools with three or four student counsellors. They do exist. A growing demand is made upon teachers, particularly as reported in an article two days ago about teachers in the north decrying the fact that students were beginning to harass some female teachers and were not the most desirable students in that they retort to teachers. This must require a certain amount of counselling to compensate for the fact that many teachers are finding that, when they refer a problem to parents, the parents seem to have a could-not-care-less attitude. Therefore, the problem is left with the schoolteacher.

Does not this imply that there is a greater need for school counsellors and more intimate or frequent counselling of these students? Is there any criterion or formula for how many student counsellors are allowed per head of student population? There is growing social unrest in our community, and the article suggested a lack of discipline and reinforcement from the home. Has any consideration been given to increasing this formula, namely, the number of student counsellors allowed per school?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** No, not at the moment. I discussed this with the Director-General. South Australia has an extremely high proportion of student counsellors, compared with the rest of Australia. We were innovative in that regard as far back as 1969 to 1970. We probably have a

lower incidence of those really difficult children to attend to. Schooling is compulsory to the age of 15, and a number of students who transgress in that way are asked to leave the school system if they are really deliberately and violently opposed to education. They may be removed from the school system—from counselling—on the request of the school counsellor and school principal. They are really difficult youngsters. On the other hand, a student may be transferred from one school to another, which will try to handle the situation and keep the youngster at school. There is a degree of sympathy.

We have a number of establishments where difficult children can transfer and be educated on different lines. The Director-General explained that. Additionally, although student counsellors have increased considerably in number, they do not work in isolation because they use Community Welfare Department staff, and a number of other outside officers, like parole officers, are obviously involved with recalcitrant children. There is a co-operative attempt to look after youngsters with problems.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** What formula is now used for hourly-paid instructors' time? How does it differ from the previous method, and what impact will the changed method have on costs allocated in the Budget?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** There has not been a set formula. Traditionally, there has been an annual allocation of funds for hourly-paid instructors. The allocation for 1982 will be no different from that in 1981.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** Is that in real or money terms?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The Deputy Director informs me that it would be in real terms.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** It will take account of inflation?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Yes.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** But there has been no method of allocating that between regions and from regions to individual schools?

**Dr Tillett:** The provision for hourly-paid instructors across the State in 1982 will be the same, in real terms, as from 1981. I refer to calendar years. The allocation is parcelled out between regions, and regional directors will determine the manner in which the allocation is used in schools on application from the schools.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I ask the question because a school approached me in June about the change in allocation. It was said that it is extremely disappointing to see that such a programme, a music programme, is threatened because the allocation of hourly-paid instructors' time is now made on a term-by-term basis, and an allocation of only nine hours per term is allowed. That seems to imply that there is a cut-back on the previous allocation.

**Dr Tillett:** It is true that the allocation of hourly-paid instructors is made on a term-by-term basis, and it could well be that in one term of the three of the school year the level of hourly-paid instructor time available is less than in another term. If one takes the total over the 12 months of 1982, the total level of provision will be the same as in 1981.

**Mr GLAZBROOK:** Can the Minister state what percentage of total payments will be made under total salaries allocated, first, to long service leave and, secondly, to superannuation? Shown on the lines is the amount set aside for terminal leave, which equates to almost 1 per cent, and pay-roll tax, which is about 4.7 per cent.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The amount set aside for superannuation is a Treasury allocation: it does not come from any Government department. Once a person has been superannuated, that automatically retires him from Government service. Superannuation is picked up through a separate line. I am not sure whether it is in Public Actuary's, Treasury, or where. It is not a departmental responsibility.

That applies almost everywhere: in advanced education, the Commonwealth Government picks up the superannuation section, but in regard to the State Government, the Treasury carries out that function. Any other figures, therefore, are specifically related to the line.

**Mr GLAZBROOK:** What is the situation in regard to long service leave?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Long service leave involves about 1 per cent.

**Mr GLAZBROOK:** Regarding the regionalisation of the department, will the Minister give the breakdown of the regions by the number of staff and cost of salaries for each of those regions?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** There might have been some slight misunderstanding in regard to the previous question. The long service leave allocation is decided on an annual basis and I believe that we would have allocated about \$4 000 000 in the past two years. In actual fact, we would have spent about \$5 200 000 or \$5 300 000, because applications were very high, and we did not discourage people from taking long service leave. There was also a replacement factor. One of the reasons why I made the initial statement was to point out to the House that we had not only the staff but also the replacement staff on the payroll at 30 June, and into July and August, with the high leave period. That is a provision that Treasury makes to the department. It is an annual decision. The Director-General will answer the honourable member's question.

**Mr Steinle:** The details of the number of staff appointed to regions are readily available, and can be supplied. I do not have at my fingertips the precise number of teachers in each of the 10 regions, but that information is easily obtained and can be easily converted to salaries. It can be made available to the honourable member very simply.

**Mr GLAZBROOK:** How many staff are currently employed in the curriculum directorate and what is the cost of their wages?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The Deputy Director advises that that information is spread out over the various programmes and is not itemised under a single line.

**Mr GLAZBROOK:** Could that information be supplied at a later stage?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** It would be possible to extract those figures, but it would be a slow job, because the figures are diffused over the various departments.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I wish to refer to teachers who take time off without permission for various activities, but first I would like clarification of the answer that the Minister gave to a previous question. As I understood it, the Minister stated that there was no cut in real terms in the provision for hourly-paid instructors; in other words, the provision kept account of inflation. That was my understanding of the answer. Yet a memorandum to principals dated 24 September 1981 has as one of its paragraphs the following:

Hourly-paid instructors: The level of provision made in 1981 will be maintained in 1982. This will result in a saving of \$0.1 m in the 1981-82 financial year compared with 1980-81.

Will the Minister explain that saving?

**Dr Tillett:** When I gave my previous answer, I was careful to stress that the statement about the maintenance of effort in real terms related to the 1982 calendar year as compared with the 1981 calendar year. The statement about a saving of \$100 000 relates to the 1981-82 financial year as compared with the 1980-81 financial year. In as much as there was a reduction in the level of provision in the 1980-81 financial year, that will carry forward into the 1981-82 financial year, with a full year effect in that financial year. There is no inconsistency between that and the statement

that the real level in the 1982 calendar year will be the same as that in the 1981 calendar year.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I understand that advice was given earlier this year during the school assistants dispute strike that teachers who took time off would have their pay reduced and that a similar indication was given to kindergarten or child/parent centre staff who took time off this afternoon. Will the Minister advise the Committee whether or not the same indication was given to Education Department staff who attended a meeting at which the Minister spoke and at which the Minister of Environment and Planning was present earlier this year relating to the matters that arose during the school assistants dispute? This meeting was held during school hours.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The only relationship that that statement had to anything that has happened in the past couple of years was in response to a request, perhaps from the Institute of Teachers, that both the Education Department and the Department of Further Education staff should be dealt with on equal terms. In the course of the investigation it was discovered that the Education Department at that stage did not have the right to deduct pay from staff who went on strike. It was only in relation to the one strike day that the statement was made that pay would be deducted.

The honourable member may recall that there were two strike issues and there was no pay deducted in regard to the first issue, but, in regard to the second issue, the regulations were changed to enable the department to do what every other Government department had the right to do, and that was to deduct pay should a person absent himself or herself from work for strike purposes. There was no suggestion that pay deductions would be made for any other activity until in the course of events over the past two or three days some departmental directives were sent out, pointing out that the department had that prerogative.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I am not disputing the change in regulations: I am aware of that change. My advice, as the appropriate shadow spokesman, was sought when this matter came before the House. The point I make is that another meeting took place, at which the Minister spoke and which occurred during school hours, on an issue entirely relevant to the purposes of the strike and no further. Education Department staff were present at that meeting, absent from their duties and their schools. Has that regulation applied to those staff in that situation?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I wonder whether the honourable member could cite the instance. He may not realise that I have attended 130 or 140 schools in the past several months and, as Ministers do, I have addressed staff during the course of the day. Very infrequently have I called staff away so that classes were disturbed. Generally, some staff members attended the meeting and, at the school's wish, other members of the staff looked after the youngsters, with set work.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I refer to a meeting at Mount Barker, but I would like the Minister to state a general principle. If, for non-educational purposes, staff are called from the school to attend a meeting, such as the meeting that took place in Mount Barker, to discuss issues such as those relating to the school assistants strike, what will happen? I am not arguing about the situation where the Minister visits schools: I am arguing about the situation where the staff leave school to attend a meeting, such as the meeting to which I referred.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I can assure the honourable member that no action was taken against those staff members for attending that meeting. Whether or not it was because we did not have any right at that stage to take any action, I am not too sure. It just never entered my head that I might

be penalising people for attending that sort of meeting. I have taken the point that the honourable member is making, and I will make quite sure that meetings of that kind do not occur in future so that this question becomes an embarrassing one.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** I want to draw attention to the equitable service scheme drawn up between the department and the Institute of Teachers. Was any provision made in those negotiations between SAIT and the department in regard to persons leaving any one school to take up country appointments? I draw the Minister's attention to a letter from a school in my own area, Wirreanda High, which wrote to the Regional Director stating that they were concerned as a school because in theory some 51 teachers at the school would be eligible for transferral to country situations. It would be recognised that a transfer of 51-odd teachers from one school would have a devastating effect on the programme of that school. They also acknowledged that in reality this may not happen, but were the theoretical situation to arise, are there any guidelines within the negotiations concerning how this might be overcome?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I shall ask the Director-General to respond.

**Mr Steinle:** The difficulty has been certainly recognised. As happens in all discussions about staffing, the final outcome of any of these matters rests on the proposition that the needs of the Education Department (which means, of course, the schools) come first. That is written into the arrangements, so that whatever negotiations take place between the Education Department and one of its teachers, fundamentally and finally the needs of the school will come first. So, while difficulties might arise they can be overcome in that way.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** Recognising the fact that we have over 15 000 teachers in the department, one certainly will not find a system that is going to please everyone, but I believe the Director-General received a letter on 30 August from the Staff Association of the Mitchell Park High School which expressed its dissatisfaction with the scheme. The opinion of that association was that the total length of service in the Education Department has been ignored in the system that has been set up, and that 'the impact of this scheme will particularly fall upon families causing many to split up for most of the four-year term and subjecting all to financial and psychological pressure. The meting out of such personal hardship in the random, impersonal way described will be seen by many as equitable in the sense of being even-handed, but hardly just'.

Are further discussions going on between the department and SAIT to compensate and maybe make the teaching profession more aware of the justifiability of this scheme, rather than it being thought of as impersonal, as described in this letter?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I point out to the honourable member that this has been an unusual negotiation in that it has gone on between the South Australian Institute of Teachers and the Education Department. I think it is beyond contradiction that as far away as the end of last year (it would have been at the end of November 1980) the full council of SAIT agreed to support the principle of equitable country service. As far as the Minister of Education and the Education Department are concerned, we have been working for the last 12 months in the knowledge that the full council of the institute had given its approval by an overwhelming majority, as I was informed, to the principle of equitable country service.

Members of the Committee would also be interested to hear that the Institute of Teachers put to the Director-General of Education and me a statement of intent with three main points. Inherent in the acceptance of the equi-

table country service scheme by the full council of the institute was the anticipation that the second and third clauses which were included in that head of agreement would be adhered to by the Education Department. As recently as this morning I made a point of checking to see the extent to which the department had maintained its agreement, and it has been strictly followed. To all intents and purposes the conditions under which that equitable country service agreement was drawn up have been agreed by both parties, and the Education Department has fulfilled its part of the agreement. I understand, however, that the country and metropolitan teachers are in some disarray at the moment because there has been a change of heart. Just how extensive that is I do not know. The Education Department has isolated about one-third of the teaching population, about 5 000 people, who would still be needed to fulfil some country service.

Therefore, the department decided that, with such large numbers involved, the ballot system of ascertaining who should be transferred was the fairest. It removes any pre-selection, but at the same time built into the transfer system there is a whole range of criteria under which people who are balloted into country service can appeal to the Director-General and to his personnel department. So, there are many safeguards for individuals built into the system for individuals who may be balloted for country transfer.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** What impact would the closure of the Curriculum Development Centre have upon the work of the language development project, and are extra funds being allocated by the State Government to compensate for its closure? The proposals brought forward by the Federal Minister for Education on 4 June put a very heavy sword of Damocles on the future of the Curriculum Development Centre, implying, as I understand it, that its continued existence would not go ahead next year if there was no funding from the State Government. Given the fact that the language development project, which is partly associated with the Curriculum Development Centre, is an important part of any programme in the schools to upgrade literacy and numeracy, it would seem that there should be some allocation of funds especially for that.

**Mr Steinle:** The latest advice we have been given, and I refer to advice given both to me as a member of the Curriculum Development Centre and advice given to our department, is that for two years the Federal Government will continue to fund the C.D.C.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** For two years?

**Mr Steinle:** Yes. That is my latest information—I must stress that. It was given to me verbally, but that was also reported, at quite substantial levels, at the last conference of Directors-General. It means that a number of projects which are in hand will be completed. The quite sizable stocks of material that the Curriculum Development Centre has prepared will be sold. It is then likely that there will be a new arrangement within the Department of Education federally and that either within that department or within the Schools Commission a function will be retained for that purpose. So, it would appear that the extent of the operation of the C.D.C. will certainly be reduced, but there will still be a curriculum component to the Federal department, in the same way as there will remain a research component after the demise of the Education Research Development Committee, which also was demolished in the last razor gang exercise federally.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I want to know how that alteration of arrangements will impact on the work in this State of the Language Development Project, which is a national project. I refer to a letter that I received from the South Australian co-ordinator of that project in order briefly to

describe its function to other members of the Committee. She wrote:

The language development project, initiated by that centre, is the first national project mounted in Australia to focus on the fundamental issue of literacy. The project, which has been supported by all the States, has received high praise internationally for its approach to curriculum development. The materials produced to date have generated discussion about literacy across Australia. Furthermore, they are meeting the needs of teachers of English language and assisting children to become effective language users.

Given the high priority that any Government would want to place on the need to teach literacy to its students, it seems that we ought to be having some contingency plan if that programme and programmes related to it are in any danger.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The Director-General will respond again.

**Mr Steidle:** I am not aware that funds have indeed been cut off from the language development programme. My understanding was that the major programmes (and that certainly is one of them) would have been continued, perhaps on restricted funding, but that it would be wound back. That gives us two years of lead time for that to be considered by the States and, indeed, by the Federal Government. It needs to be stressed, I think, that it is only one of a number of quite major national development thrusts. Alongside of it stands the mathematic project, which to this date also is of some significance, together with some foreign language programmes. It needs to be confirmed that funds indeed will not be made available to it and, secondly, that it needs to be seen in terms of national priorities. I suspect that those matters will be raised at the meeting of Ministers at the Australian Educational Council meeting next week.

**Mr ARNOLD:** On the question of support for curriculum development in the area of literacy and like areas, we have had the very encouraging Keeves reports on literacy and numeracy both in 1979 and this year. Those reports indicated that South Australia, indeed, has achieved good rates of literacy and numeracy compared to other States. One of the points that came through the 1979 report was that, if we hoped to continue that kind of status, there would need to be proper support for curriculum development in that area and support services for teachers involved in those subjects. What support is there in this Budget for that? Is there any increase in support over last year's Budget, or is there any decrease? If so, why?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The Director-General will respond again.

**Mr Steidle:** I do not think it is really to be best discussed in the Budget context. It is not a matter of making funds available. The matter of courses in English generally has been a major priority for the Education Department for two years, and it will remain so. It is one of the priority areas in which the Curriculum Directorate will continue to work, so I do not think it is the kind of thing that one can talk about in terms of additional funding or decreasing in funding. It remains one of the priority areas for continuing work.

**Mr Evans:** I seek to ask two questions of the Minister and ask for his views on them. If the Minister cannot give me a reply in detail now, I would appreciate receiving it later. One question is asked on behalf of the member for Eyre and relates to the Streaky Bay kindergarten, where there are approximately 49 children between the ages of three and four. Childhood services have advised that as from February 1982 the funding will be cut by half. In other words, the staff will be cut by half. They operate a day play school also at the kindergarten, which is the only kindergarten in some 50 miles radius. Could it be reviewed,

taking into consideration the position the school is in geographically?

The second matter disturbs me, and, although I believe that it has happened to several kindergartens, I give it as an example. The Blackwood kindergarten has at the moment 47 children, five of whom are five-year-olds whom the local primary school will not take. An assessment of staff numbers, according to students, is made in August of each year. I find that difficult to understand, when the assessment is made in August with the staff being allocated for February, because, in the case of the Blackwood kindergarten, it appears that in February next year they will have 58 children, without the five-year-olds, in all possibility, and their staff numbers will be aligned to the number of children at that kindergarten under the age of five years as at August this year. I would ask the Minister about those two specific cases. I also ask the Minister to discuss with childhood services the foolishness of making staff assessments for February, in August of the previous year, when not a full knowledge of how many children will be at the kindergarten in the following February is available either to the kindergarten or to Childhood Services.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** We are on the Curriculum Directorate line. With every respect to the honourable member, we had undertaken to air these views on childhood services after the dinner break. I will certainly bear the honourable member's questions in mind. They come under the Minister's 'miscellaneous' line allocation of \$19 800 000, Childhood Services Council. Perhaps we will address ourselves specifically to those questions immediately after the dinner recess. If the honourable member could provide me with the written question, I will ensure that some response is available for him.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I am sure that the member will be pleased to do that.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** My question relates to the vocational school concept. Does the responsibility for funding for developments in this direction rest with the individual schools or with the State Budget? If it rests with the State Budget, what allocation is being made in this Budget? I will explain this question a little further. Members will know that earlier this year some coverage was given to a possible change in Government policy that would provide for the creation of schools of a vocational type. Some felt that this might be a return to technical high schools, but the Government policy statement seemed to go a little further than that. There was some understanding that funds might be available from transition to work funding from the Federal Government over and above that level of funding which we presently receive. As I understand it, that hope for extra funds from that source did not eventuate. Therefore, any changes in those schools would have to be funded somehow within the State Budget or by the individual schools. I therefore ask who will be picking up the tab.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** This issue is not yet fully resolved. In fact, members of the Committee will recall that a little earlier in the day I said that the Federal Government had (we believe quite improperly) earmarked from all State recurrent and capital grants, both in secondary and further education, funds which were normally part of the State's general grants. States have traditionally had the right to allocate those general grants to projects as they saw fit. In fact, the Federal Government said that it had made a considerable sum of money available for school-to-work transition education. In fact, to a large extent it was earmarking the State's own grant money and taking the credit for that expenditure.

As recently as last weekend, the Premier of South Australia took up this issue with the Prime Minister. I believe that the Federal Government would have been reappraising

its earlier decision as recently as at yesterday's Federal Cabinet meeting. The outcome of that was that I was asked yesterday to supply the Federal Government with a detailed approximation of the efforts of South Australia at State level in school-to-work transition education. We presented the Prime Minister and the Federal Minister of Education with a brief statement which showed that we were committing about \$4 100 000 at secondary level and about \$2 000 000 at TAFE level from within State funds to projects, which, under the present Federal guidelines, are quite clearly in the area of school-to-work transition. That is about \$6 100 000 in total. We provided that information specifically to enable the Federal Government to decide whether or not we should earmark our own funds for programmes of its choosing. When we have the Federal Prime Minister's decision (and we expect that in the very near future) we will then decide precisely how to allocate the funds that the Federal Government has made available for school-to-work transition, both in the technical and further education sector and in the secondary area, bearing in mind that we do have compensatory amounts at the State level for which we hope we will now be given credit.

Turning to the special vocational schools, the six schools programme, these schools are generally what were formerly known as technical high schools. They are very well provided for by way of equipment, and we felt that that type of school was an ideal school upon which to build a school-to-work transition programme, not simply for the children at that school but for children around Adelaide who might decide to commute in order to take up a special transitional education programme. I believe around 325 youngsters might be specifically catered for in the immediate future if that programme got under way. I am not certain of that figure.

I believe that we were looking for a sum of about \$600 000 for that programme. As soon as the Federal and State issue has been resolved, we will have a South Australian Cabinet decision to show precisely where we will put our transition education funds for the next financial year. That is an important matter and a statement will be made within, I think, the next couple of weeks. I cannot be more precise than that, but the six schools programme is one of our keystones and we are anxious that it should proceed.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I appreciate the Minister's indication of future advice on that matter. I raised the issue because I have had members of one of the schools which has been designated a vocational school put questions to me about what would happen if Federal funds were not, in fact, available. They clearly want to know whether the responsibility comes back on to their council or whether the State Budget will somehow pick it up. I can see the point that they are raising: where decisions are made at one level and the funding is expected from another, there is a natural conflict.

The vocational school concept has come up this year, admittedly under the transition-to-work umbrella. Nevertheless, it has come up especially this year, and it has proceeded somewhat apace. What is the justification for this development, and is the Minister satisfied that we will not be in danger of recreating the technical high school concept that in years gone by was not totally beneficial?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The response to the second part of the question is speculative, but it had been my wish that, rather than recreate the old-style technical high school, which tended to drain off from secondary schools the less able students, we should be emphasising that youngsters must be encouraged towards standards of excellence, whether it be academic or technical excellence. Whether that is a dream capable of achievement in the short term

is, as I said, speculative. However, I do not think that the creation of this type of school will perpetuate the old-type of technical high school. One of the reasons for my thinking so is that we are being increasingly requested by parent groups to encourage this sort of technical training in schools; there is increasing interest. Therefore, I suggest that a wide cross-section of the community is interested in having youngsters trained more towards vocational programmes.

An encouragement in South Australia is that already in the metropolitan area and other areas many of the schools have already, of their own accord, reallocated staff towards curricula programmes in this vocational area. An interesting sideline to this is that, whereas a couple of years ago, when we decided that we would replace the old SURS scheme with a more practical vocationally-oriented training programme, there was, I think, some element of ridicule on the basis that the Federal Government was unable to guarantee jobs. It was, therefore, asked why we should be bothering to train anyone for anything. That attitude has changed. We think that that idea, two years ago, was quite soundly based. We believed that there would be a swing towards a steady demand for people in technical vocations, and that has been proved to be the case, so the scepticism has been denied by the reality.

We find that youngsters who are trained pre-vocationally, even given literacy programmes, and who undergo any of these pre-vocational programmes, quite apart from the vocational ones that are more specific, are more readily accepted into the work force. Of course, we have already reached the stage where there is an Australia-wide shortage of youngsters in a number of specific areas. I refer to business and commerce, that is, the practical, grass roots business and commerce as opposed to theoretical, tertiary level.

I refer also to boilermaking, welding, macro-electronics and micro-electronics, construction work, and sheetmetal work, where we are actually looking abroad for people to come in with these specialist skills. We decided two years ago that we would try to train youngsters through a variety of programmes in schools and, where most of our youngsters go from secondary school, into the Department of Further Education. There has been close collaboration between the two departments. In fact, it extends beyond that, because officers of the Department of Labor and Industry, further education and secondary education have, for 18 months to two years, been working together as quite a well-organised team in order to get this school-to-work transition programme working and effective. The youngsters are moving out from this transition programme and finding it relatively easy to obtain employment. Those are the reassuring signs.

Of course, we are steadily extending this programme. We have also supplemented it with an increased apprentice intake. I think that 400 apprentices were taken in and there was about a 17.5 per cent increase during the present D.F.E. year in apprenticeships alone at Department of Further Education level. So, the programme extends from secondary school through to full apprenticeships.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** On the question of transition education and resources that have been committed to it, the Minister said earlier that there will be a reduction of three staff members in the Transition Education Unit. Why is that reduction taking place, and will resources so liberated be specifically earmarked for transition education?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** This question was asked previously, although probably not by the member for Salisbury. I said then that this reduction in the Transition Education Unit was simply a recognition of the fact that in the early days we were literally grabbing at straws and trying to find programmes in secondary, tertiary, technical and further education and putting together a whole range of experi-

mental projects, which were soundly based. We initiated 25 projects in 1979 and early 1980. But, gradually we have weeded out the less productive ones and fined down the programmes, and aligned them with State and Commonwealth industrial and commercial needs. As a result, the team has been fined down. Also, a greater degree of co-operation now exists between secondary, further education and labour and industry departments. So, there has been no diminution of efforts: it is simply that the team is working much better now than it worked in earlier days.

**Mr GLAZBROOK:** I refer to the bottom part of that Curriculum Directorate line, which states 'transport of students, \$568 000'. That line appears three or four times. Page 5 (11) of volume 2 of the support document talks about the cost of providing transport for students, which I take to be an addition of all the different elements of the transport lines. Last year, although \$7 000 000 was allocated to student transport, \$9 000 000 was spent, which was \$1 200 000 more than was budgeted. First, what are the individual divisions of this line, 'transport of students', and, secondly, if there was such an increase last year, what caused it?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Perhaps the Deputy Director-General will respond to this question.

**Dr Tillet:** In the estimate of payments document, there are two references to transport of students, one under Curriculum Directorate and one under Management and School Services Directorate. The first entry relates specifically to transport of handicapped students. The second relates to all other transport of students which, most significantly, is student transport to country schools, where distances travelled are substantial. The figures in the programme and performance budget papers will include some figures for staff in the central office engaged in the administration of providing transport for students, whereas the estimate of payments document shows against that item only the contingencies costs. The reason for the cost escalation from the proposed 1980-81 expenditure to the actual outcome relates to various inflationary factors, including payments to bus drivers.

**Mr GLAZBROOK:** Increasing criticism has been expressed that there seems to be a slowness in publication of modules following the writing of documents by the curriculum section. It has been suggested that eventually, when some of these modules reach teachers, they are based on a distribution method of 300 students to one. Can the Minister comment on that in relation to the amount of money spent on the publication and distribution of documents supporting the curriculum?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I ask the Director-General, as the person responsible for curriculum development, to respond.

**Mr Steinle:** There is always a dilemma in the production of curriculum materials. One tries to get a balance between a steady flow of documents at a rate that teachers can reasonably be expected to handle. If we go too fast, plainly they find it difficult to implement them. If one does not go fast enough, the students are put at risk. It is a difficult balance to achieve. Add to that the difficulty of very high cost escalation in production of such materials, and I think members of the Committee might understand the dilemmas faced by the Director of Curriculum. We have looked carefully at this over a good number of years. It is not a late decision at all.

Most teachers will recall the day when virtually all teachers were given virtually all departmental documents. Many of them were unused, because they were inappropriate for the age level that the person was teaching. As a result, quite expensive documents were relatively underused. We took a quite conscious decision two years ago that we would endeavour to rationalise the circulation of Education

Department documents on a formula basis, which we believe gives adequate supplies of those kinds of documents to teachers in classrooms that require them. I know that some teachers feel that that formula is too frugal and that more such documents should be circulated. I suggest that it is a matter of judgment, and I am yet to be convinced that teachers who need those documents do not have adequate access to them.

**Mr GLAZBROOK:** I notice, under the activities shown under 'Curriculum' at page 5 (5), that the following appears:

To assess needs for course subject development.

Looking down the lines published, whilst it shows a column for evaluation, which I take to be the evaluation of the course after its implementation, I wonder whether any money is spent on post-educational audit to ascertain whether curriculum courses developed under the assessment of needs for courses are checked after the courses are completed, to show applicability to students later on.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I ask the Director-General to respond to that question, too.

**Mr Steinle:** By and large, South Australia has not spent a great deal on assessing success of courses after students had completed them. There are two reasons for that. All form of assessment is extremely expensive. I believe (and I guess that I must speak personally now) that one must be quite sure that money spent on course evaluation is of value to schoolchildren. I believe that right around the world, and in this country as well, there is something of a tendency for educational researchers to spend time, effort and money on researching the success of courses without having any real impact or feed back into what happens in classrooms.

Therefore, we have relied on surveys of the kind referred to earlier, conducted by ACER, which we believe give us a fairly accurate assessment of the overall education process. The stand that we have thus far adopted has been that we are unwilling to spend a great deal of Education Department effort on the production of tests that cannot be used by teachers in classrooms for the use of children. It is a matter of judgment, and I stand by the judgment, although this matter will be discussed again by Ministers at the Australian Educational Council meeting to be held next week in Queensland. Ministers will have to make a decision about whether or not to repeat the five-year national assessment programme or whether to adopt a States-based co-operative testing machinery. No doubt the Minister will make known his views at that meeting and A.E.C. will decide which way the decision will go.

The matter has been further complicated by the first report of the Keeves Committee, which has suggested that we consolidate the two branches of the department that are responsible for curriculum and research and planning, and that we develop a new directorate of curriculum research and development. The Government has the report, and in time it will give us directions about the way in which we should go as a result of the Keeves Report. Whichever way we go, built into all of the courses that are produced, I trust that there will continue to be a capacity to assess their success. Whether that is done as part of the curriculum thrust or by separate directorate, as is the case now, is not a matter about which I am greatly concerned, as long as it is done, and done adequately.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** I refer to the vocational school concept. Regrettably, despite what the Minister says, there appears to be a certain amount of scepticism about the training of young people, which is unfortunate. The member for Salisbury stated that he would not like to see a return of the technical schools, yet it was interesting to note that in Victoria last year there was quite a marked increase in the

student population in technical schools and a decline in the population of high schools. This would tend to indicate, as the Minister stressed, that parents are looking towards this sort of education for their children, for whatever reason they may have.

The department has been looking at the vocational school concept. Obviously, Goodwood High School is a classic example of how well this system operates, and I commend those staff members of Goodwood High School for the development of that course, particularly a former senior master of mine, Mr Kevin Clark. I find it somewhat distressing that, in the light of the developments in that area, as reflected in the sheet that was supplied by the Minister prior to the luncheon adjournment, there has been a reduction in the curriculum of one person in the technical studies area. Will the Minister elaborate as to who is that person, what expertise he provided to the curriculum sector, and whether this expertise is being covered adequately by other people in the curriculum sector?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The Director-General will answer that question.

**Mr Steinle:** I wish to make a general comment about the advisory positions, because I believe that there was a misunderstanding. It is not a matter of those positions having been done away with: it is simply a matter of using resources responsibly. We simply cannot provide all of the advisory staff in all of the areas in which teachers would like us to provide them, much as we would like to. A choice must be made on an annual basis. The positions are reviewed annually.

While a position may not be included this year, that does not mean that it will not be included next year. In fact, the chances are that that position will be included next year, for the very reason that we have to look at priority areas and allocate advisory staff in relation to those priorities. The number of positions should not be seen as final but rather as an assessment for this year on the best advice that we can obtain from people in the regions.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** I thank the Director-General for that comment, which certainly alleviates a lot of the fear that people may have that these positions are being taken away. Again I draw on past experience. At a school at which I taught, the general school population was declining, yet, interestingly enough, the number of students in technical studies and home economics was increasing, or at least remaining static, which would indicate that students were remaining in those courses. Has consideration been given to increasing the per student capita allocation for that type of activity?

As the Minister will no doubt be aware, it is becoming increasingly difficult for teachers in the technical studies and home economics areas to buy the materials or ingredients to provide adequate practical experience for students. Regrettably, because of the cost factor, some schools have found that they are having to return to a more theoretical teaching system. That is fine in itself, but, without practical experience, the theory is often lost on students. One knows that there is no greater teacher than practical experience. It would certainly make the task easier if more consideration was given to increasing the per student capita allocation for the provision of materials and ingredients.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** This question has been put to the Director-General and me at a number of high schools as we have travelled around the State. Some 10 years ago a decision was made in the Education Department, first, to phase out the technical high schools and more or less to encourage all schools to have some sort of wood work, metal work and craft work for boys and girls as part and parcel of the school's normal stock in trade. As stated earlier, there is increasing emphasis in Victoria by parents and

students in regard to technical education. That is probably because the Victorian Education Department maintained a very strong technical school proportion. That decision was taken, as I said, before the Director-General's time and certainly well before my time.

The latest initiatives of the Director-General towards the six-school concept and the school-to-work transition unit are a recognition that we should be encouraging youngsters to undertake some course of technical instruction. That occurs already in the majority of high schools. We are looking now for specialist courses that we could introduce in an experimental series of schools. There is also the problem that, in both secondary education and in further education, South Australia was doing quite well in regard to equipment some 10 years ago. The honourable member might recall that further education was undergoing an expansion in the early to middle 1970s and the really first-class equipment that was provided then is now depreciating throughout the educational system.

This has happened throughout the Australian education system. At the last two or three Australian Education Council meetings that we have held we have suggested that the Federal Government might take a special interest in this area and make available one-off grants for both technical and further education and secondary education with a view to encouraging this sort of educational transition. That, of course, is part of the school-to-work transition programme. I claimed a little earlier that the Federal Government has in fact this year taken a couple of initiatives that displeased us. It earmarked capital funds amounting to \$2 500 000 for South Australia and \$2 500 000 in recurrent expenditure. The capital was allocated to the TAFE sector, and the recurrent expenditure was allocated to the secondary sector.

Those amounts of \$2 500 000, both of them fixed amounts, was money which the State already had. They were grants that normally would have been ours to allocate according to our own priorities. However, the Federal Government said that the money had to be earmarked for specific projects, and then it took the credit for having spent the money, which was really ours. So, this is the area of dispute that we are currently resolving. Meanwhile, we are hoping that the money that the Federal Government has allocated will be allocated untied so that we can decide where to spend it, but of course we would like additional funds for equipment, and that is a long-standing problem, Australia wide—and world wide, come to that.

I refer to the provision of up-to-date technical equipment so that youngsters can go out into the world and compete, being able to operate the machinery which is more readily available in industry and commerce now. The problem is recognised, but of course the cost of equipment is extremely high. Once again, that is the reason why we are specialising with six vocational schools for the time being and why we have them as high priorities. I would dearly like to do as the member suggests and make more of this equipment available in schools. In particular, we realise that it costs quite a lot simply to purchase one strip of aluminium rod which might be drilled or machined. The cost of raw materials has escalated very rapidly over the years, and we bear that fact in mind, too.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** Whilst it is good on the one hand that the Federal Government may come forward (and I stress the word 'may') with grants for the provision of equipment in those areas, I find it somewhat regrettable that it appears that it would be following similar lines to those followed in the past, namely, *ad hoc* decisions concerning a new library or science block, rather than developing a comprehensive system which could be gradually built on to. It should not be suddenly spurting forth with funds for development of

one area to the detriment of another. However, surely there is an area where we can further negotiate with the Federal Government. Referring back to your comments about the school concept, discussions that I have had with the Director and with other people indicate that the decision on which schools will be chosen for this particular scheme is still very much in the negotiable stage. In the central/southern region, three schools were suggested to be part of this total scheme, and I think the unfortunate message received now is that they are the only suggestions. Some people in those schools and in other schools tend to think that it is already a *fait accompli* that those three schools will be selected.

I am wondering whether the Minister can clarify the position as to how these schools will be chosen, when they may be chosen and whether there might be a bi-lateral agreement to have these schools evenly distributed. The three suggestions that came forth for the southern region were the Mawson, Dover Gardens and Marion High Schools, which are three schools close to each other. Therefore, the schools in the deeper south, those schools in what I call paradise, on the other side of O'Halloran Hill, were missed out of this scheme. It would be interesting to know whether there may be some revision of this whole concept.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The matter of the six schools that are under consideration has to go to Cabinet, and the matter might have been resolved on Monday had it not been for the rather belated promise of the Federal Prime Minister to re-examine the earmarking of funds. In fact, we were all ready to put a submission forward. In view of the fact that the Federal Government might change its mind and give us more rope to play with, more room in which to make decisions, we referred the decision to Cabinet. There are six schools involved and I believe that those schools would be pretty well aware of the fact that they are under very strong consideration. I will not name them today in case there is some change, but I can assure the honourable member that the six schools have been asked over the last several weeks whether they are prepared to join in with the scheme.

Of course, our aim would be to expand the scheme as quickly as possible. At the time being we are looking at one year's funding, and naturally we are anxious to get the scheme widened. I believe there would already be plenty of schools in the metropolitan area alone which of their own accord are initiating vocational programmes, quite irrespective of whether they are chosen or not. In fact, the submissions that we sent to the Prime Minister which we telexed and vocadexed yesterday stated that at least one full-time equivalent staff member is currently involved in 26 high schools in the central/northern region alone and would be involved in teaching and in vocationally orientated groups.

So, the thrust is already there at the grass roots level in the schools; they are already innovative of their own accord, and that is quite apart from any additional Federal funding which might come forward. They are diversifying, from one proposal to another, school-to-work programmes of their own choice, which is very reassuring. It does not mean therefore that there will simply be six specialist schools and nothing else happening. The mood in education is changing quite quickly, and much of the change is coming from a voluntary level of existing staff. Changes in education, of course, have been a long-term considered problem. If we restructure our courses, where do we get the staff from? We are now finding that the staff themselves are proving to be adaptable in approach, which is very reassuring. Incidentally, the total estimated salaries of teachers engaged in vocational training in schools is around the \$2 000 000 mark. Already a considerable amount of effort

is going into school-to-work transition training at the schools level.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I understand that it has been proposed that teacher-initiated and parent-initiated in-service work will require that 50 per cent of the time allocated by teachers will be in their own time. If this is correct, who made that decision? If the decision has been made, how much will that save the department in terms of relieving teachers, and what consultation was held with the Teacher Service and Development Committee about this matter?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I suppose there are several facets to this response. One is that there have been several inquiries into teacher education and training: the Auchmuty inquiry at the Federal level and TEASA at the State level, which both raised this issue as to whether teachers might not engage in different forms of training and retraining in their own time. Of course, I think all of us would acknowledge that teachers have for a long while traditionally done courses of external studies in their own time, but the problem that we have, I suppose, is that this is not purely for the Education Department to make a definite decision upon, because the committee that decides upon these in-service training courses is an inter-systemic committee, and therefore a decision that is arrived at must be a consensus decision with the independent schools, with the Catholic education system, the Education Department, and of course, an influx of Federal funds comes into the matter, too. There are several different people to consider. However, it would be quite correct to say that this has been suggested by the national and State inquiries, and also the State Budget Review Committee, in its overall inquiry into every portfolio, asked the Education Department to consider that as one of the alternatives, but no decision has been arrived at.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** Before a decision of that nature is made, will the Teacher Service and Development Committee be fully consulted and given an opportunity for their input to be included?

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I just want to make one final comment on this matter, namely that I am pleased to hear that they will have that input. There has been a tendency over recent times for in-service work to be unfairly criticised, the indication being that teachers grab whatever chance they can for time off during working hours. The Minister, of course is correct that teachers do a lot of after-hours further study. I understand that one out of seven teachers is involved at any one time in further study, which has an obvious impact on that teacher's capacity to perform during school hours. I will keep to only two questions on that so that we can get through more questions speedily.

**Mr GLAZBROOK:** I have seen a publication indicating that an approach has been, or is being, made to the Education Department for a State-run Christian-based school. I wondered whether or not that would be involved in the Curriculum Directorate and whether or not they would be participating in the evaluation of that proposal, which has been or is being made.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The Director-General of Education himself attended a meeting as recently as last night, and I would ask him to make some preliminary comment.

**Mr Steidle:** There are two such propositions, one from the north side and one from the Hills, where a group of parents is asking that a Christian-based school, which should be a part of the Education Department, should be established. My officers and I have discussed this at very great length. While it is true that we have, wherever possible, met the requests of parents for schools to give the greatest range of options to parents, we do not believe that it is in the best interests of students to provide a school of that kind.

Very briefly, this is for three reasons: first, it is very difficult to establish precisely what is meant by 'Christian' because of the differences that arise out of denominational differences; secondly, there is the question whether it is possible to run such a school and, at the same time, ensure that children who are non-Christian will get access to that school because of its very nature; and, thirdly, because the question of staffing it raises so many problems of tests of various kinds for teachers to ensure that they are, indeed, Christian. Having considered those three major features and one or two others, we are saying to the parents in both those areas that we do not consider that the provision of such a school within the framework of the Education Department is in the best interests of the children.

**Mr GLAZBROOK:** I assume that the Minister gave that answer to the meeting that he attended yesterday. Would the Curriculum Directorate be involved in any of the curricula that perhaps may arise from parents now wishing to enrol at Christian-based schools, or starting their own, or being involved in new emergences of schools such as that?

**Mr Steidle:** I will answer those questions *seriatim*. First, I made plain my position to last night's meeting, which was very well attended. I should also say that they proceeded to pass a motion (I am talking now of the northern group) that they would continue to press for such a school. I do not know whether your question is based on the fact that the Chairman of that meeting happened to be an officer of the Curriculum Directorate in his private capacity, but that is a fact. However, the resources of the Curriculum Directorate would not be made available to such a school. It ought also to be added that in general independent schools of whatever kind use Education Department curricula substantially. All our curriculum services and advisory services are made available to schools that need them. Also, the point was made by one of the influential speakers that he would assume that the Christian offering within the school would be based on the Education Department's religious education programme.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I take it, therefore, that that is going back on the previous policy indicated by officers of the Education Department when, in February this year, an officer of the Education Department said the department was very interested in the proposal. This relates to the Hills Christian community school.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The suggestion that was put forward to the department was considered at some length by departmental officers, before it was presented ultimately to the Minister. I think probably that the negotiations had proceeded too far before there was Ministerial consultation. Be that as it may, the fact remains that, were any submission to receive consideration, I believe that Cabinet would ultimately make the final recommendation. It is an issue which is obviously very wide-spread in its implications because, quite apart from the Christian ethic that is supported in our community, it would be quite possible for other groups then to ask for the Education Department to open up a school quite specific to their needs. Having once set the precedent, it may be quite difficult to change that policy. So it would have to receive very careful consideration, I am quite sure at Cabinet level, before ultimately a suggestion was either agreed to or turned down.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I certainly think that this matter needs a lot of careful consideration before any further developments take place. I venture to suggest that it should go beyond Cabinet even; it should come to the Legislature if the Education Department system is going to embark on a broad change of concept such as this. The community through its Legislature has the right to debate that whole issue. I was referring not to Ministerial responsibility, but to change in departmental response on that matter. I am

reassured that much further consideration will be given to this matter.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I think, in final response to that, one of the leading church figures in Adelaide (I believe it was one of the leading figures in the Church of England, actually) some 12 or 18 months ago did make public comment that he felt that the secular schools should not be involved in religious instruction other than the religious education course that is currently designed and approved by a whole range of people involved in Christian churches and in education. It was compiled as a result of a great deal of consultation within and without the Education Department. Although that may not be the last word on the subject, I think that that probably reflects the thinking of a lot of people within Christian churches.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I have one last question on the Curriculum Directorate line before moving on to another line. It is a little different from the topic about which we were just talking, but I was really being supplementary in those first comments to the member for Brighton. With regard to Troika, I have just this very minute in fact received a telegram which reads:

Strongly oppose education cuts especially advisory services Troika Theatre in education suffers deplorable 55 per cent cut-back in personnel.

That is a very hefty cut-back in personnel. I know that the Troika section of the Education Department does very good work. Indeed, the Minister and I had the pleasure of seeing some of their performances related to the I.Y.D.P. Both of us gave some very supportive remarks about the role of that group and the way in which it could assist in education in the Department. Why has it been cut back 55 per cent?

**The CHAIRMAN:** Does the particular matter that the member raises come within the particular vote?

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I was advised this morning of cutbacks in school support staff, and I presume that the reduction of five staff in performing arts refers to Troika, among other areas.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I am not certain how many of the five persons mentioned under performing arts were in the Troika unit itself. I think that that may go outside the area, too. The matter generally of support for theatre and education is under consideration. I still have to arrive at some decision in conjunction with the Minister of Arts. For the time being, this decision has been taken and will stand. However, there are a number of other alternatives we are considering in order to involve Carclew, for example, so while this represents the decision for budgetary purposes it is possible that there may be some changes in the course of a year. For the time being, however, we have decided that this will be a reduction on that curriculum line.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** When will the cutback take effect, and when could it be expected, if a decision is made to go against that cutback, that the restoration of staff will be made?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I am not suggesting that there would be a change to that cutback, but there may be some transfer of effort from one department to another. Carclew is a joint venture—they are quite critically involved in theatre and education. The cutback would take place from the beginning of next year, so the House would receive some quite positive information from the Ministries, I assume, between now and Christmas.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** So there possibly could be no interruption to its services?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** It is unlikely that it would go along unchanged. I am quite sure that if there were any new decision it would still involve restructuring.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** Another way of saying 'cutbacks'?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I am not sure. As I said, it still has to be renegotiated. The Minister of Arts came up with a request and the Director-General came up with a suggestion. It just happened that I saw some possibility of collaboration between the departments. It still has to be worked out, so we must accept that, for the time being, this is the departmental decision. It has been approved, and if there is a change I am not certain what course of action we will take.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** Turning to the curriculum lines, all of them mention the transport of students. What consideration has the department given to the provision of diesel buses rather than petrol buses in the light of their more economic consumption of fuel? Also, to what extent does the department look carefully at the condition of school buses, particularly when those buses come off normal services run by the department and are made available to schools to purchase for their own purposes? It is quite surprising that in many instances schools either have to have extensive work done to these buses, or, in some cases, the schools do not want to buy a bus because it is in such poor condition that it would cost too much to bring up to required standards. What precautions are taken by the department to ensure high standards for school buses?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I acknowledge that diesel buses are better because of the cheaper fuel costs. However, the transport system of the Education Department, which is run by a small group of three people and which is quite remarkable, really, for the planning that goes on there for the vast number of miles travelled, recognises that diesels, although cheaper to run, create some problems. First, diesel fuel is not readily available everywhere in the State, although it is in most places. There are additional problems because, should a diesel bus break down, the repairs to internal parts of a diesel engine need to be done in almost clinically clean conditions. In outback areas it is usual for a mechanic with primitive accommodation to do jobs, and that is one reason why a decision was made to use petrol engine buses rather than diesel engine ones, although we recognise the merit of using diesel fuel.

Buses used in the Education Department are depreciated over nine years, during which time most of them would have been running on roads which are less than satisfactory. Very many of them are running on rough outback roads. The buses are moved around. They are intermittently brought into the metropolitan area for major overhauls, and generally, when the buses have performed their nine years of service, they are very dilapidated. The best of these buses are retained for a pool. I think there are about 20 buses currently in the pool. We could do with about 30, so that as one comes in for repairs one goes out on loan. Currently, we have 20 buses in good condition in the pool. It is the really dilapidated buses that go out for tender. In some cases schools are offered the buses, but generally there is some urgent need for repair; otherwise we would have retained the bus for our own emergency pool.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** My next question relates to grants to schools. I am not entirely certain which line it comes under. I imagine that it comes under 'Management and School Services' but I can take the Minister's advice on that. In 1980, certain grant levels were set and published in the *Gazette* of 10 October 1980, vol. 8, No. 27. In the *Gazette* of 9 October 1981, vol. 9, No. 27, there was another statement about grants to schools, consisting of supplies grant, the books and material grant, and the ground maintenance grant. In both cases, but for the dates, they are identical. That clearly indicates that there has been an erosion of provision of funds to schools as a result of inflation not having been taken into account. Why is that so, and

how does the Minister anticipate that school communities will be able to counter that effect?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The school communities will have a problem, certainly, but not nearly as big a problem as they had in 1979, when we came to office, because I think that during that year the grants had been reduced by half. In fact, one of the first things that the new Government did was reinstate the grants to the level at which they were before that cut, so there was already a loss for one year that parents and schools had to sustain. That is one problem.

There is another problem, the effect of which is being felt by everyone. That is that the cost of labour is an ever-increasing component in annual expenses, and, whereas in 1975 the cost in the educational dollar was about 85 cents for staffing, in 1981 the cost has increased to 90 cents in the dollar. At the same time, the previous Government and this Government have increased the educational effort over the years from 26 per cent of the State Budget to one-third of the Budget, so, as we spend more and more money on education, a diminishing amount of each educational dollar is available for the grants; that is, all things other than school staff.

We continue to reaffirm that people are the most important part of the educational system, and we have improved the student-teacher ratios in education over the past several years. It is a fact of life that the more money we spend the less change we have to allocate to those parent and school needs in the resource area. I do not know that there is any solution other than the two straight-out alternatives. One alternative is a major reduction of staff and the transfer of the initiative of that resource into other initiatives, and the other alternative is to tax more heavily and pay a greater amount into education. We have resisted both of these methods. We have tried to maintain the educational share of the State Budget at around 33 per cent.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** The Committee is still awaiting the reply from the Minister to the question I asked this morning on relativities. I think that that reply may contain a lot of information on the effect on grants for schools and the way they have not been indexed in the current Budget. I think the point should also be made that it is not entirely the fault of salaries within the system that 90 per cent now goes to salaries and 10 per cent to non-salary items. I would have thought that there was a bit of a push-pull effect. Salaries may be increasing the Education Department budget but, if we cut down the allocation to the non-salary component, it becomes a smaller share of the total cake, and not indexing school fees this year must lead to the fact that, having an inflationary component in them, salaries and wages must grow in terms of the total cake.

The Opposition is worried, because increasingly there seems to be a trend to require the user to pay for education at the point of service delivery. Even if one adopts the user pays philosophy, we suggest that another approach that could be used, different from this one, which is forcing costs back to the parent at the time of service delivery, namely, the concept of user pays as a kind of insurance policy through the tax system.

In other words, people over their working life contribute premiums towards education through tax payments and draw on that when their children are in an educational facility. When the children are there, they are not more imposed upon than at any other time. But, we seem to be seeing greater and greater impositions put on parents at the time that their children are at school. Also, we are ignoring the fact that the biggest user of education services is society at large, which benefits by a healthy education system, independently of whether every individual in society has children using those facilities.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I think the member made a statement, rather than asked a question, in his final few words. He was obviously advocating the possibility of there being different methods of fund raising and resource allocation. Of course, we have considered not the proposition he propounded; but, certainly the possibility of voucher funding has been put forward by people, such as Professor Blandy at Flinders University, among a range of other options.

For the time being, we have chosen to remain with the system that is presently operating. Both the present and former Governments have been willing to acknowledge that costs will vary, even from school to school in South Australia, because the 12 schools survey, which was initiated by a former Minister of Education (Hon. Don Hopgood), revealed that over those 12 schools fees payable by individual students varied from somewhere in the \$20 bracket to as high as the \$50 bracket. From school to school different decisions are made about the funds that a school needs. It is not an easy problem to resolve, when schools have that freedom to make decisions at a local level. They have varying needs. There is no rubber stamping of education.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** It may well be that schools have freedom to determine what fees they will raise. They also suffer under the severe constraint that, if funding available to them through such things as school grants is cut back, they are no longer free of the matter. They must raise the money somehow, and the natural source becomes parents. Is the Minister concerned about what could only be the inevitable result of increasing imposts on parents following maintenance of grants at the previous year's level?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I am concerned, but far more concerned than was the previous Government when it literally slashed those grants. I do not know why that was done. It seemed a very eccentric move that the grants should be cut. That meant that schools had a year, during which time they were thrown on their own resources. Schools had to carry that backlog. It is equally difficult for education departments across Australia to index grants upwards, in very much the same way that I told the member for Mawson that we were looking to the Federal Government to provide some sort of one-off additional grant to all States to enable us to catch up with equipment that had depreciated quite steadily over the past five to 10 years.

We acknowledge that it is a widespread problem, but we have asked for Federal assistance. We are not the only Government, as I know that the former South Australian Government has repeatedly echoed those sentiments at the A.E.C. level. It comes up on the agenda each time. The Federal Government has seized upon one aspect of education, funding it for a short time and moving off to another one. This is the way of Federal Governments, irrespective of which Party is in power. I refer to the libraries grants available in two trienniums from 1969 onwards, the science grants that were available, and the equipment grants available in further education.

These have been cyclical. I do not know what will be the next target. Currently, it is transition education. That is the current three to five-year boom area for Federal funding. We hope that this will be recognised as a major problem, because it is directly associated with our need to move into transition education. It is an additional problem.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I appreciate that the Minister seems to understand the impact of not increasing grants to schools. He clearly made that point. I hope that, when it finally comes out in the wash, school communities will not be expected to bear heavier and heavier burdens. I believe that the time has well and truly come to state where we believe the role of parental funding should start and finish in education costs, and whether or not it should become a critical feature of the education system. Personally, I do

not believe that it should be an essential feature of the running of a school. I do not believe that a school should have to rely on extensive parental funding or support. I believe that is the job of Consolidated Revenue; the task of parental funding should be to enhance the system.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** I refer to page 11 of the Programme Estimates, relating to administration and disciplinary investigations. The department is in a rather dichotomous situation. Teachers say that there should be a greater effort to eliminate the dead wood, but no-one is prepared to say who or what is the dead wood. Will the Minister say whether there will be any broadening of the criteria in determining the so-called dead wood? I ask this question because a number of teachers have told me of their concern that part of the frustration in teaching arises from the fact that, because they are among the hard workers in the school community, they are asked to do any additional jobs and extra-curricular work. By the same token, other teachers are out of the gate on the dot of 3.30, almost quicker than the children.

This comment has been made not only by teachers but also by parents who have observed this situation in various schools. That is not to say that the teachers who leave at this time of the day do not have a valid excuse for doing so, but we must not be oblivious of the fact that some teachers are not as conscientious as are the majority. Is there any expansion in the criteria used to determine the competency of teachers in the profession?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I will ask the Director-General to respond initially to that question.

**Mr Steinle:** There are two categories of investigation of that kind. One category involves cases where there is clearly some misconduct; those cases are handled simply and quickly, in terms of a set of guidelines that are known to all. The second category is that to which the honourable member has referred, and involves incompetence. This matter is always tricky. The last thing that anyone wants is some kind of witch-hunt. However, where there is demonstrated incompetence, the clear guidelines of the department provide that the teacher will be told that his work is incompetent; he will then be given an opportunity to take advice on how his work can be improved; and, if he refuses to co-operate and improve the quality of his work, not infrequently but indeed regularly we take action against such people.

When teachers are dismissed on the grounds of incompetence it is not done in the full glare of publicity. I see no point in that. We endeavour to give people an opportunity to rehabilitate in other areas, and so we do not make a great deal of noise about dismissals on the basis of incompetence. Those dismissals are made, and I would not say that we are stepping up those dismissals, but certainly we are maintaining vigilance in regard to incompetent teachers. I draw the attention of the Committee to the fact that the Keeves committee of inquiry, as one of its terms of reference, considered the matter of the inspection (for want of a better word) of schools and colleges. I await with great interest the committee's views, which will be available in February.

**Mr TRAINER:** I refer to the Curriculum Directorate and the Minister's earlier response to a question by the member for Salisbury regarding the Troika Theatre Group. Does the reallocation of resources with respect to that group represent a downgrading by the Government of the importance of theatre in education? I tie up that question with a series of questions that I asked the Minister of Arts last night with respect to theatre in education. These questions followed on from an article that appeared in the *Advertiser* last Saturday, which stated that theatre groups must now face the censor before they can perform in South Australian

schools. The Minister of Arts was most helpful last night with respect to what is to be called the Schools Performing Arts Review Committee. The Minister outlined the composition of that committee and to a certain extent he outlined the qualifications that the members of the committee brought to it.

There was a bit of uncertainty as to whether that committee came into being at the instigation of the Education Department or the Department for the Arts, or both, and if both, which department had the greatest influence in its coming into existence. I would be interested in the Minister's response to that question. I would also be interested to know the source or sources of complaints that the Minister has received with respect to theatrical groups appearing in schools. Can the Minister recall the titles of any performances that have aroused adverse comment? The Minister was quoted in the report on Saturday as having said that he could not remember the names of any performances that parents found objectionable.

I would also like to ask the Minister in exactly that same context whether the reference in that article to the Director-General investigating similar complaints about literature in schools is at all related to any sort of pressure that has been put on the department either directly through the Ministry, or indirectly through Government backbenchers and from the Festival of Light? It is so strange that that should appear shortly after the Festival of Light publication pointed out that, 'parents should not have to keep checking up on what their children are exposed to in State schools . . .' They further stated that 'books, plays, films and all teaching ought to be inculcating higher moral standards to the young people left in their charge'. It was further stated, 'We believe the department should bring questionable books, films, plays, etc. to the attention of parents. The department is responsible for standards. These should not be dependent on parents being alert. Does this indicate a new role being adopted by the department?'

**The Hon. H. Allison:** In the first place, I am not familiar with the last comment that the honourable member made. Do I understand correctly that it came directly from the Festival of Light?

**Mr TRAINER:** It came from the same Festival of Light publication that had the member for Brighton on the front cover publicising a very significant and important meeting on sex education that that particular member was going to address, but for some reason found himself unable to do so.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I can assure members of the Committee that the issue is doubly irrelevant. I have not read that particular edition, any more than I have read the majority of publications from that organisation. However, I can reassure the Committee that at no stage have I received any representation or solicitation from the Festival of Light regarding the performances by any organisation, theatre group or theatre company in South Australian schools. I think that I might carry a good deal of the responsibility, together with the Minister of Arts, in establishing this Committee, because over the past two years I have had a steady stream of telephone calls and letters from different people whose children had attended certain plays, which I will not name, because I have forgotten the titles. They were presented by, I think, two or three companies, and in each case (I will give those groups credit) they subsequently were withdrawn from the circuit and from future performances.

I think that in most cases the plays in question would have had a number of lines or a number of actions contained in them that may well have been left out without affecting the general impact of the play. In none of the cases did I see the performance, so I was not in a position to judge first hand, but in each of the instances I referred the matter

to the Education Department's officers for assessment and received a report back. I do not think that in any case was any performance withdrawn before the company that was performing the play actually withdrew it of its own accord from its own repertoire. I am pretty sure about that.

We drew to the attention of the different theatre companies the fact that parents had been objecting, and we received various reactions. I think the point that I made repeatedly as Minister was that I do not really care what adults see or read; there is a great deal of freedom in the adult world which is going down steadily into the underworld. What an adult does is certainly less relevant than the fact that in schools there is a captive audience, and, therefore, anything that is brought into a school and performed before that captive audience is generally assessed on the spot. There is no prior assessment. It was simply that the Minister of Arts and I decided that we would like to have some sort of committee to look at the repertoires, the scripts of the plays that the companies were offering to schools, so that we could make some sort of prior assessment. I do not think that is unreasonable. Quite frankly, I think that already we have had co-operation from the companies involved.

**Mr TRAINER:** Before I ask a follow up question, I want to place on record the fact that I do not in any way wish to imply that there may not have been more than one occasion on which material unsuitable for a particular age group was presented. I was merely presenting the Minister with an opportunity to expand on the statement that appeared in last Saturday's *Advertiser*. However, one of the comments that he made interested me greatly. The Minister said that he had had no contact whatsoever with the Festival of Light. However, various people, as individuals, had approached him. I will quote here the name of one of the performances that I think the Minister had in mind, namely, *Until you say you love me*, which was presented in our State schools. Is that the name of the play that the Minister had in mind?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Yes, the Director-General informs me that that was the name of one.

**Mr TRAINER:** *Until you say you love me* was presented in State schools until sufficient protest brought that to an end. Mr Allison then wrote to the Festival of Light saying, 'I can now let you know that it will not be shown in 1981 or thereafter.' The Minister may have been under the impression that he was contacting an individual, but the individual that he contacted certainly did not have that impression. It was believed that the Minister was approaching the Festival of Light as a body.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I had lost sight of the fact that that may have gone in response to a request. I point out that the letter, whether it was to the Festival of Light or to an individual, was in response to a rather belated inquiry, and in fact that play was not withdrawn at the insistence of the Festival of Light. I think you will find that by the time they received the letter, the theatre group had already withdrawn it.

**Mr TRAINER:** Of its own volition?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Yes. The letter was sent recently, and that play was withdrawn last year, not at Ministerial or departmental insistence. I am reasonably confident that that is so. So, if the Festival of Light wishes to give the Minister credit for exerting pressure, I think it is credit that is wrongly apportioned. I do not take any credit for that, because it involved reasonable negotiation with the group. The play referred to, *Until you say you love me* was one of the plays in question that parents repeatedly complained about, both in the metropolitan and country areas, but there were others.

Incidentally, this issue extends beyond simply the field of drama. It also goes into the field of poetry and literature, and parents have even complained about material which is presented for study at Matriculation level. I believe that there the material which is set by the Public Examination Board for sophisticated youngsters is something which we are not ready to criticise at length. We feel that that is affecting a much more mature and narrower audience than the material that goes to a captive audience into primary and secondary schools. Therefore, we have not tackled the Matriculation material anywhere near as vigorously. In fact, we have generally erred on the side of defending things of literary merit in education.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** We have heard from time to time Opposition member stating that one cannot programme or quantify the cost of programmes in education. However, I think that certain programmes could be quantified and costed correctly. I attribute this mainly (and I refer to the Curriculum Directorate, about which we have just been talking) to the development of text books. I refer to a book on woodwork and another on metalwork, which I am glad to see have now been completed. I know from all the years that I was involved in that area that it took some considerable time for committees to get together and nut out this text book.

I know that at times there were arguments over some quite trivial points about whether or not the thing should be proceeded with and printed. I am happy to say that those matters have now been overcome and that the books are now in circulation within the schools. Again, I commend the quality of those books. That highlights the fact that these books are not cheap to produce, particularly if we consider the manpower and resources involved therein particularly if their production is protracted over a number of years. Therefore, I wonder whether the department puts forward a specified programme as to when these books should be completed and thereby keeps an accurate costing on the production, and particularly the development, of these books?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I shall ask the Director-General to respond to that, although I do not think that he would have the precise data to hand. The Director-General did present to me some months ago information extending, I think, into 1983.

**Mr Steinle:** The department does produce some books. It is in areas of the kind that the honourable member for Mawson has mentioned. By and large, we take the view that that is the prerogative of private enterprise to produce books and then for schools to evaluate them and use them as they see fit. But, in some areas where there are no publications, it is true that the department does produce some books. It is also true that they are very expensive. But, I can certainly indicate that we have a programme that is quite public. Indeed, it has been published for use of teachers, and I can make that available if the honourable member is interested.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** I refer to Management of School Services Directorate, and specifically to page 12 under the heading 'Replacement/upgrading of accommodation (major works)—activities as for development of new and additional accommodation component'. There are two categories to which I want to refer here. One is the Miltaburra school, which is to replace the Wirrulla and Haslam schools. I wonder whether the Minister can elaborate on the progress of this new accommodation.

The other is the old Reynella school. I believe that the Minister and the Director of Education came down (for which I am grateful) to have a look at the facilities there. I believe that, in consultation with the region and, more particularly with the school council, it has now been deter-

mined to upgade the old church building. Can the Minister say when that work will proceed and whether it will be completed in time for next year's schooling programme.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The Miltaburra Area School is scheduled to tender call in June 1982, with completion for September 1983. That, of course, will mean the amalgamation of several schools in that area, being concentrated on the Miltaburra Area School.

The old Reynella project is not on the departmental list. That is a regional priority. The honourable member is quite correct when he says that the old church hall that we inspected will be subject to renovation. I believe the original suggestion was that it be demolished and replaced. It is the consensus opinion (I think the Public Works Standing Committee alerted us to this fact some time ago) that the most expensive parts of buildings are new walls, so the old Reynella project was reassessed. It was decided to retain the church hall and to renovate it extensively inside. That, I believe, is on regional priority list. I undertake to check with the region and ascertain the commencement date.

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

Works and Services—Education Department,  
\$1 400 000—examination declared completed.

Further Education, \$54 108 000

**Chairman:**

Mr G. M. Gunn

**Members:**

Mr R. K. Abbott  
Mr Lynn Arnold  
Mr E. S. Ashenden  
Mr R. E. Glazbrook  
Mr K. C. Hamilton  
Mr J. W. Olsen  
Mr I. Schmidt  
Mr J. P. Trainer

**Witness:**

The Hon. H. Allison, Minister of Education and Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

**Departmental Advisers:**

Mr L. A. Kloeden, Director-General, Department of Further Education.

Mr D. Carter, Director, Administration and Finance, Department of Further Education.

Mr P. W. I. Fleming, Director, College Operations, Department of Further Education.

Mr T. Beeching, Chief Accountant, Department of Further Education.

**The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr Olsen):** I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** The Chairman indicated that I might make a few comments at the start of each vote, Mr Acting Chairman. My comments here relate to the question of the volume of work we have to get through. The Opposition gave an undertaking in the previous Committee that we would keep our questions and comments concise so that we could get through as much work as possible. We believe that we have lived up to that bargain, but have had to put aside a great volume of questions because of the time of the Committee running out. We indicate, again, that we

will keep our questions precise and hope that other members of the Committee will see fit to do the same.

My question relates to total funding for the Further Education Department. I understand that the impact of the cuts in funding to the Further Education Department is an amount of \$700 000. What is the real impact of that when taking into account the extra work areas, the extra endeavour areas that the Department of Further Education is now required to pick up which it did not have in the previous 12 months?

**Mr Kloeden:** This morning, when we were discussing the 4.5 and the 8.5, it was difficult to get the figures precisely correct. We like to work on what we call commitment, and we have an arrangement with the Treasury so that we understand what is meant by commitment. In our case, the Budget allocation is \$1 000 000 below commitment. You ask what other things do we have to do: we know that we are going to be required to reserve some funds for the opening of Noarlunga, in a very modest way. There will be the second stages of certain programmes that commenced last year because of legislation. Because of factors like that, we believe that there is probably another \$300 000 to \$400 000 that has to be accommodated within that budget, so we have developed a budget strategy, with the Minister's approval and concurrence, of determining that our directive should be to try to make savings on the various lines of about \$1 400 000 from that \$54 000 000.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I understand it is envisaged that courses to the value of \$150 000 will be cut. How is that determined? Linked with that, what course areas are targeted as being the main areas where cuts will be made? What efforts are being made to ensure that cuts in further education funding do not result in the sudden curtailing of courses commenced in any academic year?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I believe that the majority of funding on that line, the \$150 000 quoted, is by way of hourly-paid instructors. I ask the Director-General to outline the areas of impact.

**Mr Kloeden:** The Minister is correct: it has to be h.p.i.'s. The only other source of making savings would be attrition through the full-time staff, and at this stage we do not know precisely where that attrition will occur, so we will be watching that aspect. In terms of project cuts, the sum is only a modest \$150 000, and that is spread through quite a number of programmes that have been researched carefully by our staff. Mr Fleming's units, and others, have been in touch with colleges, and we have identified quite a number of areas where we believe certain minimal cuts can be made without affecting the programme too drastically. The very modest saving in h.p.i.'s and some re-arrangement of adult matriculation involve about \$12 500.

In automotive, where there has been a decline in some enrolments at the basic trade levels, we are hoping to make a saving of \$13 000. In art and craft, where we have over the last couple of years tried to reduce the programme a little because of the pressure on the other vocational areas, we hope to make a saving of \$20 260 in h.p.i.'s. In business studies, which is a very big programme covering a wide area of offerings, we hope to make a \$30 000 saving in 1981; likewise, in commercial studies, a small saving of \$30 000. That is not quite as big a programme as total business studies. In garment construction design there will be a saving of \$12 000; home economics, \$3 000; performing arts, \$5 000; and, finally, real estate, \$2 500. The programme cuts are spread over quite a wide range, hopefully in a way which will cause a minimum of dislocation to existing programmes.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I repeat the second part of my question: will undertakings be given to see that courses are not suddenly curtailed in midstream? That did, in fact,

happen this year, and I believe that in education that is not the soundest way of managing an institution. I want to ask also about the impact of these cuts: are they evenly spread around various branches of the Department of Further Education, or are certain of the cuts centralised on particular branches?

**Mr Kloeden:** We are talking at present of the programme cuts involving the \$150 000 only. You will appreciate from the figure I mentioned earlier that there had to be other savings in order to accommodate the full budget that affects all our colleges, branches and the whole system in certain ways. In terms of programme cuts, they are expressed as evenly as possible through most colleges in an attempt to rationalise our total offering in a way that one particular area will not be disadvantaged more than another.

Inherent in this is our attempt, for several years now in total State strategy, to make our resources go as far as possible and to be certain that no community, whether it be a country town or a city metropolitan area, is disadvantaged. It is difficult to give complete details, because the cuts are still being worked out, in conjunction with Mr Fleming's people. We will have discussions at college level. If they can think of ways of achieving a reduction slightly differently which makes sense, it will be accommodated. The circular I sent out to all our principals and branch heads, with the Minister's concurrence, illustrates that in terms of programme cuts, which are always sensitive, there will be ongoing discussions between our officers and the colleges before exact details are announced. We have a strategy in mind which we want to talk to them about.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** Going back to the Further Education Department policy, how does the Minister see that department's role, and how does he equate that with the Keeves recommendation that the name be changed to technical and further education, to better qualify the further education role?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** We do not see that changing the name of individual colleges will have much effect. While the department is generally referred to as the Department of Further Education, Federal funds are made available under the technical and further education umbrella. At local level colleges are increasingly known as community colleges. We have had a number of name changes over the past few years. Originally it was the A.E.C. or Adult Education Centres. It would be unnecessary to change the name again. At the Federal level it is TAFE, which is the Department of Further Education. Perhaps a name change might be effective simply by renaming it the Department of Technical and Further Education. But individual colleges can retain their names locally. People know why they are there.

The honourable member earlier referred to philosophy. There has been some change of direction in the past couple of years with diminishing emphasis on stream 6 courses. Streams 1 to 5 are vocational and semi-vocational. Stream 6 is commonly referred to as enrichment. It has been the Government's policy objective to make stream 6 increasingly self-supportive, with one exception, that we make a certain sum available each year for people who wish to take part in stream 6, but who are financially handicapped, such as pensioners and others.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** What importance is attached to increasing material fees for courses at colleges of further education as a means of funding their operations? Particularly, what is the policy regarding cost recouped from materials from vocational courses? Approaches were made to me early in July and August this year concerning rather dramatic increases in fees for courses such as advertising, graphic design and commercial art at the Croydon Park College of Further Education, some of which fees have

increased by well over 100 per cent. I have been told that, on average, a student spends between \$1 000 and \$1 500 a year on materials in such a course. It is clearly vocationally oriented, has a very high employment rate, and proves itself that it achieves results. I was asked to what extent users were asked to pay.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The high cost of fees in the graphic arts area seems far in excess of what I imagined. We have relatively high costs in the professional catering course—I understand about \$600 per annum.

**Mr Kloeden:** I understand that the most expensive materials are in the commercial certificate course, which is a full-time half-year course. Material fees are about \$550 to \$600, from memory. I am surprised by the figure given for Croydon.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** It was quoted to me.

**Mr Kloeden:** I have not been told that it costs that much. Members will be aware of what is known as the fees abolition scheme, introduced about 1979. In return for that, we get a reimbursement from the Commonwealth Government, which is supposed to cover tuition and standard material fees. However, 'standard' has never been very carefully defined. The sum we recoup from the Commonwealth is inadequate to meet all the pressures of these courses. So, in recent years there has been a tendency to try to make the dollar go a little further and recoup some of that by the method the honourable member outlined.

People who have to attend statutorily at our courses, such as stream 3 apprentices, are not charged because they are obliged, by law, to come. But the others are not: they are volunteers in our courses. In some courses there are varying scales of material fees, over and above those we recoup from the Commonwealth. From memory, I think we are reimbursed by the Commonwealth about \$5 000 000 in fees, which is not very much in \$54 000 000.

**Mr Carter:** The figure for 1982 is \$5 600 000.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** Generally, for other streams, including streams 5 and 6, in further education, what is it envisaged will be recouped from those fees? Is it intended to increase the impact of fund raising from fees for those courses, in other words, by increasing the fees for streams 5 and 6? To what extent are pensioner students likely to suffer due to limitations on the proportion of concession places at further education facilities, resulting from cut-backs in the Budget?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Regarding the latter part of the question, pensioners and other under-privileged groups have been protected by the allocation of specific funds to stream six courses to guarantee that a number of places will be available. There are no tuition fees in regard to streams one to five. Perhaps the Director-General would like to comment further.

**Mr Kloeden:** In accordance with the fees abolition scheme, no tuition fees are charged for streams one to five. There are standard material fees which, theoretically, are recouped to a certain level. In addition, as discussed, some material charges are levied. Those are the fees paid in streams one to five. As the Minister has pointed out, stream six involves the enrichment area and is totally different. These courses do not come under the fees abolition scheme but under a local South Australian arrangement. The Cabinet, on the Minister's recommendation, sets the fee per hour. At present, it is \$1.25 per hour for instruction. We receive a part-time instructor allocation to mount those courses and, as the Minister has indicated, pensioners are admitted to the courses free to a certain value. In 1981, the package was that the Government contribution was \$320 000. The total allocation in terms of P.T.I. was about \$1 400 000 and there were fees of \$1.25 per hour. Our revenue return was expected to be just over \$1 000 000.

This was a total package approved by Cabinet. Present indications are that we are pretty well meeting our targets in regard to that package.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** An interesting sidelight, relevant to the question of support for pensioners and other people, is that \$320 000 was allocated for pensioner courses, but, in fact, the department made available \$400 000 worth of instruction, because colleges had managed to reallocate another \$80 000 from revenue that was derived from the stream six courses to help the needier groups. This is a discretion that we give colleges: we give them some entrepreneurial rights.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** I am somewhat surprised by the comments of the member for Salisbury and to note that he was almost anti the idea that people should contribute towards the cost of their own enrichment courses. I recall the days before my coming into this place when I was involved extensively in Department of Further Education evening courses at the school at which I taught. There was immense disruption in the community at that time because some courses were cut out. People were told that, if they wanted to continue with, say, woodwork courses, they would have to pay and that, if sufficient money was collected from among the willing participants to cover the cost of the tutor, the course could proceed. Regrettably, in that year, a number of courses were wiped out. Eventually over a few years those courses were reinstated to something like the same level that previously existed.

The scheme was not properly explained to the community. I and staff colleagues with whom I taught made great efforts to explain adequately to the people that they could continue their courses if they were prepared to pay for them. It is nothing new that people in stream six are asked to contribute towards the cost of their course. This occurred in the latter part of the previous Government's Administration.

I want to take that one step further by asking the Minister what consideration has been given to those subject areas where people are prepared to pay the costs of the tutor so that the courses are provided closer to where these people reside. I can give an example. A number of child care centres in the southern area, about a year ago or longer, endeavoured to have the child care course incorporated into the O'Halloran Hill college curriculum. A number of workers in the southern area were prepared to pay for that course, but they were told that the course would be centred at the Kensington Park college. Many of these people who could have upgraded their qualifications in early child care were required to travel to Kensington. Have there been any further approaches to have that course reinstated at O'Halloran Hill?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I will ask the Director-General to comment on the child care course and the rationale behind bringing the course to a central position. I recall that this issue was raised in the Budget debate last year, and it was certainly with my acquiescence that the course was ultimately transferred. I hope that the rationale has not varied from one year to the next. The other question as to whether there might be entrepreneurial activities of that description is different to the entrepreneurial activities to which I referred when the member for Salisbury questioned me.

I was really referring in that instance to stream six, where a wide variety of courses is available through hourly-paid instructors and where, in some instances, if the college wishes to pay an instructor through fees raised and run a course of its own volition, that is quite all right. In this instance, where there are apprenticeship and vocational courses, I have not considered that matter. Perhaps the Director-General can comment on the possibility of that happening.

**Mr Kloeden:** The scheme for stream six, to which the Minister referred, was sometimes referred to as master classes. The fee can be much higher than \$1.25, if an expert in a certain field comes from interstate and if many people would desperately like to take advantage of the tuition. The scheme is completely self-supporting, and it has been agreed that that is quite a sensible approach to those courses. I gather that that agrees with the philosophy that the honourable member mentioned earlier.

The child care course is a vocational course and is therefore exempt from fees. We are not in a position to charge fees. We would be in breach of the fees abolition scheme if we charged people to attend that course. We could endanger the allocation of \$5 600 000 to \$5 700 000, which Mr Carter mentioned previously. There is an obligation on us not to charge tuition fees for those courses. The child care course was rationalised last year or at the beginning of the year before, not to Kensington Park but to the Croydon college. The college that was most affected was the Elizabeth college. I remember that last year in this place quite a number of questions were asked in that regard. Things seem to have worked out reasonably well in respect of this matter. Other courses have been established at the Elizabeth college that are of a somewhat different nature. Together with Croydon and other colleges there is a total child care package that, in the light of our resources, will give the best value for money across the State. I believe that the honourable member was thinking about Croydon rather than Kensington Park.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** Reference was made to the extension during the last year of the service to pensioners. I also know from people to whom I have spoken that initially when the scheme was introduced there was a bit of uneasiness as to how many pensioners could be incorporated into one class. The officers in charge were somewhat dissatisfied with the fact that they had to turn away some pensioners because of the restricted numbers that could be incorporated into one class. How was that matter resolved? Will the scheme be extended to allow a greater number of pensioners to participate?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I believe that in a number of colleges we have already made special provision for circumstances, for example, where there is a class attended predominantly by pensioners. The college may be given a special provision to allow that class to continue. Generally, a certain number of free places are made available in each course. My earlier comment that, while \$320 000 was allocated this year for pensioner courses, \$400 000 worth of tuition was actually given, highlights the fact that in a number of cases courses are financially viable and, therefore, the college decides to transfer some money back to pensioner assistance.

**Mr Kloeden:** There is a slight difficulty at the beginning of any financial year, as the honourable member will appreciate. As I mentioned earlier, the total package provides that we obtain a certain allocation of money. About \$1 400 000 was provided in 1981. The Government stated that the minimum amount for pensioners would be \$320 000, and in addition we had to return revenue to the tune of just over \$1 000 000. At the beginning of the year a college naturally watches its revenue return rather carefully to ensure that it meets its target.

Therefore, if lots of pensioners are gratuitously turning up for that particular class and there are not many fee-paying students it places the college in the difficult position of deciding whether in that early stage it should take a chance on that with a view to picking up the fees later on. I believe that in 1981 some of our colleges may have erred on the side of caution earlier on (they were quite wise in doing that), because they were not certain whether they

could pick up the revenue later on. As the Minister has pointed out, later they were able to pick up that revenue and many more pensioners were able to be put in. It is in the early stages that there can be some uncertainty, until the college can see how its total package is going.

**Mr ABBOTT:** I refer to physically handicapped persons. I note on page 34 of the Programme Estimates that one of the specific targets for 1981-82 is to focus on the International Year of the Disabled Person activities, with emphasis on provision of daily living skills, personal care and development and vocational preparation for adolescent, and adult physically and intellectually disabled. Has this programme been implemented, and how much has been allocated for this purpose?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I would like Mr Peter Fleming to respond to that question, as he is familiar with the work.

**Mr Fleming:** I cannot give a specific answer as to the total sum of money involved but there are a range of programmes that we have introduced this year over a number of colleges, and most of the funds have come out of the colleges' budgets, by decisions they have made to redeploy in that area. There have been some funds coming centrally where we have tried to assist the colleges to get off the ground in a particular programme. To give an example: we ran a very successful wood machining course for physically disabled people from Bedford Industries and the Phoenix Society, and we will be running those programmes again next year. In the first instance, there was some initial assistance centrally, but the college has now brought that overlay into its own budget.

There are programmes in some eight to 10 colleges in the metropolitan area that are concerned with basic living skills which the handicapped person often does not have, which we take for granted, and which are built into a programme. These are quite different from the more specifically vocational courses such as wood machining; another one was for clothing machinists, which was another course that was also found to be suitable for disabled people.

**Mr ABBOTT:** I was interested to hear Mr Fleming say that the programme would be continued next year. I take it that he means that following the International Year of the Disabled Person this programme will be continued, as long as it is successful.

**Mr Fleming:** I would not say that all elements of the existing programme will continue, but there are some that I can name that will, because they are successful. The elements that drop off will be replaced by ones that we have learnt from experience will be a lot better. It is certainly planned that programmes like the wood machining course and the clothes machining course, which were most successful, will be on again in 1982. I point out that Budget provision has been made for them to continue in 1982.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Incidentally, the provision just outlined is the same provision that has been applied in school-to-work transition education; it is an experimental programme, successes are encouraged. If programmes are less than successful, they are replaced.

**Mr Kloeden:** I can add a few figures which will be of interest to the Committee. The courses outlined are more widespread than people realise. They are conducted at all sorts of places throughout the State. In 1980 there were at least 495 handicapped persons in various courses, some of which Mr Fleming mentioned. We had 269 people in certain aged courses, and in the base programmes that Mr Fleming mentioned there are 905 people. Also, adult literacy comes into this programme as well. My figures show that about 1 855 people were involved. All the other disadvantaged groups have to be considered. If one is going to call Aborigines or unemployed people disadvantaged, the total

becomes quite significant. We now tend to put the unemployed and those type of groups in the 'transition' bracket, and the Department of Further Education, together with the Education Department have quite sizable programmes overall. The numbers do add up, and last year we had figures indicating almost 22 000 people in various courses for what we call special groups.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** First, I have a supplementary question on the matter of pensioner concessions. I take it that places are made available, and I think it is significant that money is set aside for that. Is any account taken of the potentially different proportion of pensioners in the varying areas where the colleges are placed, the point being that one part of the metropolitan area may be more likely to have single parents on pensions, unemployed people on unemployment benefits or aged persons on benefits than may be another part? Unless one takes account of this difference in the amount of money made available to each college, one could be discriminating against certain groups in certain areas.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** It has been the practice in the Department of Further Education to allocate certain revenue raising targets to different colleges, and the criteria of old age or sole supporting families and other reasons are among the criteria used when establishing how much money should be raised and how much money the Government will make available from that \$320 000. As I said, the degree of the success of the programme is highlighted by the fact that \$80 000 was put back into pensioner assistance by the colleges themselves, as a result of their stream 6 fund raising activities. The department is not neglecting that area but is actually trying to get additional funds for the underprivileged groups.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** What series of data is used in an attempt to make that assessment as to the differing needs? What information is compiled by the Department of Further Education?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The information is fed in from individual colleges which make their own assessment of the needs in that area, and these figures are transmitted to head office where the ultimate decision is made. However, the criterion of needs basis is one that the colleges are well aware of, and that is one of the things that is fed in.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** It is not standardised between the colleges?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** No.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** Those questions were supplementary, and I now ask a question relating to the Noarlunga Centre Community College in regard to child care facilities. The Public Works Standing Committee, when it considered the Noarlunga College in 1978, recommended that child minding facilities should be incorporated in that centre, yet I have been advised that the Deputy Director-General has indicated that no space has been designated for child care within that facility. So, obviously, the proposal has been cut out of the original plans. I want to know why that has happened in that case, and whether, in fact, there is any proposal to redress that situation.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The general policy of the Department of Further Education has been that child care services are not provided on campus. I know that there has been a lot of debate over many years as to whether universities or colleges of advanced and further education should provide this facility. However, it has been a conscious decision of the Department of Further Education over the years that child care is best left within the community. I know that that is an area of dispute, but that decision has been made, and for the time being no provision is anticipated in that college for child care.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** There are community colleges within the system that do in fact have child care facilities, and they obviously were incorporated in the planning. Indeed, the Public Works Standing Committee in its report on the Noarlunga College stated that such facilities should be there. The point I make is that, if we believe that community colleges are for the community, and therefore we try to encourage access to those colleges, we undertake a number of methods of doing that. For example, we normally put car parks in on the presumption that not everyone can use public transport, and that, therefore, the provision of car parking facilities helps people to get access. Likewise, the provision of child care facilities helps people to gain access to a community college, it being called a 'community' college. I cannot accept the point that for some years the provision of child minding facilities has not been the case because the Elizabeth Community College, for example, has a child care facility, and that was not built a long time ago.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The honourable member is quoting the exception rather than the rule. Certainly, the response that I was given in opposition was that, as a matter of departmental policy, the provision of child-care services was somewhere well in the future. Of course, this would be another competition for that elusive Childhood Services Council dollar. Whether Childhood Services are best provided in an institution of this kind, or left at the local level, as I said, is a point for debate. The departmental policy has for some time been that as a general principle child care services would be provided outside rather than within certain Education Department facilities. In an expansionary time I suppose that the decision would be much easier to arrive at but, when one considers the stabilising of the Federal input into childhood services, the decision becomes much easier. The sum of \$3 700 000 over the past four years from the Federal Government is certainly a major inhibiting factor when we are considering whether to expand into this area, too.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I wonder whether the Minister or the department could provide me with the actual cost of car park facilities at the Noarlunga Community College in due course.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** We can provide those figures, although we do not have them readily to hand. We will undertake to make them available.

**Mr Kloeden:** The car parking provision there has been minimised by the fact that it is right within the commercial centre, and therefore, they will be able to make use of certain other car park facilities there. From that point of view, the numbers provided need to be kept in perspective.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** Less than normal?

**Mr Kloeden:** Yes.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** I want to take the Noarlunga Centre a fraction further. I believe the reply that was sent to the services forum down there indicated that use should be made of external child minding facilities. Have any of the external bodies been approached by the Department of Further Education to ascertain what facilities it can provide?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** To the best of my knowledge, not so far, but I take the honourable member's point. As the college will be firing up in a limited way early next year and going ahead in full capacity within 12 months, it is certainly something that we should and will investigate.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** I believe that there is a Commonwealth funded child minding centre within walking distance of the college. I believe that no approach has been made to ascertain what facilities they can provide. I hope those sorts of things are made known to prospective clients of the college when they enrol there. Further, what programme has got

under way so far in the utilisation of the courses between O'Halloran Hill and Noarlunga Centre, and what courses are being transferred?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The Director-General will respond.

**Mr Kloeden:** I will just add to the previous question. When we have been approached by any organisation with regard to providing child minding facilities within the college itself (there have been, from memory, a couple of letters about this), we have advised those people to make inquiries about other facilities that are available. We ourselves have not been in a position to do that. I think you are suggesting that we could help the local people to do that. By and large, we tend to find the local people know more about it than we do in head office. So we simply say to them, 'See if you can make those arrangements. We will facilitate it if there are any difficulties.'

With regard to the courses down there, when we develop any new college we have to start by making a needs analysis of whether or not we need a college there in the first place. Therefore, through our research branch and others we do go in to a very detailed demographic and other survey in terms of what requirements might be needed there. That was done in the case of Noarlunga. It was a very extensive survey. We must remember, of course, that we are a State-wide system, and therefore any college must relate to all the other colleges. You quite rightly draw the Committee's attention to the fact that Noarlunga must be thought of in relation to O'Halloran Hill and, might I say, even beyond O'Halloran Hill, back to Panorama, Marleston, and even beyond that. So, when we decided to do that, we took all those factors into consideration. We now have a juxtaposition of courses eventually between the southern area. So, the total southern area, we hope, is catered for in a rational sort of way. The exact details I have not got with me, but I can assure the Committee that we did look at the total southern area in order to make the best provision that we could in that area.

It is a fact that some courses were transferred from O'Halloran Hill and Marleston. It will also give us an opportunity to do further work at O'Halloran Hill in the foreseeable future. We have not got our plans for that ready yet, but we have in mind that there are some difficulties there, particularly in the automotive and other areas, which need upgrading, and by easing the pressure on O'Halloran Hill it will make it possible for us to do things there. So, it has been taken into consideration. If the committee wants details of that, we can provide the exact nature of the courses at both colleges and how they inter-relate with each other.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** I would appreciate that information. Harking back to the creche concept, has consideration been given to providing room space to allow a voluntary system of creching to exist?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** It is certainly a possibility that we can consider. I suppose the final answer will depend on how much room space we have available for the streams one to six and other courses. Again, I suppose, it highlights the fact that colleges might have some entrepreneurial flair, and they will provide baby-sitting of their own accord. I am not sure what the industrial implications are of that, so I will make some inquiries. We would, of course, be competing with the adjacent Commonwealth funded child care centre. That would be an immediate outcome that would bring complaint.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** And family day care.

**Mr Kloeden:** Therefore, we always, quite properly, get Ministerial approval for any of those sorts of arrangements. In this case, that has not been sought at this stage. I do know of one out Elizabeth way where it applies, and where we have Ministerial approval for running one with the use

of volunteers in a very special way. As the Minister rightly points out, there are all sorts of legal implications for people who are supervising youngsters, if accidents should occur, and the like. One has to be guarded, therefore, when one engages in this sort of activity, and gives it official blessing.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I have been intrigued with the reference on a number of occasions now to the entrepreneurial ability of colleges. I wonder whether that really comes down to their capacity to run cake stalls and the like. It is a rather unique phrase.

My question relates to the Adelaide College of Further Education and whether or not any funds have been set aside for project officers within the Department to consider further the development of facilities for the Adelaide College, and, if so, when their work would be expected to be completed and at what stage the new college facility would be available.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I have two responses. First, I refer to the entrepreneurial flair that I like to see in directors of colleges. I do not use that word lightly, because I believe that directors of colleges of further education are in fact good managers. If, as part of their management programme, they can see fit to introduce a course in stream six, for example, which is self funding and which is unusual (it might not otherwise be acceptable), that entrepreneurial flair is certainly an important component. That they have seen fit already to introduce various courses which paid their way quite clearly demonstrates that we do have good management skills in our colleges.

So, it may be an interesting word, but it is not fund raising for cake stalls. In fact, I think that colleges of further education are quite different from our secondary schools, in so far as there is very little of that parental and community involvement at that fund raising level. They are quite different types of establishment. I have been asked to give colleges the right to raise funds and to expend money on their own behalf. That was agreed to some few months ago. So, perhaps they will be holding more cake stalls in due course. However, I was not referring to that as one of the main thrusts of management skills.

The second issue which is, of course, very important to South Australia, is the need for an Adelaide College of Further Education. At the moment we do have the Adelaide facilities fragmented. A number of premises are leased at substantial annual leases, at about the \$400 000 to \$500 000 a year mark, and of course, those rentals will increase over the years. We are currently negotiating for two or three alternative parcels of land in metropolitan Adelaide. We have partly acquired one, the old A.B.C. site, in the Hindmarsh Square area. We are holding discussions with the Adelaide City Council with the view to a joint venture in this matter. There are one or two alternative sites that we have under consideration. We believe that the question should be finalised quickly and that the Federal Government should be approached for the funds that we believe will be available. We regard that as a matter of urgency and are approaching it in that way.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** Does that imply, therefore, that we could expect that the Public Works Standing Committee will be approached next year to report on this matter?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I hope that the Public Works Committee will be brought into this issue very quickly, yes.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** The Minister raised an important point about this matter. The further we delay on this new college, the more it ultimately costs the State, anyway, because we are paying out vast sums of money on rent. Centrepoint is costing \$1 000 a day for the facilities there, so it is false economy, from the State Government's point of view, to delay that project for any considerable length of time.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** We believe that we are reaching the stage where the new college will pay for itself in rent savings and in savings on the different cleaning contracts that will be allocated to the college as opposed to the fragmented approach that we currently have towards further education in the city area.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** Harking back to my earlier question in answer to which the Director-General said that the whole course structure and the various D.F.E.'s in the southern areas are becoming closely integrated, what is the future plan for the land on the corner of Brodie Road and Sheriff's Road, Morphett Vale? Is it envisaged that that land will be used in the near future?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I ask the Director-General to respond.

**Mr Kloeden:** We do have a master strategy plan for the metropolitan area. You realise, of course, that a strategy plan has to be flexible and changes from one period to another, but we have looked at the total area. At this stage we do not foresee that it will be necessary to build on that land and, therefore, we will have to give serious consideration to whether we should declare it surplus to our requirements. On the other hand, it is a very good site, and you will appreciate, because you live in the area, that there is a long distance between O'Halloran Hill on the northern extremity and Noarlunga on the southern extremity. My guess is that that particular site is somewhere in the middle, about half-way between those two areas. Therefore, we would be reluctant to declare it surplus at this stage unless we were absolutely positive that that was so. You will appreciate that parcels of land like that do not come on the market very often and, if we sacrifice it now, in 20 years time we might be accused of being short-sighted in our planning options.

At this stage we have not made a recommendation to the Minister about this land, but it is something which is in the back of my mind. From time to time I say, 'Should we not have another look at it and see whether or not we can justify its retention for that particular plan that we once had for it?' I guess, in short, we are hedging our bets a bit at this stage.

I do not think that we are yet in a position to make a firm recommendation to the Minister one way or another. It is a matter we have looked at. We have recently sold land at Port Lincoln that was surplus to our requirements, and there is another parcel of land down Seaton way that we are currently thinking may or may not be surplus to our requirements, as well. What we would like to do in these circumstances is make a swap of land where we have requirements ourselves, so that we do not have the disadvantage of selling one bit without acquiring another. Noarlunga, I seem to recall, involved a swap of land out Salisbury way with the Housing Trust down in the south, and that was to everyone's advantage. We are not able to say whether the parcel of land you are talking about is surplus or that we need it.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** I know that comments are often made in hindsight. Regrettably, however, O'Halloran Hill tends to be stuck in the wilderness, and it is rather difficult for students to get to, especially if they are relying on public transport corridors. That land in Morphett Vale is certainly a lot closer to transport corridors. I take on board the Director's comments that it would be short-sighted to dispose of the land too quickly in view of the long-term need. Has any further consideration been given to the possibility of leasing the land to other organisations that may be able to utilise it in the short term until they are able to find a more adequate site for whatever the project may be?

**Mr Kloeden:** Departmentally speaking, we would have no objection to that, as long as the lease was the sort where

our long-term interest could be protected. From time to time there have been requests to use the land and to build certain clubrooms and the like on it. That could present problems because, if we allow some sort of building on it, you can bet your bottom dollar that in 10 years' time we will run into difficulties with it. If the lease did not preempt any long-term decisions that we might have to make in regard to it, departmentally we would have no objection and could advise the Minister accordingly. The decision could then be made by him or by Cabinet as appropriate.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** My question relates to the colleges, branches, equipment, material and services line. I understand that there has been a reduction in the allocation to individual colleges on this line. I understand also that there was some implication that there was an expected increase of Commonwealth funds to be made available. Further to the comments about equipment depreciation and the anticipation in the early 1980s of significant bleeps, in the purchasing requirements, as a large amount of equipment will wear out together, what is the forward planning projections on equipment needs in the Department of Further Education, and is it done on an annual basis or over a longer period, such as on a triennial basis?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I think I referred to this problem earlier when we were speaking about the school-to-work transition programme. I commented that over the past 10 years, in both secondary and further education, there had been a depreciation of equipment originally provided for by Federal grants and supported by State grants. The present reduction from \$800 000 to \$500 000 is in anticipation of the difference this year being made up by a \$300 000 Federal allocation.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** Does the Minister, when saying 'this year', imply that there will not be a forthcoming allocation next year? Also, the Tertiary Education Commission, in its work on this question of the replacement of equipment, highlighted it as a fairly major area of concern throughout Australia in the 1980s for educational facilities at all levels. Perhaps the time is right to do some forward planning to see how serious an impact that will have in financial terms on State and Commonwealth Budgets. Are we doing that forward planning at this State level, and, if not, why not?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Certainly, the forward planning is being done. The availability of funds is the major question. I point out that, in addition to that \$300 000, which we anticipate receiving during the current financial year, it is, in fact, only a proportion of the Federal grant for the next calendar year. In the second half of next year we anticipate another \$640 000 being made available. That, of course, will be reflected in the next State financial year. So, I have split them into two amounts, \$300 000 in this financial year and \$640 000 in the next financial year. However, it is just the one TAFE calendar year, that is, 1982. This is partly a Federal response to the repeated requests that have been made to Federal Ministers of Education for support in the TAFE equipment area. We hope that it will support not only the TAFE sector but also the school-to-work transition area.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** Therefore, forward planning appears already to be under way for the needs in the years ahead. Will the money being made available meet those needs, or will there be a shortfall, and will the Minister say what the impact of any shortfall will be?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I will ask the Director-General to respond to that in a moment. As part of the Commonwealth's funding allocation, it is helping with a computerised equipment register, which will help considerably in any departmental forward planning.

**Mr Kloeden:** The honourable member has raised a very big issue. With the advent of technology, which is changing so quickly, how can a TAFE department keep up with that, because we are supposed to train the work force that has to get ready for the technology? As the Minister has pointed out, this matter has been discussed at TAFE conferences and in the A.E.C. for several years now. I believe that our department has made a major contribution to that discussion by trying to quantify the magnitude of the problem, not only in equipment terms but also in curriculum terms, and it is no easy task. I referred the matter to two of my senior people and said, 'You have got to try to do it. You may have to use a crystal ball a bit, but let's do the exercise and see what it shows.'

It is my belief that, in the long term, the Commonwealth contribution will not really be adequate in terms of the needs, but that is crystal balling a little. I am sure that our Minister and others will continue to put pressure on the Federal Government. I think the total for Australia was \$9 000 000, of which we got about \$900 000, as the Minister has said. We hope that that will be only a first instalment and that it will be repeated in the next few years. I believe that our proposition was over the next five years at about that magnitude, and even then we may be lucky if we have caught up with the problem.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The State has for a long time recognised this problem and it is compounded by the fact that much of this technological equipment is already obsolete by the time it goes into the Department of Further Education or into industry and commerce. There is always something new on the drawing board, particularly in the macro and micro electronic fields. The new equipment is replacing the old within months: it becomes old very quickly because of the speed of technological change.

The fact that the Federal Government told the State to earmark \$2 500 000 worth of capital funds to purchase new equipment also highlights the fact that that Government is fully aware of the problem but recognised our argument and said, 'We know your argument, but you pay for it.' That Government has, over the past two weeks, capitulated.

It withdrew its request or insistence that we earmark our own capital grants, because at the same time as we were being asked to earmark capital grants we also had a substantial reduction in Loan funding, and we felt that the two things combined were unfair on the States, and that was on all States. The Federal Government has withdrawn its insistence on earmarking but that did not help in the purchase of new equipment. We still have that problem and we are still asking the Federal Government to reconsider and to make even more funds available in addition to that \$9 000 000, of which we received a little over 10 per cent.

**Mr GLAZBROOK:** Historically, departments concerned with education and many other departments in Government have never had to have a provision for replacement of capital cost items. Some criticism has been made of equipment in some colleges because of the quick changes in technology. It appears to me that, unless some form of capital reserve account is established, we will end up not being able to fund much of this new equipment that is needed in colleges. What percentage of funds is being put up for replacement of old equipment, besides the need to get new technology in, in relation to the funds listed on p 531 and the breakdown of curriculum activities?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The proportion of funds is readily obtainable from the Budget papers, in so far as the total allocation for further education is about the \$50 000 000 mark, and the allocation this year from State resources is \$500 000, so when we add the \$300 000 from the Federal Government it still is a small proportion, but Governments have never worked on traditional, sound business lines in so

far as they have made allowances for depreciation. When Governments need to purchase anything, they make a spot allocation, whether it is for motor vehicles or equipment.

Perhaps I am being a little unkind, because in the Education Department we depreciate our buses over nine years, and we know that we will have a depreciation programme like that, but I think such cases are the exception rather than the rule. Certainly, the area of further education has been a rapidly expanding one. South Australia was into further education early, in the early 1970s, and much of the equipment is 10 years old and at the depreciated stage, ready for trading in, so we are on the second wave, really, of equipment replacement.

That is why we are highlighting the problem to the Federal Government, which helped initially 10 years ago, and I think another cycle of assistance is due, because that Government is attaching so much importance to school-to-work transition, to technology and further education, and to ensuring that we have South Australians trained for the jobs that are becoming available in industry and commerce in Australia. That is unquestionable: there are many jobs waiting for skilled Australians to take on.

**Mr GLAZBROOK:** I ask a further question about the curriculum. Bearing in mind the inclination of industry and commerce towards a more technological support system, particularly in the commercial area, I note that the department still maintains a very large area for typing instruction. What is being done about word processing courses and programming courses in conjunction with that; has there been any advance?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Word processors are in limited supply in the Department of Further Education and generally in the Government. Mr Fleming will respond.

**Mr Fleming:** We are planning to rectify that and to acquire that sort of equipment. I would like to comment on typists. We are very conscious of statements made regularly that typists are being done away with, but we are equally conscious of the very high employment rate of people who graduate from our courses. We believe that it is an overstated situation. It may be true to say that there is a reduction in new jobs, perhaps, in typing, but we are well aware that these courses cost a lot of money and that we are under pressure, and it has been said to us in times past that we really ought to reduce these courses.

At the moment, we are quite satisfied that more than 90 per cent (sometimes 100 per cent in some courses) of those people walk immediately into jobs, and employers cannot get enough typists and stenographers. I think we have to tackle both things to be able to keep up that level of supply and to gradually make inroads into the area of word processors. This will require our equipping ourselves, and we have some plans under way to do that in the next year or so.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I support Mr Fleming's comments in as much as that the criticism that has been levelled against the department generally for training typists is unfair, because the communication skills of shorthand and typing are useful in so many other walks of life apart from simply the office situation. It is an important area of communication that gives the trainees skills in the field of modern computer technology and word processing. Those typing skills are not simply restricted to the typewriter alone, and we find increasingly that people with typewriting training are being trained much more readily on computers in that new rapidly burgeoning field of technology.

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

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

Works and Services—Department of Further Education,  
\$500 000—Examination declared completed.

Minister of Education and Minister of Aboriginal Affairs,  
Miscellaneous, \$41 724 000

**Chairman:**  
Mr G. M. Gunn

**Members:**  
Mr R. K. Abbott  
Mr Lynn Arnold  
Mr E. S. Ashenden  
Mr R. E. Glazbrook  
Mr K. C. Hamilton  
Mr J. W. Olsen  
Mr I. Schmidt  
Mr J. P. Trainer

**Witness:**

The Hon. H. Allison, Minister of Education and Minister  
of Aboriginal Affairs.

**Departmental Advisers:**

Mr W. A. Monks, Acting Executive Director, Kinder-  
garten Union of S.A.

Mr Justice L. T. Olsson, Chairman, Childhood Services  
Council.

Mr H. F. Cox, Executive Officer, Childhood Services  
Council.

Dr Y. J. Weaver, Executive Officer (Professional), Child-  
hood Services Council.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** With regard to the childhood  
services area and, in particular, the Budget operating allow-  
ance payments to pre-schools, we have had a number of  
variations as to exactly what is going on in recent weeks.  
First of all, schools were being cut back 70 per cent, then  
50 per cent and then 65 per cent. Finally, today's announce-  
ment from the Minister indicated that all pre-schools would  
receive 50 per cent of last year's allowance. The information  
I have is that that was not entirely an accurate reporting  
of the situation or at least did not fairly present the whole  
case, in as much as I understand that 50 per cent of the  
operating allowance may not be available for next year: it  
is only available for the third term of this year; and, sec-  
ondly, that there is no extra vote of funds being allocated  
to the Kindergarten Union and other providers of pre-school  
services and that they are expected, therefore, to find the  
extra funds involved from within their own finances. Would  
the Minister comment on that?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The situation as reported in the  
House a couple of weeks ago was that I said that I believed  
that an initial check had been paid to kindergartens rep-  
resenting approximately 30 per cent of last year's allocation  
and that I also believed that an additional 20 per cent  
would be sent out to kindergartens so that they would have  
an allocation of 50 per cent. I believe that that statement  
that was made in the House led to some general under-  
standing that in fact all the kindergartens would be allo-  
cated at least 50 per cent of last year's funding.

The telephone conversation which I had prior to making  
that statement in the House was probably misunderstood  
or subsequently misreported by the Minister in the House,

but to the extent that I was under the impression that  
kindergartens would receive 50 per cent as against the  
conveyed information that 50 per cent would be the aver-  
age, with some over and some under, Cabinet yesterday  
discussed this issue at length, and last night I made a press  
statement which confirmed that the Government's intention  
was that 50 per cent of the last term's allocation would be  
available for term 3 of this year. The press release, as it  
left my office last night, was as follows:

The Minister of Education, Mr Allison, this evening held dis-  
cussions with representatives of the Childhood Services Council  
and the Kindergarten Union about Government funding of pre-  
schools. 'The meeting further reviewed the difficulties being caused  
to some kindergarten and parents by the Commonwealth Govern-  
ment's refusal to increase its contribution to the funding of pre-  
schools,' Mr Allison said. 'I gave the meeting an assurance that no  
kindergarten in South Australia will receive less than 50 per cent  
of last term's allocation for operating costs such as electricity,  
cleaning and telephones. This reduction in the contribution to  
operating costs amounts to 1.9 per cent of the total Government  
funds available to kindergartens in South Australia. 'Salaries and  
other costs will continue to be fully funded. The meeting also  
agreed that the Childhood Services Council and the Kindergarten  
Union would examine all means available to effect economies in  
their operations to reduce, to the maximum extent possible, the  
need to increase pre-school fees next year.'

Those discussions, of course, still have to be put in train.  
My statement continues:

'The allocation of funds for the remainder of this calendar year  
means that very few parents will be required to pay more than 40  
cents a week in increased fees. For about one-third of all parents,  
there will be no fee increase.

It needs to be appreciated that the South Australian Govern-  
ment's funding of the pre-school programme for this financial year  
has been increased by almost 14 per cent and this figure may rise  
to as much as 22 per cent by the end of the financial year,  
depending on the need for further allocations to cover wage and  
salary increases.'

That, of course, would be from the round-sum allowance set  
aside in Treasury. My statement continues:

'The State Government cannot change the budget allocation for  
this financial year. There is a limit to the extent to which the State  
can be expected to pick up the Commonwealth Government's  
shortfall. The State Government's allocation of funds in this area  
confirms its strong commitment to pre-school education, despite a  
well orchestrated campaign by the Institute of Teachers to misrep-  
resent the State Government's position.'

I may refer quite specifically to that in a few moments  
when I finish reading the release. My statement continues:

'I understand that there has been some misunderstanding about  
the allocation of funding following the initial payments sent out a  
fortnight ago. Today's meeting has clarified the situation for the  
remainder of this year, and I will be having further discussions  
with the council and the union about arrangements for funding next  
year in the light of any economies which may be possible.'

Mr Allison emphasised that if the Commonwealth's support for  
the pre-school programme had kept pace with wage increases since  
1978-79 its contribution for this financial year would have been  
about \$5 million compared with its actual allocation of \$3.7 million.

'The South Australian Government's contribution for the 1981-  
82 financial year is \$12.3 million,' he said. 'The Commonwealth's  
failure to even keep pace with inflation has meant that the pro-  
portion of its contribution to total pre-school education funding in  
South Australia has dropped from 71 per cent to 22 per cent in  
the last four years.'

I said specifically in that statement:

The State Government's allocation of funds in this area confirms  
its strong commitment to pre-school education, despite a well  
orchestrated campaign by the Institute of Teachers to misrepresent  
the State Government's position.

I do not withdraw that statement in any way. Members  
may have received copies of the green pamphlet which was  
handed to me last night at a meeting I attended of the  
Kindergarten Union Council, at which I spoke for some  
two hours and which meant that I did not have great  
qualms of conscience about not attending the rally this  
afternoon, which had approximately the same number of  
people attending in probably a less responsible role. The  
pamphlet which the Institute of Teachers handed out said

that the Government's contribution was not as the Minister stated. The heading of the pamphlet was 'The Minister's figures are wrong', and it stated, in effect, that bad figures did not support a bad argument.

In fact, the Institute of Teachers perpetuated a common error, which has been made in this House, too, whereby it compared last year's expenditure with this year's vote and, of course, you always compare the allocation with the allocation and the final expenditure with the final expenditure, so that the expenditure last year was compared with the allocation for this year.

We have said time and again today that there is a very considerable round-sum allowance of \$78 000 000, some of which will be allocated to the Childhood Services Council, so that by the end of the year we anticipate that approximately 22 per cent of last year's final allocation will have been spent in addition. For the Institute of Teachers to compare pears with apples and then say that the Minister is wrong is quite a specious argument. It is not the first time it has happened, but it is misleading to the people who attend rallies, and, as I said last night to the full council of the Kindergarten Union, it is certainly a specious argument and incorrect argument, and it either illustrates an accounting ineptitude or quite a deliberate attempt to mislead and denigrate the Minister and the Government.

It is not the first time it has happened; it is not the first time that I have corrected that method of interpreting Government statistics, and I think the last time I corrected anyone it would have been the former Minister of Education when he compared allocations with real expenditure some 12 months ago in the previous Budget debate, when I pointed out then that the present Government had increased its allocation of educational funding in cash and real terms in 1980 and 1981, whereas the previous Government, irrespective of whether it compared the allocation with allocation, or allocation with actual spending, still came out well below the inflation rate. To that extent, the expenditure on childhood services this year by the present Government has run ahead of inflation, and the main argument that we wish to put forward is that the Federal Government has allocated \$3 730 000 for each of the last four years.

It has not increased its expenditure in any way to the extent that in 1975 the State Government was spending about 25 per cent to the Federal Government's 75 per cent. Now, the State Government is spending 78 per cent to the Federal Government's 22 per cent. I reiterate what I said to the Kindergarten Union meeting last night, that both Liberal and Labor Governments in South Australia have been picking up the tab for the last few years, while the Federal Government, we feel, has been reneging on its responsibility. Today the Premier has also taken issue with the Prime Minister on that latter point and has expressed the State Government's strong disapproval of the way that the Federal Government has gradually reduced its expenditure on childhood services in South Australia, both in cash and in real terms, and has asked the Federal Government to reconsider childhood services as a priority. I hope that has cleared the air regarding our intentions for the rest of this year; that the Committee understands that we will be considering the question of what fees will be payable in the new year (I cannot give any firm commitment at this stage; it will be under review); and that the State Government has increased its expenditure this year well beyond inflation and, when the round-sum allowances are made available, it will have increased its expenditure to somewhere around 22 per cent over last year's budgetary figure.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** The Minister's comments are very poor comfort indeed to the committees running the kindergartens and pre-schools of this State. They will have heard or will read the Minister's comments that there have been

increases for childhood services, yet they are the ones that have to work out how the 50 per cent cut in funds to the operating allowances for these kindergartens will be taken account of. It is at least pleasing to see that the Minister has now acknowledged that my statement of 6 October is correct, when I indicated that he misled the House on this matter. The Minister on 7 October—

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I hope the honourable member is not reflecting on the Minister.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** The Minister indicated just now that he may have misinterpreted information he received by way of a telephone call and accordingly advised the House in that manner. I am not saying he deliberately misled the House, but the information we received on that day in answer to the question he has now acknowledged was not correct. I indicated last week that that was not correct and was told in no uncertain terms in the *Advertiser* of 7 October that he had not misled Parliament; he had told Parliament that the first two cheques were a total and average of about 50 per cent and not necessarily exactly 50 per cent for each kindergarten. My point is that had not been said at the time, and I now acknowledge the fact that the Minister has taken that point. The issue, which is very important indeed, is that, whilst there may have been increases in the childhood services total allocation of funds (I will not argue with that; in fact I would support that) and whilst we do face very serious problems in regard to Federal funding (I do acknowledge that and would say that the previous Government was as much opposed to that erosion of funding as is the present Government, and we ought to maintain that opposition to that erosion of funds consistently until such time as there can be real growth in Federal funding), the point is that at the kindergarten door level the money available to committees to run their kindergartens to keep the lights on, to keep the water flowing and to keep the places clean has been cut by 50 per cent.

It has been put to us that it is only a 50 per cent cut. This is a whole new psychology of thinking, when we are expected to believe that 50 per cent can be referred to as 'only'. I would like to know how the Minister considers that these kindergartens and child/parent centres in the months ahead will cope with that. What advice has he got to give them?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Included in the previous press release was a statement that there were also other special arrangements for areas of underprivileged, in that there was a fee support scheme and a special assistance programme, and that the request from the Minister was that the Childhood Services Council and the Minister should not interfere in the decisions to be made by individual sponsors, that is, the Kindergarten Union, the Education Department and the Catholic Education Department, but that each of the sponsors should, by negotiation with individual kindergartens, decide upon methods of fund raising. These will vary. We do acknowledge the tremendous work which is going on in each and every kindergarten in the amount of money which is raised—the various means of support that are given to kindergartens in order to keep them running.

The Kindergarten Union advises me that 97.2 per cent of the Budget increase, which itself is well in excess of inflation, is going towards salaries, leaving a diminished amount available for the other resources. It is the same argument precisely that we elucidated this afternoon during the earlier session with regard to general education funding, that salaries are absorbing an ever-increasing amount of an increasing amount and it leaves less money available for the wide variety of other things that have to be done in education. It is not a new problem: it was acknowledged by the previous Government as well as by this Government, but in this case it was a personal contention which was

supported by others and, incidentally, supported by some people within the kindergarten system itself, that the amount of the increase which we estimate to average somewhere around 47 cents per student per week was certainly not worth the tremendous furore which the Institute of Teachers hoped to raise. We do acknowledge that an increase is an increase. We have acknowledged that there would be areas of underprivileged which would need to be specially looked after, but when you look at the increase of 47 cents per student per week that is half a bottle of beer, or half a packet of cigarettes, and then the magnitude is certainly not of the order that the Institute of Teachers tried to whip it up into. There is a problem, but we have tackled the Federal Government in an attempt to gain a fairer share of funds for the Childhood Services Council, and meanwhile the State Government has repeatedly picked up the difference between the shortfall in Federal funds and the needs of the childhood services area.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** The Minister has indicated that the increase to the parents will be 47 cents a week. He earlier indicated, when the cuts were greater than they are now, that the cost to parents would be \$1 a week. That is the ball game we will be playing next year unless some decision is taken by the Minister. The Minister indicated that 47 cents is the cost of half a bottle of beer a week, and I am quite sure that the kindy kids will not mind missing out on their half bottle of beer a week. That is the sort of ever-increasing impost that is being put on parents who are trying to keep their homes together.

It is grossly unfair that the Minister thinks it is possible to throw in, quite gratuitously, another charge for parents to have to cope with in the education of their children, and expect them not to react to it. It is unreasonable to think that parents are not genuinely concerned about this matter. If the Minister has not read, with a great degree of sympathy and concern, the letters that he has received, he is doing a disservice to the people in the community who have taken a great deal of trouble to try to express their opinions to him. They are asking why the vote cannot be changed and why more money cannot be allocated. We have not yet voted on the third reading of the Budget. Technically, it should still be possible to increase the funds. The Minister's comment that we cannot change the Budget allocation is not correct. The Minister has acknowledged the role of parental funding and how valuable it is, but it is not right and proper that we should take advantage of parental funding by throwing the burden back on the parents in ever-increasing amounts.

Will the Minister indicate the way in which the wages of staff in pre-schools have increased in excess of inflation? What is the total monetary value of that increase? We must know that information to even start to consider the argument that they have eroded the funds available for the Budget allocation for pre-schools, as is the implication. The other argument that I put today is that there is a push-pull effect. If one cuts down by vote the non-salary component and allow the salary component to increase by inflation, on paper it naturally appears that the salary section has eroded the total vote available. It denies the fact that there has been a conscious vote to cut down the non-salary section.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The honourable member asked for quite specific information, and I find that both His Honour Mr Justice Olsson, and Mr Monks, from the Kindergarten Union, offer substantive information showing how salaries have increased beyond the inflation rate. I will ask His Honour to present some statistics and, if they need further amplification, more information will be provided.

**Mr Justice Olsson:** The figures I will quote include a minor element outside the pre-school area, but substantially they give the picture. The unavoidable increases due to

inflation-type elements over last year's figures run along the following lines. There are direct salary increases, which are the effect of the national wage and work value decisions, amounting to \$1 111 000. There is an additional net cost of incremental progressions up the teaching scale of \$300 000, a number of miscellaneous items that relate to increasing debt charges of \$214 000, the cost of the twenty-seventh fortnightly pay period, which intermittently occurs and which occurs in this period, \$446 000, and an additional subsidy recoverable from the Commonwealth in relation to existing approved services, which is really a book entry on both sides, but which reflects in the figures of \$142 000. There is an overall inflation factor of 4 per cent that is applied to the contingencies area of \$45 000 and a number of miscellaneous items, which together add up to nearly \$70 000. The effect of all that is that we have an unavoidable cost escalation over the total Budget of \$2 237 000. There are some minor offsets in relation to non-recurring costs. That gives the votable figure.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I will ask Mr Monks to further illustrate the impact on Kindergarten Union employees' salaries on a percentage basis.

**Mr Monks:** The total increase in the Kindergarten Union's anticipated expenditure for the current fiscal year is \$1 673 000. Within that, the substantial item is the increase in teaching salaries, which we predict will increase by 14.84 per cent in the current year.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** That is in excess of inflation.

**Mr Monks:** Yes.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** How much in excess of inflation?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The inflation figure is running at about 10 per cent, and we have an excess of 4.84 per cent.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I thought that the Budget figure had an inbuilt inflation figure of 12.6 per cent.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The inbuilt inflation from Treasury is 4 per cent. That is the standard Treasury inflation figure for non-salary lines. The salary lines are catered for in that round-sum allowance, which ignores any inflation rate and simply allocates according to salary. We are looking at a figure for childhood services well in excess of inflation, that is, about 22 per cent over last year's allocation. Mr Monks supplied me with information yesterday that was certainly more pessimistic than it need be. Since these figures were released, we have decided to give every kindergarten 50 per cent of last year's allocation for term 3. Mr Monks makes the point that already some of the disadvantaged kindergartens have received more than 90 per cent of the previous grants. That involves the special allocations that we made available.

The six kindergartens that are in the worst position and in regard to which Mr Monks extracted data showed an increased additional cost per child in a 14-week term of 73 cents a week additional for one kindergarten, and the others were 68 cents, 79 cents, 69 cents, 98 cents and 64 cents respectively. Honourable members will appreciate that when I made a statement to the House a couple of weeks ago, I said that, at worst, I anticipated that kindergartens would be paying an extra \$1 a week, not as an average (which the honourable member assumed a little while ago), which is very close to the 98 cents that the worst-affected kindergarten will be paying. The average for the Kindergarten Union was 47 cents per student per week, prior to the additional distribution. That now will have fallen further.

**Mr RANDALL:** My questions will relate to the childhood service and the pre-school area. I want to use my time to learn something. What is the role of childhood services in administering pre-school education funds? How are the funds divided? To whom are they delivered?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Perhaps Mr Justice Olsson would be the most appropriate person to answer in this regard.

**Mr Justice Olsson:** It should be appreciated that the council is not directly a sponsoring agency of any service. It is not an operating agency but a planning and co-ordinating agency. Our main sponsors are the Kindergarten Union, the Education Department, the Department for Community Welfare, the Catholic Education Office, the South Australian Health Commission, and a multiplicity of community groups, which run individually—

**Mr RANDALL:** If I may interrupt, I am concerned only about pre-school funding.

**Mr Justice Olsson:** The basic sponsors are the Kindergarten Union, the Education Department, and the Catholic Education Office.

**Mr RANDALL:** Would it be possible for you to tell me what is the funding allocation to each of those areas from the pre-school education line? The Programme Estimates does not show that information, which perhaps could be incorporated next year.

**Mr Justice Olsson:** Yes, it is. These are all part figures because they include central administrative costs. The figure for the Kindergarten Union is \$14 130 000; the Education Department, \$2 523 000; and the figure for Catholic education is \$207 000.

**Mr RANDALL:** The Childhood Services Council administers these funds or divides them up. Is any levy or administration costs for its handling these fees is built into this fee structure? In other words, does the council cream off any percentage?

**Mr Justice Olsson:** No, not at all. There is a separate allocation for the administrative costs of the council itself, and these funds are divided up, of course, in accordance with predetermined formulae.

**Mr ABBOTT:** I refer to the Minister's comment in relation to the problems in the under-privileged area. Like all members of the Opposition, I have been inundated with letters expressing disgust at the cuts to kindergartens that have been announced. I represent an under-privileged area and I received a lot of correspondence from the kindergartens within my area. I shall name three: the Croydon Park Kindergarten, the Woodville Gardens Pre-School Centre and the Kilkenny Child-Parent Centre. They are all bitterly complaining about these cuts that have been announced. The Croydon Park Kindergarten, for example, says that the cuts in the grant means a reduction in basic services such as cleaning and maintenance, so that we can cover our non-reducible costs, such as electricity and rates. However, the obvious step to be taken by the kindergarten is to increase fees, and the Minister has indicated that that amounts to 47c per week.

Also the kindergarten can roster parents for cleaning and maintenance and increase fund-raising activities. The Kilkenny Child-Parent Centre said that it had been advised that the arranged terminal grant would be reduced from \$480 to \$310 a term, that particular reduction representing a 35 per cent drop. The Commonwealth cut in this area was nowhere near 35 per cent. Therefore, the Minister might be able to indicate why such a very large cut has occurred. I also ask the Minister whether he will undertake to look at those kindergartens within my area, which is an underprivileged one.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Perhaps before I ask His Honour to give a fuller explanation, I might take up the issue of cuts. In fact, the Government has increased childhood services expenditure in cash and real terms by 14 per cent over the last year's budget allocation by an anticipated 22 per cent, if we look at round sum allowances which will be available to cover anticipated salary increases. However, in spite of that increase, the Treasury has asked all depart-

ments, not simply childhood services, which come under Government expenditure to consider a shortfall, that is, to take some reduction.

In the case of childhood services the reduction is about \$300 000 mark. That \$300 000 reduction might have been borne in one of two ways. Here again, I think that the Institute of Teachers was a little less than honest in the publicity that it put out. The reduction might have been effected by a change in the staffing formula, which after all is the most generous anywhere in Australia; it is a basic formula of one to ten, which does slip here and there, I admit. However, we have worked on a basic formula of one to ten, and one teacher to 10 pupils is a very good staffing formula.

It might not have been unreasonable, therefore, to look at that formula and say, 'Can we extend that so that we would need less staff?' Without dismissing anyone, but by attrition, staff would be lost over the next six months. That was one possibility. However, the Institute of Teachers, in order to protect its membership, has repeatedly asked that the Government protect staff by maintaining as high or as good a teacher-student ratio as possible both in the general education area, the primary and secondary area, and in the childhood services area. Really, we acceded to a request from the Institute of Teachers to maintain the staffing ratios.

The other alternatives were two-fold. Either we increase taxation to bring in additional revenue, an option which the Treasurer has repeatedly said he does not want to take up, or to ask parents to contribute something additional towards the running costs of their kindergartens. We felt, after conference with the sponsors, that the latter option was the most acceptable because of the relatively small increase per student per week involved. Whether that judgment was correct, it was made, so the request was to take up from parents an additional average of about 47c per week. That has further reduced now.

Rather than mislead the House I led the House and I confirmed that the statement that I made was so. I would have misled the House had I not confirmed that 50 per cent was the amount that we were looking towards. Whether there was misunderstanding has nothing to do with the House. I said that there would be a 50 per cent payment, and a 50 per cent payment there is. So, the honourable member is playing with words; it is semantics. The fact is that the Government has maintained the promise that the Minister made a couple of weeks ago. That is quite unquestionable. The press release confirms it, and my understanding has been to that effect. I am sure His Honour will be able to amplify the other aspects of the question.

**Mr Justice Olsson:** There are perhaps two preliminary points that I should make by way of introduction. First, we have administered the situation on the basis not of disadvantaged areas but of disadvantaged children, so that our whole funding approach has been geared to that. The second preliminary point is that there is probably some degree of understandable misunderstanding within the kindergartens as to exactly what their financial position is going to be because the sponsors sought to get out a preliminary check as rapidly as possible to the kindergartens, to be followed up by another one shortly, by way of making up a top-up payment in respect of the current term. So, I think that some of the reaction that has been generated is probably a reaction to the first payment that was made. I think certainly the figures quoted in relation to, for example, the Croydon Park Kindergarten appear to fall in that category.

As the Minister said, the overall real reduction in operating expenses was a round sum of \$300 000. When the Childhood Services Council was asked to come up with an implementation of that approach, in discussion with the

sponsors, we really split the remaining funds into three components. First, we identified in each of the areas concerned a number of individual situations that could not be the subject of any reduction on any reasonable basis. For example, there is the handicapped children's kindergarten at Kent Town which is clearly catering to a special needs group. Parents are already under great pressure and obviously cannot pay. There was no reduction in the operating expenses there at all. A number of other special situations were identified along those lines. We then studied our previous experience, and determined in consultation with the sponsors that in general there was maximum of about 30 per cent of children in the special needs category where clearly their parents either could afford nothing or could afford only a nominal fee.

In the case of Catholic education, that percentage was slightly higher and we made a special allowance there. However, in general it was 30 per cent across the board. We then allocated on the appropriate *pro rata* basis 30 per cent to the various sponsors. That 30 per cent was made available on the basis that they then would examine in detail their own situations and ensure that an equitable distribution would be made to the kindergartens containing children in those special need categories, so that there could be a proper picking up of fees where that was necessary to ensure that they could continue to go. The balance was then split up, again on a *pro rata* basis. This has meant that, subject to the sponsors' finally adjusting those figures (that process has just been completed, particularly in the Kindergarten Union, where cheques went out in the past few days; Mr Monks can confirm that), in kindergartens which have a substantial number of children in need there will be a much bigger payment to them than in cases where there are more affluent parents. That led to the misunderstanding.

An application of that approach has meant, in effect, that where there are very few children in need the actual reduction has tended to be less than 50 per cent. It was to that area that Cabinet decided that we should top up, so that no-one was reduced to below 50 per cent of last year's contribution. I think that that is the approach which takes us through to December next and which should cater for those needy kindergartens without too much difficulty. No child should be refused kindergarten because they cannot pay. That was the basis for the split, anyway.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** I want to ask some questions regarding pre-school education. I refer to the Programme Estimates, vol 2, page 61. Why, if the allocation to general pre-school services has been increased by 16.9 per cent to \$15 530 000, has it been necessary to include within that figure cuts in the amounts allocated to operating expenses?

**Mr Justice Olsson:** That is the net figure which is shown there after those cuts.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** That is correct. That is what I am saying. That is an increase of 16.9 per cent. Why has it been necessary to include within that the cuts allocated to operating expenses?

**Mr Justice Olsson:** Because that figure reflects the all-up figure that has been paid to sponsors in the pre-school area for all purposes. It was decided that there had to be a reduction of \$300 000 in the original Budget estimates presented, and, of course, it had to come off that figure.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** Why? What has increased to lead to that decrease? I guess that that is another way in which I can ask the question.

**Mr Justice Olsson:** As the Minister pointed out, over the past four years in particular, the amount of Federal contribution towards pre-school expenses has been pegged at a constant figure. We have therefore been going backwards at the rate of inflation per annum. I suppose you could say

that we have been going backwards by about 10 per cent per annum, at least for the past four years on the major element of pre-school costs, which is, of course, salaries. Successive State Governments have had to pick up the short-fall as it has occurred.

In the context of the present Budget the Government has decided that along with, no doubt, what has happened with other Government expenditure in other departments there must be some reduction here. The sole reduction in our real expenditure for this year has in fact been the \$300 000 that has come out of operating expenses. As the Minister said, a policy decision could have been taken to take that reduction against salaries but, of course, that would have meant a reduction in staff and, therefore, a reduction in service or an increase in child-staff ratios.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** When we look at the figure, are we saying that salaries have increased more rapidly than inflation? Is that basically what you are saying?

**Mr Justice Olsson:** No. There has been a constant increase in salaries which has fairly directly represented the rate of inflation, because most salaries have been geared to movements in the consumer price index under the indexation approach. The Federal contribution, which was struck about four years ago, at a certain point in time, has never been indexed. So, whilst our salaries have been increasing at the rate of at least 10 per cent per annum, that contribution has not. Successive State Governments have been asked, by increased allocations in the State Revenue Budget, to pick up that deficit. Here lies the problem.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I should like to add a couple of other relevant points relating to the increase in salaries. The figure that Mr Monks quoted a little while ago clearly indicated that the differential in salaries for the Kindergartens Union was 14.84 per cent, which is well ahead of inflation. Two factors which are relevant to the argument are, first, that the Education Department Government service generally is faced with an incremental creep, particularly in the teaching service, whereby, even were there no salary increase by indexation or award which should have been applied for through the tribunal, there would still be a substantial salary increase because teachers with another year's service are escalated to another step on the ladder. That is one factor that must be taken into consideration: every year there is an increase automatically, even without normal indexation. Of course, the indexation applies to the incremental increase, too. There is a double up.

Of course, we have been considering another factor. Whereas we used to have one major rationalisation in childhood services each year, with a minor rationalisation (that is, a transfer of staff from kindergartens shrinking to kindergartens gaining), over the past 12 months, we have had two major rationalisations, with movement of staff. In many cases, this has meant that a professional staff member, that is, a trained teacher, replaces an ancillary staff member whose services are disposed of in the shrinking kindergarten. That is one of the facts of life whereby we are increasing the number of professionals in the service and decreasing the number of ancillary staff. Those factors will automatically escalate the salaries bill beyond inflation. I think that that would be correct.

**Mr Justice Olsson:** Yes.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** That has fully clarified my first question and I appreciate that. My second question relates again to the Programme Estimates, volume 2 (page 5:19). My question relates to pre-school for three and a half year olds. I notice that in the recurrent expenditure the proposed money that will be spent is more than double last year's actual expenditure, yet the number of full-time equivalents is to remain at the same level. How is that extra spending to be utilised?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The explanation is relatively simple, in so far as last year's programme was commenced halfway through a financial year, so that \$75 000 has become \$150 000 for the present full year. However, the staffing aspect still runs through the full year. The spending has been held at last year's level for programmes which were initiated last year and which were apparently successful.

**Mr EVANS:** Will the Minister give the detailed answers to the questions I asked earlier this afternoon in relation to Blackwood and Streaky Bay kindergartens and the method of assessing staff numbers in August for kindergartens beginning in February?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The question of interest to the member for Eyre referred to the Streaky Bay Kindergarten which will be reduced to a half-day operation from the beginning of term one next year. Enrolment and attendance numbers, which have declined, are the basis for this decision. However, there is a plan to operate the service on three full days instead of five half days. This is being considered as an option only so far, and no decision has yet been made.

Regarding the Blackwood Kindergarten, I approved the rationalisation of its staff on September 17. In fact, I was under the impression that a letter had been sent to the honourable member about this matter. The allocation is currently at a level of one to nine, which is one of the best in the State. There are some five year olds attending kindergarten, and Kindergarten Union staffing has been on the basis of an enrolment of 44.75 four year olds. At the moment there are 42 four year olds and five five year olds attending that kindergarten. Three of those five year olds are scheduled to go to local primary schools, and the Childhood Services Council has asked the Kindergarten Union to co-operate with the slight reduction in numbers.

**Mr EVANS:** What happens if there are 58 children there next February. How long will it take before staff adjustments are made?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Mr Monks advises me that the review would occur in term one and be effective in term two.

**Mr TRAINER:** Like other members of this Committee, I have received representations from kindergartens in my area, from Harcourt Gardens, Oaklands Estate, Ascot Park, and Vermont. Parents from those kindergartens were present today on the steps of Parliament House to put their point of view. Despite the comment made by the Minister, there is little evidence of any Teachers Institute presence there. I would say that 95 per cent of those present at the lunch-time rally were mothers of kindergarten children. On their behalf, I ask the Minister whether the reallocation of resources that has taken place is indicative of a move away from a concept that we had been moving towards, namely, the concept that free pre-school education is the right of every child? We are, instead, moving away from that towards the user-pays principle. I would appreciate the Minister's comments about that.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** No, I think that it is an acknowledgement that the economic climate, not only in South Australia but generally across Australia, has been much tighter over the past couple of years, and certainly all States have felt the impact of the Federal Government's policy, which has been towards asking States generally to restrain their expenditure at Government level and to encourage expenditure at the private level. Perhaps if I may develop that idea a little further without becoming political, a certain amount of money is available in Australia for loans. The Federal Government, were it to compete for that money, would drive up interest rates. It is like going to an auction: if one bids for funds that are available the interest rates are driven up. If Government competition for funds

is withdrawn, then one tries to stabilise or reduce interest rates. That technique is currently being tried.

All States are therefore being asked to restrain Government expenditure. Whether or not we like it, that has been done for the past two years. If one does not do that, one must obviously go elsewhere, for instance, overseas, for funds. We know that some currencies are soft and easier to repay, and others are hard and become harder and harder to repay. When I say 'hard', I mean that that money retains its high value and interest rates go higher. This is a fairly simple concept. South Australia has been asked, as have all other States, to restrain its expenditure in the Government sector. At the same time, the Federal Government has reduced its own input through capital and recurrent funds, so we are doubly hit. We cannot borrow as easily and, at the same time, our grants have been reduced. This is an acknowledgement that the economic climate over the past couple of years has been increasingly tight.

We have asked representatives of the Kindergarten Union (in fact, I asked them last night) to bear with the Government in this, which is probably as tight an economic year as we would have seen for quite some time, in anticipation of improvement. If the honourable member believes that things are not going to improve, I can only repeat that we have been losing population from South Australia since 1975 but that for the past two quarters we have seen a net gain. Those are Bureau of Census and Statistics figures. To suggest that in 1976 and 1977 there were net gains, which I think the honourable member for Salisbury said, means that he is using a different set of Bureau of Census and Statistics figures from those to which I have access. We have shown a steady population loss for several years. Now we have begun to increase in population, and we have a considerable sum of money committed to resource development. It has increased from \$17 000 000 in 1979 to \$850 000 000 currently. So the State has a measure of confidence.

Apart from that, the Minister of Labour and Industry has quoted the up-turn in employment in South Australia. We lost 22 000 jobs from 1975 onwards (again, Bureau of Census and Statistics figures), but we have seen a gain of 11 000 of those jobs in the past two years. There are signs of improvement. If I sound optimistic, that is how I choose to be. If the honourable member for Ascot Park chooses to sound pessimistic and say that this is the thin end of the wedge, and that more and more will be asked of parents, then I think he is flying in the face of reality. Those were not our intentions.

**Mr TRAINER:** That was an interesting set of mixed metaphors with which the Minister finished up. I will not take him up on that point. I am sure that what he has said is going to look nice in print to quite a lot of people. I would now like to ask the Minister about other matters raised by people associated with two kindergartens in my area. One query relates to what the Minister said earlier, namely, that an alternative to the reduction of the grants was to alter the staff ratio. I understand that it was mooted at one stage that the current ratio of 10 students per full-time staff member per session should be increased to a ratio of 12.5 to 1. The way it was put to me by kindergarten representatives in my area was that the Government was considering that not as an alternative to the \$300 000 reduction but as an addition thereto. Can the Minister give us an assurance that the current staff ratio of 10 to 1 will be maintained for at least another two calendar years?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I can give the honourable member no unequivocal guarantees, any more than his Government or this Government can budget beyond the current financial year. The honourable member knows that Governments simply do not budget for triennia, unless they are Com-

monwealth Governments in exceptional circumstances. So, to give an unequivocal guarantee is literally impossible. Neither he nor I would be aware of financial circumstances over the next two years for which he is seeking the guarantee. Implicit in what the honourable member says is that the Minister has been considering a document quoting a figure of one staff member to 12.5 students. In fact, a member of the press rang me one day last week and said that she had a document that had fallen off of a truck. It was a leaked document, to which I had not been privy, and she said that it quoted a substantial increase in teacher/student ratios.

It is quite possible that working documents are moving about in the Childhood Services Council, or elsewhere, but certainly there has been no Ministerial consideration of that matter. I do not know whether His Honour can comment on that. Certainly, a document came into the hands of the press; it contained a brief comment by the Director-General of Education that he felt the matter should be further examined, but this was certainly not at Ministerial level. I would like His Honour to comment briefly about that, because a report appeared in the press as recently as Monday of this week stating that there were Ministerial leaks. I deny that.

**Mr Justice Olsson:** I think that the letter or document that is in issue is associated with what is an annual exercise by the Childhood Services Council to review its policy on staffing within the various facilities for which it has a planning responsibility. One of our problems is that, whilst we conduct rationalisation exercises twice a year (once in August on a forward-planning basis and once again in March on hard enrolment figures), there are always points in time at which it becomes impossible to maintain a constant staffing ratio across the whole system. You have a constant ebb and flow of students, you have a flexibility factor before you rationalise staff anyway, and we have situations in which we have never been able to achieve a full coverage for all of the four-year-old children in the State, and the Budget documents disclose that we are something like about 6 or 7 per cent short of what we believe is probably the optimum figure.

This has meant that we have something of a scattered pattern of *de facto* staffing situations, and they range from extremes of about 1 to 8 in the best case to I think in the very worst case a figure of 1 to about 21. That is really an outside odd situation. These situations cause us, as you would appreciate, some concern. What we have been discussing with our sponsoring agencies is to try to achieve some flexible situation in the approach to rationalisation which recognises differing needs of differing pre-schools, given that we have an overall short-fall of the ideal staff we need anyway. It was in that context that this figure of 12.5 was first mooted as being part of an outside broad band in relation to which there would either be or not be a rationalisation implementation. I think it has arisen in that situation.

There has to be a flexibility factor before you physically redeploy staff, and that was really the outside limit that is desirable. We wanted to discuss that with the sponsoring agencies, because there has to be some flexibility, otherwise you rigidly move people, which causes hardship to the staff and might cause undue movement of staff during a temporary situation; either a temporary decline or increase. It is really in that context that it has been discussed, but the policy has never been varied from a core approach of 1 to 10.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** It is regrettable that this problem has arisen at the moment due to a lack of or inappropriate communication channels. It is highlighted throughout the 3½-year-old pre-school programme where I know from some

of the letters I have received from my kindergartens that their opening stand was that there was a Government policy to provide 3½-year-old pre-school education, and for some odd reason they had been led to believe that this was an across-the-board policy, which we know only too well was not such a policy. It was a specified policy, and regrettably people chose either to misrepresent the policy or had not correctly informed the kindergartens of such. That also appears to be the problem behind this whole controversy of the cutting in their funding, and members opposite know that too often it is the first figure quoted that sticks in people's minds.

Some people obviously delight in trying to use a higher figure, such as a 70 per cent cut, rather than coming forward with a more exact figure. What I am getting at is the problem that many kindergartens (and I talked to some of the ladies outside at lunch-time today), when they received their first payment of the 30 per cent, made inquiries and were told that the particular sponsor, in this case the Kindergarten Union, was not able to inform them prior to their receiving that first payment why they were getting it. From the comments His Honour has made here, it is obvious that communications had been set up within the Kindergarten Union from the Childhood Services, that they would receive this first payment of 30 per cent and that the Kindergarten Union was then to determine its own needs basis within that figure. Therefore, why were the kindergartens not informed adequately as to what the funding arrangement was going to be? Sometime later a fact sheet was sent out, I think accompanying in some cases the second payment, and certainly it was a help to the kindergartens to receive that.

The second line of the fact sheet states, 'This is 50.2 per cent of the amount paid in 1980-81', so it is easy to see why the kindergartens could assume that they were going to receive 50 per cent of their previous year's allocation, whereas the way it turned out some were going to get more and some were going to get less. Could it therefore be explained why adequate information on funding was not provided to the kindergartens?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The fact sheet which was sent out by the Kindergarten Union does begin with the statement, 'What funds are available' and says, 'This is 50.2 per cent of the amount paid in 1980-81' and there is quite a full explanation, with probably the relevant paragraph at page 2, which states, 'Because of the new distribution arrangements, those kindergartens with parents paying reduced concessional fees will generally receive assistance at a higher level than those centres where all parents are able to meet full fees', so the qualifying statement is at page 2.

That in itself may relate to a misunderstanding. People read the first paragraph and see that figure of 50 per cent. The statement in itself was quite ample, and again at page 2:

The 30 per cent made in the week of 28 September was an interim payment designed to ensure that kindergartens had some funds to go on with following the confirmation of the available funds in the State Budget. All kindergartens are receiving an additional payment in the week of 5 October. This payment is largely made up of assistance under the fees support scheme.

There was no statement there as to the precise amount. It would be possible for people reading quickly to misinterpret that letter, but it did set out the facts quite clearly.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** The question was: Why did the kindergartens not receive this information either prior to their receiving their first cheque or together with their first cheque?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I will ask Mr Monks to speak to that in a moment, but when I first discussed this issue with the sponsors, the Director of the Kindergarten Union, Dr

Ebeck, was one of those who agreed that this was the better of the two alternatives that were finally put and that the Kindergarten Union would, in fact, advise its kindergartens. Mr Monks came in subsequently, and whether he was made privy to the nature of the discussions I had with Dr Ebeck, I do not know, but Mr Monks was landed with the job, and partly with the blame, although I think the Minister can accept some responsibility in so far as I might just as easily have made a point of contacting all the sponsors and asked, 'Have you told people what has happened?', so I am certainly not going to blame Mr Monks for being second in line.

**Mr Monks:** I am happy to give some further background in relation to the question. The 30 per cent payment which was made on the week of 28 September reflected a judgment made in the Kindergarten Union that it was desirable to get some payment to kindergartens forthwith. The background of this is that payments of this nature are made very early in each term and, because of the State Budget coming down, as I understand it, later than usual, the Kindergarten Union was at pains to get some funds to kindergartens at the earliest possible time. That is reflected in comments which have been made to me by people in kindergartens, kindergarten treasurers and so on, saying things like, 'We had our telephone bill and we were keeping an eye on the post box waiting for the cheque to land so that we could pay that.' As I said, that sort of information was taken into account in making that judgment.

The reduction in the overall level of funds available to support kindergarten operating costs has been accompanied by a variation to the method of payment. What that means is that the Kindergarten Union has been at pains to try to get its best matching between funds provided and the needs that there are in kindergartens, in particular taking account of the economic circumstances that individual parents have. It has meant there has obviously been some administrative work necessary to develop the new fee support scheme. When the first payment was made in the week of 28 September, that administrative work, which involved analysing our statistics on every child who attends a Kindergarten Union facility in this State, was still proceeding. As soon as that came to fruition some 10 days thereafter, a second cheque, and this is in the week of 5 October, was sent out to all kindergartens, primarily reflecting the additional assistance under the new arrangements.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** I hope Mr Monks did not think I was attributing any blame to him. When you have a kindergarten such as Happy Valley, with a large number of children (I think offhand 143 on their books) and the majority of those children can only be offered three sessions a week rather than the full four sessions, yet in other kindergartens not far away, for instance at O'Halloran Hill, they provide a full four sessions—it is a higher payment than at Happy Valley—it becomes difficult for parents to understand why another kindergarten should give more than theirs when they are so heavily loaded in their commitment.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** We appreciate the problems kindergartens have encountered during the last several weeks. I might add that another reason why there was a hiatus was that the Minister had the file and was personally considering a number of alternatives before finally agreeing to the recommendation of the sponsors that this was the only acceptable alternative in the circumstances, so that was a further compounding element.

**Mr SCHMIDT:** If I can return to an earlier comment that was made, could it be specified what allocation is made to the Childhood Services Council for its administration? What allocation is made to the Kindergarten Union for its administration and what allocation is made to the Education Department for its administration? Are these

administration fees separate allocations, or, in the case of sponsors, are those allocations taken out of the total funding for that particular sponsor?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Perhaps Mr Cox, the Secretary of the Childhood Services Council, could answer that question in detail.

**Mr Cox:** The Childhood Services Council's total budget is \$287 000, which comprises secretariat \$201 000 salaries, \$59 000 for contingencies, a small amount for research, which may or may not be used, and a central pool that we hold on behalf of resource centres and toy libraries by way of maintenance grants which we will pay out centrally from the council during the year. That is the total budget, \$287 000 for the council. For the Kindergarten Union the programme papers reflect the Childhood Services Council's budget, so if you are looking at the administration of the Kindergarten Union, that information, until the Kindergarten Union goes on to programme performance budgeting, does not appear here. However, I have supplementary information indicating that the Kindergarten Union salaries, administration consultant advisory staff are budgeted in this financial year at \$1 308 000; long service leave \$60 000; superannuation \$37 159, and so it goes on through a great realm of items. These all appear within the pre-school sector, or the relevant programme sector, so far as the programme papers are concerned and next year or possibly the year after, when the Kindergarten Union itself is on programme based budgeting, you would get very detailed dissection that you have on us at the moment.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Mr Monks is quite prepared to explain in some detail the allocation of \$1 300 000 for administration within the Kindergarten Union.

**Mr Monks:** That figure for administrative staff which has previously been mentioned broadly splits into three main areas. The first area relates to the union's regional advisory service, which is the main link between the head office administration and kindergartens in the field. The second area relates to the union's clinical staff, including speech therapy services, social work services and other similar services aimed at children with special needs. The third area which is included in that is the central administration. I am not able to give you a detailed dissection of what those particular areas amount to but, on the most recent figures I have seen, the administrative staff of the union, including clerical, typing and other similar functions, come to less than 5 per cent of total expenditure.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Before calling the honourable member for Salisbury, I point out that prior to this session I gave the honourable member 35 calls. There were some grumbings a few minutes ago because I gave the honourable member for Mawson four calls. The Chair has endeavoured during the whole of these proceedings to allow a member to follow through his line of questioning, and I have endeavoured to assist members. I make that quite clear, that the Chair has in no way endeavoured to miss anyone out. It is entirely up to members to indicate, and they will be given the call.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** In no way was I reflecting upon your ruling and the running of the Committee debates. I was perhaps casting some reflection on the lack of gravity and lack of conciseness of certain questions that have been asked today by certain members in this place. I will ask only one question in this bracket, because I know my colleague the shadow Minister of Aboriginal Affairs has a great many questions he wants to ask on those lines. My comments at this stage relate to the kindergarten area. The Minister indicated that we should not be too concerned about the cuts we are now seeing. I have received a letter from a child/parent centre, which is classified in category D, the second highest priority on the needs basis and, from

the information they have given me, their funding has been reduced from \$1 500 in the first year of this Government in office to \$932 projected for next year. I have no doubt that that probably needs to be upgraded because of the latest announcement today, but in the absence of it being upgraded this projection for next year represents only 53 per cent of the amount allocated in the first year of this Government in office, and if you take account of inflation it represents only 40 per cent of the first year of this Government in office.

I believe that that opens up a very clear question as to how serious the Minister is in regard to providing extra funds for those areas that have special needs. I repeat the point that this child-parent centre is a category D centre and, therefore, it is clearly high up on the needs basis. I want to make one other point in that area. The member for Mawson highlighted this problem as being due to a lack of communication channels. However, I believe that that is entirely incorrect: it is due to a lack of cash at the door level of kindergartens and child-parent centres to allow them to pay the bills to keep the operation functioning.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The press release that I quoted earlier stated that the meeting had agreed that the Childhood Services Council and the Kindergarten Union would examine all means available to effect economies in their operations to reduce to the maximum extent possible the need to increase pre-school fees next year. In other words, the matter is still under review and, whatever impression I might have given, I point out that the Government and the Minister certainly are most acutely aware of the situation in which some kindergartens find themselves. There is certainly no lack of sympathy and understanding. However, because of budgetary constraints, and acting on the advice of the sponsors, we adopted what we considered to be the better of two alternatives.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** At this stage I should like to introduce Mr B. C. Headland, Administrative Officer, Office of Aboriginal Affairs, and Mr J. L. Reedman, Executive Officer, Advisory Committee, Non-Government Schools.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Are there any questions?

**Mr ABBOTT:** Would the Minister be prepared to consider listing Aboriginal matters under a separate category, rather than under the heading of 'Miscellaneous'? I think that the Aboriginal community is a very important section of the community; indeed, more important and warranting more consideration than simply being listed under 'Miscellaneous'. I realise that Aboriginal matters are listed in alphabetical order under 'Miscellaneous', but as this is such an important category I ask the Minister whether it is a Treasury decision, or whether the Premier will consider listing Aboriginal matters under a separate category in future Budgets.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I would simply say 'Yes', the intention was in fact that the Aboriginal Affairs Office would be given a separate line but certain administrative procedures prevented that occurring for the present budgetary session. However, I am quite sure that we will come to some alternative arrangement before discussing the next Budget.

**Mr ABBOTT:** The Aboriginal community in South Australia has possibly suffered more than any other section of the community in this Budget. It would appear that the Government is making no effort to provide for the special needs of Aborigines. If one looks at the total financial contribution towards the four main Aboriginal areas that are assisted by the State Government, namely, the Aboriginal Co-ordinating Committee, Aboriginal housing—the administration and maintenance area—the Aboriginal Education Foundation, and the Aboriginal Lands Trust, one can

see cuts amounting to \$352 000. Actual payments made in those four areas in 1980-81 totalled \$476 154. The proposed expenditure for this financial year is down by a massive \$124 154, which is a reduction of 26.1 per cent. Therefore, the overall cut, taking inflation into account is approximately 38.1 per cent in real terms, and it would appear that the Government is making no effort to provide for the special needs of Aborigines. I ask the Minister whether he will say why the Aboriginal people are being treated so harshly in this Budget.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** With regard to the first line under 'Miscellaneous', the reduction of expenditure for the Aboriginal Co-ordinating Committee for fees and expenses is down on last year because there are a couple of capital items on last year's account which are certainly not there this year. One of them comprised several thousand dollars for two new vehicles. The allocation for the Aboriginal Lands Trust is a slight increase from \$32 000 to \$34 000. There is a new allocation for the Anangu Pitjantjatjara to allow that body to run its own affairs; not only has the South Australian Government allocated \$75 000 but also I believe an allocation of somewhere in the vicinity of \$80 000 is available from the Federal Government. That was a joint contribution. With regard to Aboriginal housing, the contribution towards administration and maintenance would be an amount that was determined by the Housing Trust, not by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. That is the most substantial reduction to the Aboriginal housing line.

**Mr ABBOTT:** The Minister mentioned the Aboriginal Co-ordinating Committee's fees and expenses. I agree that there has been a major cut in that area. An amount of \$86 000 is proposed under this line, yet the actual payments during 1980-81 totalled \$102 154, representing a 15.8 per cent cut before inflation. If we take that into account, the cut is 28 per cent in real terms. That is an appalling situation, when the Government has clearly stated that it will continue to place great importance on Aboriginal affairs. I ask the Minister to explain the reason for those cuts. I would also like to know what the staffing situation is. How many salaries within the Office of Aboriginal Affairs are paid for by the State Government and how many by the Commonwealth Government?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I stated a few moments ago that the \$86 000 on the Aboriginal Co-ordinating Committee line was reduced because of the two motor vehicles which were purchased last year, but which did not have to appear on that line this year. In fact, the line for the preceding year (that is, two years ago) was down in the low \$80 000's. It was increased last year by the amount required for two replacement vehicles. I believe that there was also an amount from the Federal Government last year toward running expenses.

I refer to the number of salaries. There is the Secretary of the Office of Aboriginal Affairs, the administrative Officer (Mr Headland), a Project Officer and a clerk. Those four salaries are paid for by the State Government. The Commonwealth contribution to that department was very small. In fact, I believe that the Commonwealth Government contributes only to South Australia and to no other State Office of Aboriginal Affairs. It is a very small contribution.

**Mr ABBOTT:** The contribution towards the administration and maintenance of Aboriginal housing has also been drastically cut. It is a 32.3 per cent cut. Taking inflation into account, in real terms the cut is 43.4 per cent. The actual amount voted last year was insufficient, when actual payments exceeded the amount that was voted by \$26 000. I would appreciate it if the Minister would explain the reason for this huge cut on this line. I would also like to know who administers that fund.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** There was an increase from the proposed \$305 000 on Aboriginal housing contribution towards administration and maintenance in 1980-81 to an outcome figure of \$331 000. That increase was due to a payment by the State Government of arrears which were recognised as a legitimate claim. I point out that this is by way of deficit funding, so that the allocation of money by State and Commonwealth is payment for work actually done. It is not an anticipatory allocation: it is an actual amount on a deficit-funding basis. So the reduction, whatever it may be, is simply a payment for work that has actually been done on behalf of Aboriginal housing.

**Mr ABBOTT:** The Minister is no doubt aware of the reports on Aboriginal housing needs in South Australia. These were prepared by the research team of the Aboriginal Housing Board. Has the Government acted on any of the recommendations to meet the current and future needs of Aboriginal housing in South Australia?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** This is a Commonwealth field of responsibility. We do have one problem which is emerging, in so far as the Commonwealth Government has given notice that it has changed the arrangements for funding Aboriginal housing. The funds are earmarked under the general welfare housing grant, which would be administered by the South Australian Housing Trust. At this stage we are literally uncertain as to how the operating loss for Aboriginal housing will be handled this year, and certainly in future years. We are not certain whether, in fact, State funds will now be required for this purpose.

This is one more issue that is currently under negotiation between the State Premier, the relevant State Minister and the Federal Government. I am quite sure that Committee members will realise, as we have said previously, that the Office of Aboriginal Affairs does not negotiate on behalf of other Ministers, but it retains an oversight through Office of Aboriginal Affairs on what is happening in other portfolios. So, those negotiations will be not under my control, but under that of the Minister of Housing.

**Mr HAMILTON:** I would like to know from the Minister what sums of money are allocated by this Government into research for hearing and speech difficulties amongst Aboriginal children. Can the Minister say what specific research is being carried out in these areas, and what are the specific problems that this research has revealed?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** That question would more appropriately have been addressed to Minister of Health, who provided me with one document which is relevant to the field of Aboriginal health and in which she notified me that she had, in fact, appointed an Aboriginal health organisation; a board of management was also appointed. However, I do not have ready access to the type of statistic on research on an individual programme that the member is seeking. I can obtain it for him from the Minister of Health and make it available to the Committee subsequently.

**Mr HAMILTON:** Can the Minister also say how much money has been made available by the Government for that specific research?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** No, I do not have that statistic available. I will make it available, too.

**Mr RANDALL:** I am in the unfortunate position of having to return to the area of childhood services to ask some questions. Turning to staff redundancies, when it becomes necessary to employ a staff member for a half-day's work instead of a full-day's work, that person loses half a day's pay without becoming redundant. What rights has that person in relation to full employment rights? What rights has such a person regarding transfers and that sort of thing?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I am not sure what rights are guaranteed to staff in that case.

**Mr Justice Olsson:** Every effort is made to redeploy staff within the sponsoring agency so that, if a person is reduced to a half day in one location, some readjustment is made so that such persons go to another location where they can either get a full day's employment, or they may work between two pre-school facilities. The difficulty that arises in practice is that in some country locations where the staff member happens to be a permanent resident of that location that is not possible. Unfortunately, in those circumstances the person is reduced to a half-day situation. I feel bound to say, without having precise statistics here, that, by co-opting various people in the field to assist in this endeavour, there have been few occasions in relative terms where some reasonable adjustment has not been possible. I do concede, of course, that in some country areas there has been an actual reduction.

**Mr RANDALL:** I have received complaints about this matter. The complaint is usually along the lines that the employee was told that she had lost half a day and that was it. These people complain, saying that they have no right of appeal because there is no re-employment policy regarding the loss of half a day, whereas there is regarding the loss of a full day.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Are we referring to an aid rather than a professional teacher?

**Mr RANDALL:** I would have to check my records, but I would say an aide.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The situation sounds similar to that regarding Education Department ancillary staff, where every effort is made to accommodate, but where no guarantees are given, although the treatment meted out to that person that the honourable member has mentioned seems to be less than considerate.

**Mr RANDALL:** So the normal policy would be to consult and try to arrange an alternative.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Yes.

**Mr RANDALL:** The Minister mentioned earlier that he received a number of recommendations from the Childhood Services Council on policy decisions that must be taken. How does that council come to grips with making those recommendations? Does it consult with the Kindergarten Union and the field staff and seek recommendation from them, or does it have its own policy planning areas which makes recommendations that have a effect on the Kindergarten Union.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I ask Mr Justice Olsson to respond to that question also.

**Mr Justice Olsson:** Members would probably be aware that the council has two major standing committees, one of which is the Planning and Advisory Committee. It is a widely based committee that has amongst its membership representatives of practically every conceivable interested group in the whole area of childhood services. In the policy evolution phase, the matter is normally referred to the Planning and Advisory Committee, which then researches the situation, debates it fully and comes forward with a draft recommendation to council. It is then debated within council and, subject to any considerations that arise, is ultimately forwarded to the Minister for his consideration and, hopefully, approval.

**Mr RANDALL:** Does the Kindergarten Union have any representatives on those committees?

**Mr Justice Olsson:** Yes, I think that almost every significant agency in the area has representation on that standing committee. There is, of course, in a sense, some dual representation because, for example, the Executive Director of the Kindergarten Union is a member of council. So, one

can get input at both levels, particularly with the major sponsoring agencies.

**Mr ABBOTT:** A significant reduction has been made to the Aboriginal Education Foundation allocation. Last year the Minister was forced to provide a further \$1 000 to the foundation when its grant was exhausted just over half way through the financial year, and the services provided by the foundation were threatened. I know that a mini bus is now being provided, and, no doubt, the Minister will say that that is the reason for the lesser amount being proposed. However, the foundation understands that it is expected to meet the driver's wages, which are expected to be approximately \$4 322. I have a copy of the letter written to the Minister by the foundation's secretary. It is pointed out that the cost of taxis to kindergartens other than Alberton, based on average over the past three months, is expected to be \$8 400. The short-fall, therefore, is in the vicinity of \$4 700. Will the Minister review this situation, and will the department meet the request that the amount of \$8 000 be increased to \$13 000 to avoid the foundation's having to further dispose of assets?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I must admit that I was quite surprised to receive the request from the Aboriginal Education Foundation on 21 September 1981 setting out the costs very much as stated by the honourable member. I say 'surprised' because for quite some time (over a year in fact) I have been repeatedly asked by the Aboriginal Education Foundation to help reduce its expenditure on taxis by providing a bus of some sort. After considerable negotiation, and with the co-operation of the Childhood Services Council and the Kindergarten Union, a mini bus was made available. I think that would have cost about \$8 000 or \$9 000.

At the same time, I decided to reduce the Aboriginal Education Foundation allocation of \$11 000 to \$8 000. I was always under the impression that the allocation of the bus would considerably reduce the cost of taxis to the Alberton kindergarten. In fact, I was assured by the Aboriginal Education Foundation that the bus that was made available and the funds were really needed in order to help them to maintain that service at Alberton. I find that, while I am being asked for additional funds to provide taxis, the Aboriginal Education Foundation has, of its own volition, expanded its services into, I believe, the Salisbury area.

That was something that was never expressed to me. There was no statement of intent to expand the services, and I am afraid that for the time being I will have to maintain the allocation at \$8 000 and I believe it would be appropriate for me to ask the Aboriginal Education Foundation for a fairly precise statement of income and expenditure and assets before any further review is set in train.

There has been an understanding that what we were doing was going to assist them to reduce expenditure on taxis. In fact, I find that I am being asked for even more money this year than I expended last year, by way of initial grant and with the increase of \$1 000, so it is an unusual and quite unexpected request that was presented to me in September.

I must at the same time compliment the Aboriginal Education Foundation and the people who run the kindergarten at Alberton. I was impressed with the way in which the youngsters were being looked after. I am not decrying the work that is going on there.

**Mr ABBOTT:** I appreciate that the foundation also desires to expand its services into the Elizabeth-Salisbury area. Does the Minister support that a need for that expansion exists in the Elizabeth-Salisbury area, and will he agree to make funds available so that the A.E.F. can employ an additional Aboriginal welfare officer to effectively meet the needs of that area?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The short answer would have to be, 'No', because we have the Childhood Services Council in quite a specific role to co-ordinate the expansion and development of childhood services throughout the State. I find that this expansion is more by way of spontaneous combustion, so I would have to have a report from the Childhood Services Council, too, before I gave that matter further consideration.

**Mr ABBOTT:** I want to turn now to the Aboriginal Chief Adviser to the Department for Community Welfare, Mr David Rathman. I understand that he will be transferring to the Department of Further Education this coming Friday. I ask the Minister whether this is because Mr Rathman has been too outspoken on Aboriginal matters, and what will be his position in the Department of Further Education.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I have just inquired of the Childhood Services Council representative regarding whether any formal approach had been made, because none had been presented to me, and in fact there was a request made a year ago by the A.E.F. to the Childhood Services Council to investigate the need for expansion in the Salisbury area. At that time it was determined that there was no need for the expansion. The request was to the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. The Childhood Services Council was invited to participate in the survey, so the initial response to the request from A.E.F. was that the service was not then required.

I believe that the correct approach would be again to go through the Childhood Services Council. After all, the major complaint in South Australia has been regarding the fragmentation of services in the childhood area, irrespective of which group of children was being serviced. I think co-ordination is far more desirable than this continuing to fragment the approach.

**The ACTING CHAIRMAN:** Will the member for Spence repeat his question? I think the Minister was taking advice.

**Mr ABBOTT:** What position will Mr David Rathman hold in the Department of Further Education? Will he be employed by the Commonwealth Department for Aboriginal Affairs or the State Government?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I understood that Mr Rathman was previously employed with the Department for Community Welfare, so I will ask Mr Headland to explain Mr Rathman's current position.

**Mr Headland:** It is my understanding that Mr Rathman will transfer from Community Welfare to the Department of Further Education from next Monday. It will be a new position funded by the Commonwealth Department of Aboriginal Affairs, with the title of Head of School, with the responsibility shared with the Principal Education Officer in that department for the planning, development and implementation of special D.F.E. programmes for Aboriginal people. He will be transferring on secondment initially. The permanent appointment to the position will be reviewed at a later date. It is a promotional position.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** That is going to help out the Department of Further Education in so far as I recently lost one of my key officers in the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Section, who resigned through ill health, so obviously this is a solution to that gap left in D.F.E.

**Mr ABBOTT:** The transfer is not because Mr Rathman has been outspoken on Aboriginal matters?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I was unaware of the transfer, so I assume that, if this is a promotion, Mr Rathman would welcome the opportunity to show his mettle in the Department of Further Education. I can assure him that it will be a challenging position.

**Mr ABBOTT:** It is noted that \$35 000 is proposed for the Anangu Pitjantjatjaraku Incorporated, and I understand this is in relation to the proclamation of the land rights

legislation passed recently by Parliament. How was the amount of \$35 000 arrived at? Where will this incorporated body be established, and how many persons will be employed by it? In other words, will all of those employees be Pitjantjatjara Aborigines?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I know that Anangu Pitjantjatjara Incorporated requested establishment funds when the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Bill was passed in this House, and the Bill was proclaimed. The State Government decided that, rather than wait for the Commonwealth Government to decide how much it was going to allocate towards the Pitjantjatjara people to establish their council and to get things running smoothly, we would allocate a figure of \$35 000. A few days after that the Federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Senator Baume, called in at my office and we asked whether the Federal Government was going to make a similar contribution. We did in fact agree upon the Federal Government proportion, which brings up the total sum to \$87 500, and I understand that that amount is approximately the sum that will be needed for operating costs in the first year. We have not reviewed that in any way, because the money has only just been allocated and the Pitjantjatjara Council is now establishing itself. I believe it will establish at Alice Springs, although I am not certain.

**Mr ABBOTT:** What about staff members?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I have no idea to how many staff members. We are not exerting any influence there. It is the funding of the Pitjantjatjara Council, and all the decision making will be in its hands. It is an independent group. It will be handling its own affairs.

**Mr TRAINER:** I am going to break with the practice that I have followed in all sessions of this Committee with all Ministers up to date, that of being concise with my question. I regret the necessity to do that, but it is a topic with which I wish to deal in some detail. I apologise for that. I have noticed that members on the Government side have not been particularly concise with their questions, but their interest in these Committees is different—

**The ACTING CHAIRMAN: (Mr Olsen)** Order! Order!

**Mr TRAINER:** It is different to that of members of the Opposition.

**The ACTING CHAIRMAN:** The honourable member has the call to address the question to the Minister, not to make aspersions in relation to the contribution of other members of the Committee.

**Mr TRAINER:** The line upon which I wish to question the Minister is that relating to minor grants, which has been reduced by a sum of \$15 000 from an allocation in 1980-81 of \$96 887 to an allocation in 1981-82 of \$81 775. The amount that that has been reduced by, if it relates to the subject I am about to bring up, is not a large one. In terms of an overall Budget of around half a billion dollars, a sum of that size of \$15 000 is quite minute. However, if that related to the funding of the Women's Studies Resource Centre, that sum although not large, has a very strong symbolic value.

In the past, the Women's Studies Resource Centre has been funded, I understand, out of the line 'Minor grants' underneath the line with which we are dealing, 'Miscellaneous'. Its allocation in 1980-81 was the sum of \$11 000. That sum upon which the Women's Studies Resource Centre operated ran out on the expiring of the last financial year on 30 June. The centre was then provided with a quarterly cheque in advance for the next three months, which expired at the end of September.

Since the end of September, no money has been forthcoming for the operation of that centre. Staffing has not been a direct problem, because the centre is staffed by way of secondment of staff from the Education Department.

Nevertheless, there has been no money for the operation of the centre. I would like to ask a series of questions in relation to this topic. First, does the Minister intend to continue funding the centre? If the Minister's reply to that question is along the lines that he is leaving it up to a working party that is looking into the matter of the funding of the Women's Studies Resource Centre, I will then ask the Minister who is on that working party, when will the working party be meeting, when will it report to the Minister, and how thorough is its mode of investigation.

Further associated with that, and pending the report being delivered to the Minister, will some form of interim funding be provided to the centre? I will also be interested to know at whose instigation the working party was formed, particularly bearing in mind that the Minister is on record, when he was in Opposition, as showing a great deal of hostility to anything that was associated with what could be called the women's movement. The Minister has said since then, I believe in reply to a question in the House, that he took that attitude as a result of pressure that he had received from conservative elements in the community. I would be interested to know whether those same conservative elements are exerting any form of pressure in regard to this issue, particularly inasmuch as the Women's Studies Resource Centre in recent months has seemed to be under attack from some back-benchers in the Government who apparently are seeking to please conservative constituents or people with whom they are associated who are hostile to such matters as the anti-sexism course that the department has been operating. This is not the occasion for me to say too much about those activities that have been directed against the centre: I will choose a more appropriate forum to do so.

It was certainly significant that (and I could direct a question in relation to this matter), in relation to the stock management capacity of the centre, that shortly before a particularly infamous speech was delivered in this House by a certain member in regard to health education courses, particularly the sex education component, the one and only box of material from the Women's Studies Resource Centre that dealt with the topic was borrowed from the centre and has not yet been returned. It would appear that there is some connection between those two events, namely, the speech and the borrowing of that material. The Women's Studies Resource Centre is (as described admittedly in its own words, in its latest report) something that should be a matter of pride to the Minister. One brief paragraph from the last report, stated:

The Adelaide Women's Studies Resource Centre continues to be the largest and most comprehensive of its kind in Australia.

**Mr RANDALL:** On a point of order, Mr Acting Chairman. Earlier today it was indicated that each time we change lines and a new vote comes under discussion, the Chairmen would give members on both sides the opportunity to make a brief preliminary statement regarding the direction they wished to take. I believe that the Committee has give the honourable member opposite a considerable amount of leeway and opportunity to express his concerns. There is an appropriate forum in which to express those concerns and I suggest that the honourable member should ask questions of the Minister.

**The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr Olsen):** I cannot uphold the point of order. I have taken note of the time that the member for Ascot Park commenced his speech, and I anticipate that he has approximately 20 seconds left of his five minutes in which to address the Committee, at the end of which I will ask him to forthwith direct a question to the Minister.

**Mr TRAINER:** Thank you, Sir. I would have reached that point without the point of order. The concluding words of that section of the report are as follows:

The Women's Studies Resource Centre is a credit to the foresight of women in education in South Australia, and the Minister of Education can be commended for continuing to support such a unique and worthwhile endeavour.

In which way is the Minister going to continue to support such a worthwhile and unique endeavour?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The sum allocated to the Women's Studies Resource Centre in the current minor grants line is \$2 750, and I believe it was \$11 000 last time. I understand that that amount has already been allocated by the Women's Resource Centre for purchases which were already in the pipeline before the Budget was handed down and that in fact there may be additional accounts for payments that have either fallen due or will be falling due over the next month or two. I am not unaware of the relatively slight predicament that the Women's Resource Centre finds itself in. That is not to say that the last word has been said with the allocation of \$2 750 on this budgetary line. The honourable member is perfectly correct when he says that a working party has been established, the composition of which is: Chairman, Mr Barry Grear, the Director of the Ministry of Education, the Premier's Women's Adviser, Miss Rosemary Wighton, the two Women's Equal Opportunities Officers in the Education and Further Education departments and Marilyn Davis, one officer from Curriculum and also one officer from the Libraries Branch.

The working party has undertaken to bring down a report by the end of November, and during the interceding few weeks I can assure the honourable member that the Women's Resource Centre will not be neglected. The Director-General of Education has undertaken to maintain the staffing there; there are two departmental staff who are both teachers on secondment, so the working routine of the Women's Studies Resource Centre is not under threat.

The honourable member chose to introduce once again a topic which I quite frankly would have preferred to forget. I do not choose to introduce the subject of a previous debate at length, although the challenge is certainly there, and I could substantiate quite easily what was in the box which was on loan, and I could name four or five titles which were quite salacious and which certainly should not have been circulated among schools. I could have made available a typescript circular that was pasted into the inside of a box stating quite clearly that the material was considered very suitable for circulation in schools. Suffice to say that the Director-General has seen that material and did express some surprise. I think that a fairly amicable discussion followed between members of Parliament, the Director-General and the women in the Women's Studies Resource Centre.

The outcome of that was quite simply that there was an agreement that that material should not continue to be circulated, I think mainly because the Director-General of Education has already approved a course of study for health education which incorporates a sex education component. The less desirable titles that were found in that box that had been circulating in at least one country area were not approved of. So, let us dispose of that. I say that the Minister of Education did feel that he had been compromised in some way, because here he was providing two professional staff and subsidising the purchase of literature which was not entirely suitable for circulation in schools. That is one issue. Let me also say that the Government recognises that the Women's Studies Resource Centre in South Australia is acknowledged Australia-wide as being a very effective one, and a worthwhile one, and that the use of the centre is far wider than simply for educational purposes, although the Minister either through the Director-General or through his own 'Miscellaneous' line is respon-

sible for the maintenance of that unit. We would like to see a wider input of funding into that unit than simply funding from education, so that if that material that was in the boxes is suitable for adult circulation, and it probably is, then it may be funded through the State Library (and there is a librarian on the committee), or it may be funded through the Premier's Department or it may be funded through some other agency, either on a one-off basis or jointly.

Perhaps in a few weeks time we will have a much clearer idea. Meanwhile, the resource centre will be kept going. The Minister does not like being compromised, and he certainly was. I think if the honourable member saw the material he would appreciate the dilemma that I was in. We will see whether we can find a better way out of this situation than simply the Minister of Education being responsible. Most of the people who complain that it is inappropriate for a Minister of Education to be funding some of the material. Of course, it is a small proportion of the material which has received very strong criticism, not only in the House but outside, and certainly for a far longer period than the honourable member may imagine. We will try to arrive at a compromise situation which will be satisfactory for everyone.

**Mr TRAINER:** Would the Minister agree that that particular box of material represented probably much less than 1 per cent of the stock of resource material in the Women's Studies Resource Centre, that in fact the subject of sex education in relation to that body was blown out of all proportion in one sense, inasmuch as material of that nature represented only one tiny proportion of the material in the centre and, indeed, that the subject is considered so insignificant in relation to the overall activity of the centre that it is not even mentioned in any of their reports?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** Quite frankly, I do not know just what proportion of the stock in the centre that material constituted. What I do know is that it was circulating among schools with a statement from the resource centre that in fact the existence of such kits was initially denied when the Director-General first went along to make inquiry. The kit did and still does exist. It exists in its entirety; it has not been broken up. For the Minister to condone, by providing staff and funding for the purchase of material, the circulation with a type script contained in the kit that this is suitable not only for secondary but for primary school use, and that it has been approved and recommended (it did not say by whom), is just not on, irrespective of how large or how small a proportion of the resource materials that might be.

So I think it is really more than simply a proportion of book stock. It is a principle that the Education Department should not be seen to be encouraging the circulation, however limited, when in fact the recommendation is, 'Use this material, all of it', and five out of the 40 titles are titles I would certainly not like my children to have access to. I know adults were certainly, without being prudish, concerned with the material. When I say 'adults without being prudish', I am talking about responsible adults, such as the Director-General. It really is that issue where the Minister was compromised, and we are trying to find a satisfactory solution, a way out, which will still enable the Women's Studies Resource Centre to operate, but without having the Minister of Education's patronage.

**Mr RANDALL:** Having been one of those backbenchers who looked at the Women's Studies Resource Centre and spent some considerable time sitting down there chatting with the ladies who run the centre (they run it quite well, I might say), I never intended (nor, I believe, did my colleague the member for Brighton intend) to put such

pressure on the Minister as to suggest that the Centre should be disbanded.

I believe, I think quite rightly, that as members of Parliament we were doing our job of seeking advice and information, and we have done that. The Minister has sought to seek further information and has thus set up a working party to look at this matter. I believe that when the working party reports back to the Minister the appropriate assessments will be made. Therefore, I think I can say quite strongly, on behalf of my colleague and myself, who were pretty involved in this matter, that we would support the Women's Study Resource Centre and its operation. It is interesting to note the sorts of questions and comments which the member opposite made and which quite clearly identified to me the source of information which has appeared in the schools under the name of the South Australian Institute of Teachers titled 'Budget disaster for women'. It states:

The Women's Study Resource Centre is under threat. Their resources, which support schools, have dispersed. Non-sexist teaching will suffer a set back.

It is quite clear to me who gave honourable members opposite what information and who gave them the misguided information that was put out about this Budget.

**Mr TRAINER:** Let us know.

**Mr RANDALL:** I do not wish to pursue that any further.

**Mr Trainer:** Because it is a dead end.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr RANDALL:** That is the sort of innuendo and the sort of statement that has got members opposite into strife. In some ways it is getting the South Australian Institute of Teachers into strife, too, because it is becoming quite clear where the information is coming from. It is misguided information and non-factual. My question relates to a totally different area, namely the Children's Television Foundation. The Minister has for the first time allocated a Budget line of \$20 000 to the Children's Television Foundation. Will he detail that expenditure?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** I would be delighted to do that, because this was the subject of considerable discussion a year ago at Australian Education Council meetings. The second Victorian Minister of Education Mr Norm Lacey (they have two Ministers of Education over there, Allan Hunter being the senior of the two) put forward the idea that children's television should be put on a much firmer footing and that there should be a better programming and a better choice of material. They quoted work being done by the British and Canadian Governments in producing films suitable for general circulation, both for cinema and

television use. The Victorian Minister requested that the Federal Government join in this venture and put in a substantial proportion of the funding. It suggested that each of the States also contribute on a pro rata basis according to population. South Australia, I believe, was one of the first State Governments to send its financial contribution. I was supported in this matter at Cabinet and Ministerial level in so far as the Minister of Arts contributed \$20 000 and the Education Department \$20 000. We are hopeful that, over a period of three years, the Children's Television Foundation in Australia will establish itself on a firm footing and will, by taking entrepreneurial moves, obtain sponsorships. It will, in that three year period, become self sufficient, and the State will no longer have to subscribe to it.

If the circumstances are contrary to that, and it becomes an expensive operation, I believe that the whole thing will be reviewed after three years. Certainly, it is up to the Children's Television Foundation to prove itself. It is exciting, and it is certainly a challenge to the Australian film industry to start producing films for children, particularly in television programming. I thank the honourable member for raising this matter.

**Mr LYNN ARNOLD:** I turn to the question of per capita grants to independent schools. I think we will have trouble getting an answer at this late hour. Will the minister say on what justification the Government felt that it could fulfil a further stage of its promise to take per capita funding up to 25 per cent, which in this Budget has resulted in a 21.7 per cent increase in the vote for per capita grants when, at the same time, other areas of the Budget have indicated that other promises of the Liberal Party have not been able to be put into effect?

**The Hon. H. Allison:** The allocation of funds to the independent schools sector has been increased. However, irrespective of which formula was used, whether it was the previous Government, or the present Government, there would have been a very substantial increase because of the net population gain to the independent schools sector. As I said earlier in the day, about 2 300 additional students have increased the number from 40 000 to 42 300 and that is one of the reasons for the transfer of funds.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I thank the Minister and his officers for their attendance.

#### ADJOURNMENT

At 10 p.m. the Committee adjourned until Thursday 15 October at 11 a.m.