

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 8 October 1980

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B

The Committee met at 11 a.m.

Agriculture \$17 820 000

Chairman:

Mr. E. K. Russack

Members:

Mr. Lynn Arnold
 The Hon. J. D. Corcoran
 Mr. S. G. Evans
 Mr. I. P. Lewis
 Mr. J. Mathwin
 Mr. I. Schmidt
 Mr. J. P. Trainer
 The Hon. J. D. Wright

Witness:

The Hon. W. E. Chapman, Minister of Agriculture and
 Minister of Forests.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr. J. C. McColl, Director-General of Agriculture.
 Dr. J. Radcliffe, Leader, Policy and Planning Unit,
 Department of Agriculture.
 Mr. G. Della, Acting Accountant, Department of
 Agriculture.
 Mr. J. C. Potter, Director, Department of Agriculture.
 Dr. P. R. Harvey, Director, Department of Agriculture.
 Mr. N. J. Cooke, Superintendent, Country Fire
 Services.
 Mr. P. M. Barrow, Director, Department of Agriculture.
 Mr. G. J. Inns, Chairman, South Australian Meat
 Corporation.

The CHAIRMAN: I have examined the minutes of 7 October, copies of which have been distributed to members of the Committee. If there is no objection, I will sign them as a correct record of proceedings.

During the evidence the Minister may state that he will obtain information at a later stage. I ask that that information be brief and suitable for insertion in *Hansard*. It has been the practice of this Committee for members to stand when speaking, as we have no public address system. However, this does not apply to the Minister or his officers: there is no need for the Minister or his officers to stand, but it is left to their discretion. It has been the procedure that a member will be called, and if he wishes to follow that same line of questioning he will have the opportunity of asking several questions. The call will then be given to the other side. Questions will be directed to the Minister who, if he wishes, can call upon one of his officers to reply in further detail.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I rise on a point of order. Did I understand you, Mr. Chairman, to say that it was compulsory for members of the Committee to stand?

The CHAIRMAN: I did not say that it was compulsory but it has been the procedure of this Committee and, for the reason I suggested, I would appeal to members of the Committee to follow that procedure.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: Is that a Committee decision or your decision, Mr. Chairman? There seems to be a

difference between the two Committees. I do not want to make a federal case out of this. I am not too lazy to stand but there are other members of the Committee to be considered, such as the Hon. Mr. Corcoran, who has a chronic arthritic condition and who may have difficulty. It is the inconsistency that I am concerned about.

Mr. LEWIS: It is for the purpose of *Hansard*.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I am speaking, if the honourable member does not mind. I will deal with him later. There is some inconsistency in this situation. If the Committees are to act in concert, either the Committee should make a decision or you, Sir, should relent in your decision and say that Committee members can remain seated if they so desire.

The CHAIRMAN: The reason for this practice is that, on the first day of the Committee's sitting in this Chamber (where there is no public address system, as there is in the Chamber in which Committee A is sitting), *Hansard* and others had difficulty hearing. This Committee's proceedings are open for people to attend, and people should be able to hear what is being said; that is their right. I have given the reasons why the Committee accepted this procedure. However, if because of a physical disability or for any other reason any honourable member has difficulty standing up, he is at liberty to remain seated. If the honourable member for Hartley experiences any difficulty, he can remain seated.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I will make an effort, Sir.

The CHAIRMAN: If the Committee does not wish to follow that procedure, a member of the Committee will have to move a motion, and the matter can then be decided by the Committee.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I certainly did not want to make a federal case out of it.

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: I understand that yesterday some members of the gallery had great difficulty hearing what was being said in the Chamber, and more particularly what was said by the Minister and the departmental advisers, who are, naturally, facing in the opposite direction from those in the gallery. So, it may be that much of what takes place is difficult to understand, as those in the gallery sometimes hear only the questions and not the answers that are given. Perhaps members might speak a little more loudly than they did yesterday.

The CHAIRMAN: I appeal to members, and particularly the Minister and his officers, to speak up, because they are facing towards the Chair and away from the gallery. Also, there have been quite a few interjections, which makes it difficult for people to hear. Therefore, in relation to those two points, I appeal to the Committee and others involved to speak up so that they can be heard.

I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination.

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: I refer to the Overseas Projects Division. What work is being done by the division and, in particular, with which countries is the division at present involved or likely to be involved in the coming financial year?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: The two countries with which South Australia is currently involved are Algeria and Iraq. In the former, we have seven or eight personnel working on a project that was entered into by the former Government. I say "seven or eight" because, although eight is the total contingent of personnel, one member of the team happens to be back in South Australia at present. If the member for Salisbury wants me to explain the details of that project, I shall be pleased to do so.

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: No, you have already answered that question.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: The other country with

which we are involved is Iraq, with which, a few weeks ago, we entered into a contract to provide a demonstration farming project in the Erbil region in the north of that country. That contract is worth about U.S.\$9 560 000. With some pride, I canvassed that and a number of projects details publicly and in the House of Assembly. Regarding personnel, a few days ago, because of the hostilities that at present surround the region, we shifted an officer from Baghdad to Jordan.

In the meantime we are on standby waiting for hostilities to ease before we proceed further to deliver items required on that project in Iraq, at which time we hope to proceed with the programmes as outlined in the contract.

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: Are any other countries involved in this line?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: I overlooked to cover the second part of the member's question. It is anticipated in the near future that we will be represented in nearby Middle-East countries. The countries with which it is expected there will be some involvement are Jordan and Tunisia, and I will be visiting Algeria and the regions where a project is currently under way.

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: I refer to Morocco and the announcement made in January 1980 that an agronomist had been appointed. In his reply to my Question on Notice, the Minister indicated that that project had fallen through. Why has that project fallen through? Secondly, there seemed to be a possibility of a project involving China in the middle of last year. What is the position?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: I have just discussed this matter with my Director. The Committee will appreciate that it is extremely difficult to be immediately abreast of these subjects in every respect if one has not visited the countries involved. We did submit a proposal regarding involvement in Morocco, and some of our officers took part in discussions, but the Tunisian Government undercut us and we missed out on that involvement. Further, it is not our intention to enter into a price war for the purpose of securing agricultural involvement by way of demonstration projects in those countries. I have already made it clear to the member and in the House that our involvement is clearly to be commercially based on that matter, and we are not currently involved in Morocco. In regard to China, to date no commitment has been made by this Government. I am sorry if I have missed some of the other matters raised by the member. If he is implying that, since my Party came into office, the South Australian Government has committed itself and stated that it has entered into a contact with China, then I am not aware of it.

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: I seek information about the status of the proposed China project under the present Government. Obviously a decision has not been made. Is a decision to be made, and what is that decision going to be?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: No proposal has been put to the Chinese people by the South Australian Government; therefore, I am not quite sure what the honourable member is getting at. Certainly, the question of whether we may or may not be involved has been thrashed around for some years, but as far as the present Government is concerned, no commitment has been made in the direction of China.

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: Is the Minister saying that there has been no contact between the Chinese Government and the South Australian Government, either past or present?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: I am not aware of any contract that has been entered into between the present Government and the Chinese.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member said "contact" not "contract".

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: Regarding contact, we are in contact from time to time with representatives who travel to this State to observe our farming practices, and I have had the pleasure, for example, in the short term during which we have been in office, of meeting in Adelaide, representatives from the agricultural field, both in the practical and scientific sense, from China, but, as I said, we have not entered into any contract nor have we made any commitment with that country to do so since our coming to office.

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: I accept that we have not entered into any contract, but now we have an indication that there has been contact between the South Australian Government and the Chinese Government. When the Chinese came to Adelaide, did they make any proposal to the Government (not a contract, but a proposal) that we enter into a similar agreement with them as we have done in regard to other countries in respect of our farming techniques?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: I thought I made pretty clear that the contact with the Chinese representatives who visited South Australia was on a discussion basis in regard to their needs and what they observed as our achievements, but we have not received a proposal from them, nor have we put a proposal to them. Accordingly, we do not have a contract with the Chinese. I believe it is important to say that many of the delegates representing some 40 countries of the world who were here during the recent dry-land farming congress expressed interest in our practices and invited us, when appropriate and when funds were available, to visit their respective countries. In a number of cases, arrangements were sought and undertakings made that we would continue contact on a friendly and agricultural basis, and I believe that that response came from their genuine interest in the subject and, indeed, from our genuine interest in keeping in close touch with those people. It is that sort of contact that has been made since we came to office. I am unable to report at this time about the sort of personal contact and the degree of conversation that might or might not have taken place with my predecessor or any other members of the previous Cabinet.

The CHAIRMAN: Before calling on the member for Salisbury, I point out that this will be his sixth question and I will give the call to another member after he has asked this question; however, he can return to the subject later if he wishes.

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: I am trying to get at the way in which the Overseas Projects Division is working and the way in which it is responding to the potential market options open to it. I would be sorry to think that the thread of thinking may be lost if I cannot continue my questioning, but I accept the decision that has been made. The point has been made that there has been contact, but it seems to me, from the Minister's reply, that this is an example of inertia in the Ministry and in the department because, some months ago, there was Chinese interest in South Australian technology and farming techniques. That has been acknowledged by the Minister, and, for the Overseas Projects Division not to have attempted to draft any sort of proposal that could be agreed between the two Governments, not to moot the idea or not to suggest to the Government that something could be entered into with further work, can only be termed inertia on the part of the department. I do not believe that that has been the case; I understand that work has been done within the department regarding what could be done between the Chinese Government and our Government. I know that

the department would be well aware of the agreement that the Western Australian Government, for example, has reached with the Chinese Government in regard to interchange of agricultural information between Western Australia and China.

I know that the department will know that and that it will want equally as well to be as far advanced in the field as is the Western Australian Government. I know that the department will also know that the Governments of New South Wales and Victoria have contact with various provinces in China. I cannot believe that the department is that slow on the uptake that a contact by a senior Vice-Minister of the Chinese Government in South Australia earlier this year has not had any response at all from the Overseas Projects Division, the Department of Agriculture, or, indeed, the Minister of Agriculture's office.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: The line that the honourable member is pursuing involves a division of the Department of Agriculture which employs a total of six people. The honourable member would be aware of the amount budgeted for financing that division. The total staff of six includes three clerical officers. Therefore, there are some limits on their capacity to deal with a number of projects at the same time. I would like to make it quite clear that that is not a reflection in any way on their efforts so far. There is a certain priority being applied to their role and, naturally, as the contract in Iraq is only just under way and within weeks of commencing, we have found a degree of hostility prevailing in that country with its neighbour. That has caused some problems in relation to moving personnel in there along with the equipment required to set up that farm. Also, their attention to the job has been somewhat concentrated on that subject.

I am sure that the honourable member would appreciate the degree of concern we have held, not only for the safety of the officer we already have stationed in Baghdad, but for the tremendous amount of equipment that has already been purchased, some of which has been despatched and some of which is still on the wharf here in Adelaide. There has been a call for tenders for supply of an extensive order for materials required to uphold our side of that contract. That work, in itself, as it applies to the Iraqi contract, is somewhat extensive. We have, as I indicated to the Committee earlier, an involvement in Algeria which is an ongoing agricultural, farming, livestock, pastoral and irrigation scheme. Beyond that, as I have already indicated to the honourable member, our next order of priority is in Tunisia and Jordan, on similar type projects, and countries like China and Mexico, in accordance with their expressed interests during contact and discussions on this subject, fall into an appropriate area of priority so far as our Overseas Projects Division is concerned.

Mr. EVANS: I turn to the Auditor-General's Report and draw the Minister's attention to page 39 and the heading "Operations of the Rural Industries Assistance Fund", where the Auditor-General makes a comment near the bottom of the page, as follows:

Applicants assisted under the scheme to June 1980 numbered 1 055; no assistance was given in 1979-80.

Will the Minister comment on that point?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: I am aware of the Auditor-General's reference and I thank the member for raising the matter, because I have had the chance to also raise it with the Auditor-General. That sentence is fairly confusing, to say the least. Therefore, I am equipped with a brief explanation of what appears to be an inconsistency in wording. For the benefit of the Committee, the matter ought to be explained.

There were no new applicants under the Rural Assistance (Special Provisions) Act, 1971 for the 1979-80

year. There were, however, a number of applications under the Rural Assistance Act, 1977, which were funded under the Rural Assistance Fund due to the lack of money in the Rural Adjustment Fund.

A total of 34 applications, representing \$1 275 583, were funded from the Rural Assistance Fund, but \$876 776 was transferred from the Rural Adjustment Fund to cover 20 of these applications. These 20 were included in the figures for the Rural Adjustment Fund in the Auditor-General's Report. A further \$398 807 will be transferred to the Rural Assistance Fund from the Rural Adjustment Fund during this year to cover the remaining 14 applications.

During the year, a number of "budget accounts" were converted to term loans. These do not constitute new loans, but simply the rearrangement of the terms of existing debts. However, they do appear in the ledger as new advances. These budget accounts totalled some \$160 000. The remaining \$2 800 represents discharge and registration fees.

Mr. EVANS: I seek your ruling, Mr. Chairman, as this is the first time I have been a member of a Committee. The next matter is referred to in the Auditor-General's Report, and I believe there is an inaccuracy. Is that a separate subject?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: Can the Minister say "Yes" or "No" as to whether his department, the Overseas Projects Division, his Ministerial staff, or he has done any work on the possibility of a project between this Government and the Chinese Government?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: The answer is "No".

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: Does the Minister, therefore, say that he has made no submission to Cabinet on this matter?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: In relation to Cabinet, "No".

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I have listened with attention to the Minister regarding the overseas projects. I am very interested in this matter, because it was launched with great success. It is very important to South Australia from a manufacturers' point of view as well. I heard the Minister speak of the smallness in numbers in this division: there are six people, three of whom are clerical.

I ask the Minister whether or not he considers the involvement of these people to be important enough to speed up the progress currently being made. If that means providing more staff, does he intend to make a submission to Cabinet to seek additional people in order to bring these projects or proposals forward as quickly as possible? What is his and the Government's general attitude to this activity?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: I am delighted that the member for Hartley has raised this matter because it gives me an opportunity to express my attitude clearly to this Committee about the degree of our involvement and our role in this matter. The figure of six given to this Committee relates to the number of people employed in the Overseas Projects Division. As well as those six officers, who are commissioned specifically in that division of our department, we have officers at Director level who also apply themselves keenly and effectively to overseas projects.

On 13 June this year I arrived in Iraq with Dr. Pat Harvey, a Director of our department, who is separate from the establishment involving the six officers specifically mentioned. I am very aware of the keen interest taken in this overall subject by other officers in our department, including those at Director level and also my own Ministerial office staff, as well as those six personnel in particular. The member for Hartley implied

that the Government is providing funds commensurate with the employment of only six personnel, but that is not quite true.

The question put to me by the member for Salisbury related specifically to the Overseas Projects Division, and I mentioned the six personnel. The member for Hartley, broadened the question and sought the Government's and my attitude to this matter. I have pleasure in telling the honourable member that I propose to visit a number of Middle East countries within the next few weeks.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: They will not be pleased to see you.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: The indications we have received from them as recently as this week via delegates from Algeria is that they will indeed be pleased to see us, even though members opposite may be pleased to be getting rid of me.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I do not think anyone will notice that you are gone.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Interjections are out of order. The honourable Minister.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: The Government's efforts in ensuring that we keep abreast of this matter demonstrates our general keenness. I personally will be in a better position, on my return from the forthcoming visit to the countries mentioned, to give the Parliament details of the position. We are not letting any grass grow under our feet. Officers in the department are co-operating tremendously in ensuring that I become properly informed and better equipped in respect of this matter, so that I can go to Cabinet and submit on-going proposals involving contracts with the countries mentioned.

That attitude is consistent with statements that I made publicly immediately after coming into Government, when I said that where our predecessors (the Hon. Brian Chatterton in particular) had entered into commitments with other countries, those commitments would be honoured and we would not sever relationships that had been established between this State and those respective countries. I stated that we would honour such commitments and would preserve inter-country relations in a proper way but that, as a new Minister in a new Government, I would not be seeking to expand any involvement between South Australia and the other countries concerned which might be interested in our dryland farming practices and/or any other agricultural or forestry practices until we were in a better position to approach these matters more responsibly.

In other words, ours was a steady-as-you-go policy, going into the subject quietly and properly informed about not only what other countries required but also what we could adequately provide. I assure the Committee that it is not our aim to venture into such a wide field that we will fail to apply ourselves properly; indeed, we intend to preserve and build on that inter-country relationship that is so important if others are to share what we have to offer in this all-important primary producing field.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I appreciate what the Minister has told us but he has still not really said how speedily he will follow the course that he has obviously set. I should have thought that if he wanted to approach the matter responsibly and to inform himself and his Government of exactly what was involved here, ensuring that it was of benefit to the State and the countries to which we were exporting these practices and technology, the Minister might be able to formulate future plans relating to this scheme and to decide their worth, etc.

I know that he is still going to follow the scheme through, but how quickly? I think that it should be speeded up from the present rate and not continue to be

approached with the caution that may previously have applied.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: I will take up one or two of the points that the honourable member has raised. It is appreciated that the Opposition respects the importance of this subject, as indeed the Government does, so that there is no area of conflict regarding the principle of this State's being involved with other countries. The speed with which our involvement is secured and bound by contract is something that I wish to approach cautiously, albeit acknowledging the requests and urging by the honourable member in this instance to speed up the matter.

The Committee would appreciate that the Department of Agriculture is required to service agricultural people in South Australia, and in this respect there are 23 000 units. Although in South Australia we have personnel on a staff unit ratio of about 1:24 (that is, for each 24 farm units in South Australia one staff member is employed), Victoria has a staff farm unit ratio of 1:14, whereas in Tasmania the ratio is 1:10. If we have access to additional staff in South Australia, we should, as a paramount step, be looking to determine what is required within our own State.

I therefore believe that a certain amount of balance needs to be observed regarding the extent to which our resources are applied to other countries so that we do not at any stage overlook the requirements of our own people in this country, because, with the vast area that we have to service, an extreme amount of work is required within our own boundaries.

However, the member for Hartley has referred to the importance of this matter. I will be better equipped on my return from the proposed overseas visit in a few weeks and, if it is clear that there is a need to do so (as I believe there is), and that we are in a position to negotiate wider involvement with a further range of countries, I will be putting the matter to the Government for its consideration.

I do not believe that I can forecast precisely or in any detail what the position will be in Tunisia or Jordan. I can talk to officers about it. Indeed, I have done so already. In fact, I have talked to delegates who have come from those countries to South Australia about the subject and the extent to which they want us to be involved. I have talked about it with a number of people who are directly and indirectly involved in this subject. I have also talked about it with executive members of our Advisory Board of Agriculture, and it is clear that there is much interest in the subject.

However, I repeat that there is nothing like actually feeling and seeing what the position is in the practical sense, namely, on their land, although so far I have not had an opportunity to visit the countries that have been mentioned. However, I intend to do so in the near future. It should be recognised that Cabinet, in readily approving the proposed tour, has demonstrated its attitude towards its Ministers becoming better informed. Before the end of this year I will, as a member of the Government, have visited the Middle East twice.

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: On a point of order, for some moments the Minister has been discussing his overseas trip later this year, with or without postcards, and that is not relevant to the question that was asked by the member for Hartley regarding the Overseas Projects Division. Indeed, it is not even relevant to the line, as the allocation for the Overseas Projects Division is on one line whereas the allocation relating to the overseas visits of the Minister, the Minister's wife (where approved) and officers is on another line. The Minister should be trying to answer the question.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I do not uphold the point of order. The Minister, having been asked a question, has the right to answer it in the way that he sees fit.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: I thank you, Sir, for your ruling, and appreciate the point made by the member for Salisbury. I am prepared to co-operate with this Committee and to apply myself. I can give brief or long answers, or expand on a matter, depending on the need or the degree of interest that applies to the subject involved. I thought that my remarks relating to visiting the Middle East countries were relevant and directly associated with the question raised by the member for Hartley.

I was setting out to demonstrate how the department was proposing to proceed and to involve itself in this matter. The department takes directions from the Government, which must, in order to be able to give those directions, be properly informed. So, it was all relevant material that was associated with the question raised by the member for Hartley.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: What does the Minister consider to be a satisfactory level of staffing in order to cater for the 23 000 units in South Australia? The Minister said that, compared to Victoria, we are badly off, and that we are even worse off in relation to Tasmania. I suppose climatic and geographical factors enter into this matter. I think the Minister said that he would not increase the staffing in the Overseas Projects Division at the expense of services to be given to South Australian farming. At present, we have a ratio of 1:24 in South Australia. What does the Minister consider to be a desirable ratio in relation to effective service being given to South Australian farmers? Indeed, if the Minister considers that an increase should occur, is he doing anything about it?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: The subject that the honourable member has raised is indeed important. In fact, the honourable member has already half answered this question by referring to the difference in the geographical and climatic conditions that apply. I have simply relayed to the Committee in my reply the details of the true position.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: But are you satisfied?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: I am not satisfied, unless we can appropriately service those people that we purport to represent. I do not know whether it will take 800, 1 000 or 2 000 staff to do this. I did not have any idea, until the present Government came to office 12 months ago. Bearing in mind the staff numbers that we have, I think that we are appropriately servicing the rural sector of this State not only in the administrative sense but also at the regional office level. True, on occasions officers are shifted from one region to another and there is a short-fall, as a result of which a request for a replacement is sometimes made more quickly than we are able to accommodate it.

In a general sense, under the regional system that we have servicing our agricultural resources, the State is being well served. I emphasise that the figures I gave were simply statistical details applying to the respective States mentioned.

Regarding the other point raised by the member, as I have said, it is of paramount importance that we recognise our own needs within the State when balancing them against the requirements and the expressed desires existing outside the State. That was the point which I made earlier and which led me to detail to the Committee the statistical details applying to our farm unit to officer ratio.

The CHAIRMAN: Before calling on a member, I indicate that I did call two members from my left and, to regain the proper sequence, I intend to call two members from my right. The member for Mallee.

Mr. LEWIS: My question, although genuine, does not relate to one particular line any more than any other line, but it is of much importance to me and other people in South Australia, especially in the rural community. Can the Minister say which yardsticks and criteria are used by the department to determine how much, if anything, to allocate to each of these lines, and what reason it has for making its allocations? Further, is a \$1 for \$1 cost benefit analysis done on every amount spent on any project to determine its impact on increasing the gross national product?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: The member has asked a question relating to financial determinations within the department. Because we have achieved a programmed budgeting system within the department as a result of efforts made over several years, where each of our divisions is equipped with a recorded number of personnel who have their respective objectives and work load programmes noted for them which accord with the actual divisional funding lines, I will ask the Director-General to reply to that technical financial question. I may need to comment afterwards.

Mr. McColl: I suppose that the first stage of the approach that we take would relate to the resources that have been made available for the previous year with respect to the various areas of activity in the department. Within the department, we now have a complete project budgeting programme operation across the four main functions of administration, regulation, research and extension. We identify areas of new initiatives. We identify the needs both within South Australia and with respect to overseas project areas, and we develop a series of new initiatives within respective areas, and where appropriate we do try to use some cost benefit approach. This is perhaps more relevant in our own research function area. Also, we try to exercise priority judgments with respect to the projects that we continue, the projects that we modify or the projects that we discontinue. That is the approach we take in the department. Obviously, there are many more activities that one would wish to undertake than there are resources available, but that is the reality and the responsibility, as I see it, of management—to work within the resources provided.

Mr. LEWIS: I thank the Minister and the Director-General for that answer and I seek further information. No specific information has been given about cost benefit for each dollar applied in any project. What yardsticks are used to enable the department and its officers to identify the needs referred to by the Director-General or to establish those priority judgments made by officers and the Minister in deciding, for example, to discontinue the programme under "Control of Pasture Aphid"? I make no criticism in observing that that project is not current in the proposed expenditure, but there has been a clear judgment of an officer and the Minister to discontinue that programme because, presumably, benefit will not accrue in sufficient amount or quantity to justify expenditure in that area. Surely it is not simply plucking figures out of the air or deciding what is possible or impossible in terms of what the electorate would want politically, but rather a rational and professional analysis of the goals, knowing the spectrum of options that are open in determining those options within the confines of the objectives that I note on page 377 of the programme papers.

Not only this department but any department must surely be capable of accounting for why it seeks to have funds applied to a programme at a particular rate rather than to other programmes at a greater or lesser rate. Even between departments we should know what the trade-offs are. We should know in those trade-offs what the benefits

are going to be to the community at large. I seek information about the relativities between the amounts spent on overseas projects compared to the amounts spent here in South Australia. Do we get more benefit in South Australia from doing that? If there is not an economic justification, is it only moral and, if it is only moral, how do we quantify morality in monetary terms? It is legitimate, if we apply tax revenue to particular purposes, to know the benefits that will accrue to us in collecting that tax and so applying it. What yardsticks are used in identifying those needs referred to and establishing the priorities in the judgments made?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: Because the Department of Agriculture is already in existence, and indeed it has been around for a long time, we do not have a system of zero budgeting for the purposes of preparing a budget requirement for submission to Treasury officers. Accordingly, before the officers responsible for making that submission to Treasury gain approval of the Treasury, and in turn deliver it to the Parliament, it is necessary that they demonstrate the needs based on their existing personnel, existing structure of the department and their experience with respect to requirements of the community. That is the internal, technical, financial approach to the subject of preparing a Budget estimate of requirements for the coming year. That involves having the benefit of knowing what was proposed last year as against what was actually expended and the experience gained in implementing that previous year's Budget. I believe that the Director-General has, in fact, appropriately replied to that part of the subject. The member for Mallee spoke of yardsticks, but the yardstick is out there in the field. The feedback I get from the people we seek to serve is the measure as to whether or not we are doing our job in relation to servicing them. The feedback I have received in the past 12 months is the guiding factor as to what is required and what is to be shifted, if it is to be shifted from one division to another, from one emphasis to another, and so on.

The honourable member referred in particular to the aphid research team. I am not sure whether I heard him rightly, but I think he said that the function of the aphid research team had ceased. That is clearly not true. The function of that research team did not cease at all. The particular project with which the aphid research team was involved for the three years of its contract terminated on 30 June 1980, or thereabouts, but the function of those people did not cease, far from it. The function of those people as it applies to pasture research (aphid effects on pasture, etc.), in that field has been taken on board by the Department of Agriculture. If there is a need to set up a special task force or a special team for a particular purpose in the future and there is an urgency about it then, indeed, we will provide that service and funds will, accordingly, be available to do that, as they have been in the past when special services have been required and particular attention has been needed to be given to any part of the community, and as indeed we did during the locust campaign.

We do not set out a figure in the Budget for those special purposes. We do not set out a figure for the purpose of funding fruit-fly attacks, but if there is an invasion of fruit-fly then the Treasury, through the Treasurer with Cabinet approval, justifies the funding requirements at that level. Hopefully, we get the money that is required. I have had no problem so far in getting finance for legitimate projects. We have had enough experience to test us in this relatively short period in office with the storms in the member for Salisbury's district, and surrounding areas, including your own, Mr. Chairman, on 14 November last year. The applications for assistance

after that storm were in the hundreds and shortly after that we had the Ash Wednesday bushfire episode and the locusts in the North, to which we not only applied our own officers and funds from the State's resources but called in the Army as well.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: Did the Federals send you the bill?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: No. Rather interesting, is it not? We have not yet had a bill for that, and I hope we do not get one, either.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I think you will, maybe after the Labor Party gets into office.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: You think that we will get a bill then? I hope it does not occur that we get a bill, or that the Labor Party gets into office. It does annoy me when the facts are not clearly adhered to, and I take issue with the specific points that the honourable member raised wherein he not only implied but said that the services of one of my divisions had terminated, ceased, or whatever. It is important that in this forum, and indeed everywhere as it applies to my department, the facts are laid on the line and understood clearly.

Mr. LEWIS: Thank you for that explanation. I am in no way criticising or implying criticism of the Minister or officers of his department. I am pleased he has taken the opportunity I have given him to state the reason why his department makes the judgments it does which result in the sorts of production figures we have achieved in South Australia, given the ratio between officers of the department and farm units (which is much wider than in any other state of Australia), which are probably as effective as, if not more effective than, in any of those other States. That is probably because we are fortunate to have had here for many years institutions such as the Waite Institute and the Roseworthy Agricultural College to develop infrastructure and awareness.

Will the Minister further explain the technique used in management and administrative terms in the preparation of these papers so that the public, when they see this material, will not misconstrue it to mean that this Government is not concerned about the control of pasture aphids, because the line "Control of Pasture Aphids" on page 69 shows that the proposed expenditure for last year was \$447 000 and that, in fact, an amount of \$410 015 was spent, yet in the coming year there is no proposed expenditure on that line. As the Minister has already pointed out, that does not mean we are not concerned about pasture aphids, so would he clearly explain where that expenditure is being accounted for and how, then, in dollar terms, our concern is being expressed?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: I think that the point raised by the honourable member this time is important.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: You are saying that the last one wasn't?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: Certainly, the figure applicable to the control of pasture aphids is covered under the line "Plant Industry Division" on page 69. In 1977-78 Cabinet approved funds for a three-year campaign to develop biological control in this area, that is, control measures in aphid resistance. The Commonwealth Government provided assistance to the extent of \$450 000 over that period. That concluded at the end of the 1979-80 financial year. Surveillance of aphid control is maintained with State funds and departmental resources, in the Plant Industry Division at Northfield in particular, and the moneys required to provide that service via the departmental officers are covered in the line "Plant Industry Division", for which \$2 060 000 is provided for 1980-81. I can give the honourable member details of the breakdown applicable to that line. I will give it to him

later.

Mr. EVANS: I believe, according to the Auditor-General's Report and the Act, that the South Australian Egg Board is under the Minister's jurisdiction. The Auditor-General has a responsibility to report to the Minister of Agriculture on whether the prices are reasonable and whether the Egg Board is economical in its expenditure on administration in handling eggs. Is the Minister satisfied that the price of eggs established through the board is reasonable, considering the consumer as well as the producer, and can the Minister state the number of growers registered in South Australia and the number of licences in terms of birds that are licensed to produce within the State?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: The principal function of the Egg Board in South Australia is to ensure that the standard of eggs and the marketing procedures are properly applied within the industry. The functions in detail are much wider, in that the board is responsible for licensing growers, monitoring the number of hens required from time to time in given areas to service the public, liaising with counterparts in neighbouring States who, from time to time, depend on us for assistance, as is the case in the Northern Territory, and for monitoring any dumping that may be occurring.

I cannot at this time tell the member how many hen quotas we have and I do not think this is a satisfactory place to be giving guesses. There are 780 growers, but the member asked how many hens there were, how many eggs they produced, and so on. I undertake to provide the information to the member by way of a Dorothy Dixier in the House of Assembly, or by other means.

Mr. EVANS: Is the Minister aware, from the records of his department, of any concern expressed by consumers or producers about the Egg Board and the method of licensing, considering that the present licensing system came into operation when the previous Government was in office, and has concern been expressed that the transfer of licences is costing a lot of money? I telephoned growers who were advertising that they were willing to purchase licences and I found that they were willing to pay \$10 to \$11.50 for licences.

As the Egg Board must establish the value at which eggs are sold on the market, and considering the cost of production, I am concerned that the cost of quota licences will have to become part of the cost of production. Representatives of the board told me about 18 months ago that that was not the case but, if a grower has 40 000 birds and has borrowed money from a bank, at an amount of \$10 a head, the cost of production, in the end, will include the cost of acquiring licences.

Because of the way in which licences are increasing in value, we cannot be sure what end price growers will pay for licences, because it has been a restricted industry. There has been a cut-back in the number of growers, so there is a tendency for the larger growers to buy out the smaller ones so that they can keep up production. Has the Minister had complaints from consumer or producer organisations and has he examined the Queensland system, where a grower cannot sell a licence on the open market or buy a farm and then close it down straight away?

In Queensland, a grower must keep a farm operating for a time. The department takes back the licence and gives it to a smaller producer until the smaller producers are brought up to a limit (I think it is 4 000). Is the Government concerned about the present practice? I believe that the egg price in this State, in dollar value, is nearly twice the price in the United States.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: Regarding whether I have

had complaints about the licensing system, I say that I have had, but I have had the complaints from the member for Fisher, not from the field, either producers or consumers. I did not realise that I would be asked a question that would cause me to say that. The member for Fisher has expressed concern not only in correspondence to the board, but also by raising the matter at least once in the House of Assembly. I do not agree that there is the area of concern that he considers there is in relation to retaining our egg quota system, nor do I agree that the matter of transferability should not apply in the egg-producing industry. True, egg licences cost up to about \$11 per bird.

When I was opening a show at Swan Reach last Saturday, I sat next to an egg producer who recently had set himself up in business. He paid \$11 a head. Without being aware that the matter would be raised today, I took the opportunity to speak to the grower, who said that he was quite satisfied with the system. He paid the fee and he believed that the figure of about \$11 had settled down and was stable. The industry knows where it is. It knows that it is safe for people to transfer licences at that level, and the man to whom I spoke expressed no element of concern about the procedure.

Regarding the quality factor and the function of the department in relation to the Egg Board, it is important to inform members that we have agreed to assist in the area of monitoring the pricing of the various grades of egg marketed. We have a committee that serves that purpose, and it is headed by none other than the former Ombudsman, Mr. Gordon Combe. That committee's job is to take on board the cost of production as a base ingredient in the formula for egg pricing.

In that regard, officers of my department, quite apart from the Egg Board function, are available and, I understand, are ready to assist Mr. Gordon Combe and his committee members for that purpose. So, I am not aware, other than as I have indicated (by the correspondence between the member for Fisher and our officers and the board directly, and his raising the question today), of any degree of concern.

Mr. EVANS: I refer back to the Auditor-General's Report. Has there been any money used in the Rural Industry Adjustments fund towards the egg industry? Regardless of that, what is the meaning of the following paragraph in the Auditor-General's Report on page 14:

Payment was not made to the Rural Industry Adjustment Fund against the provision of \$250 000.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: The answer to the first question is "No". Regarding the figure of \$250 000, that was the sum budgeted for to meet the expected State contribution to part B of the Rural Industry Adjustment Scheme. Part B assistance provides carry-on assistance to those rural industries suffering from the effects of a severe market downturn or similar situations. At present the wine grape industry is the only category eligible for this form of assistance. Part B is the only area within the Rural Industry Adjustment Scheme in which costs are shared equally between the Commonwealth and the State.

For the information of Committee members I would like to relay to them that, during 1978-79, there was a large surplus of red wine grapes and it was expected that a similar situation would prevail in 1979-80. It was on that basis that the amount of \$250 000 was budgeted for to meet an anticipated demand for this form of assistance. That situation did not eventuate. Government assistance to Southern Vales Co-operative enabled the winery to purchase fruit which might have been left on the vine, and I have already spoken about the hail storms of 14 November 1979 which reduced crops in the Angle Vale

and Barossa Valley areas; there was keen demand from the trade to supply home winemakers at prices commensurate with the fixed price in South Australia. The minimal surplus of grapes resulted in less than the expected demand for carry-on assistance. Only 22 applications were received; 16 were approved to the sum of \$117 000 and there were adequate funds transferred from 1978-79 to meet the State's share in that line. Thus, the budgeted \$250 000 referred to by the member for Fisher was not required. Accordingly, that is why it was reported on at page 14 of the Auditor-General's Report.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I am not satisfied with the answers given by the Minister in relation to the member for Salisbury's question. Not only am I not satisfied with the answer given but also I am not satisfied with the attitude expressed by the Minister on behalf of his Government in relation to overseas projects. When I was in China two years ago a huge modernisation programme had been commenced the year before; China is continuing it at the moment. Proof of that is quite evident, because the recent congress endorsed the modernisation programme. It would appear that there is tremendous opportunity for this or any other Government to cement some links with China.

It is also evident that the New South Wales and Victorian Governments have assistance programmes with the provinces of Guandong and Kiangsu. I believe that we ought to have some similar arrangement, because there is no question that that is where the potential lies. If there was ever a need for diversification in these areas, it is now, because of the situation developing in Iraq. God knows where that is going to finish—neither I nor the Minister knows. What is the Government's real attitude about some sort of sister arrangement with China? If we have all the facts before us today (I am not accusing the Minister of deceiving this Committee, but I am not sure we have all the facts), it would appear that the Government is nonchalant about its attitude to China and the potential therein for the Government.

The Minister has related the situation to costs. I am not a specialist in this area but it is my understanding that these overseas projects can and, in most cases, do pay their way. In some circumstances (and I think it is Algeria) the technology is providing some sort of profit in that area. I am thinking, too, of other areas in which they are operating with our technology, and it is at least a break-even situation. Will the Minister say why the cost factor in making some relationship with China has been taken into account? What is the attitude of this Government in relation to friendliness with China? Has the department made any proposal to the Minister, irrespective of whether it is contractual or not, for a sister or friendly relationship with China? Has the Minister taken that or any proposal for China to Cabinet and, if so, what was Cabinet's decision regarding that proposal?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: I regard the question by the Deputy Leader as important. I was discussing it with my Director while the Deputy Leader was speaking. I do not want it to appear that I was not interested, as it is an important area. I thought I had explained to the Committee the degree of importance that the State Government places on inter-country relations and, indeed, expressed my personal attitude in this respect.

As the Deputy Leader has indicated, he is interested in our becoming further involved with China. As I have said before, it is true that their delegates attended that last Dry-land Farming Congress that we had here and, from memory, there were some nine representatives from that country. I think that that effort in itself demonstrates their keenness. We took the opportunity as a Government

collectively and I individually to talk to these people, both at the Festival Centre where the congress was going on and at our offices and other functions. There is no question about our friendly relationship with those people.

The sister-State relationship to which the Deputy Leader has referred exists between New South Wales and Victoria and Inner Mongolia. Discussions with these people, particularly during the reign of the former Government, led to the subject of the sister-State relationship, particularly with the province of Inner Mongolia.

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

The CHAIRMAN: Before proceeding, I should like to remind the Committee that we still have to consider Agriculture; Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Forests, Miscellaneous; and, under the Loan Estimates, the Department of Agriculture and the Woods and Forests Department. I remind honourable members that we are scheduled to complete by 4.30 p.m. the examination of the vote with which the Committee is now dealing.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: Before the Committee adjourned for lunch, we were discussing the subject of South Australia's relationships, etc., with other countries and, in particular, the matter of a proposed sister relationship with China. During the luncheon break, my officers have done some homework on this subject and, although in April this year a matter involving agricultural co-operation was raised with the Government, via my department and me, with respect to China, the sister-State relationship has not been submitted to the Government nor to Cabinet because such a relationship with a country that has more than 800 000 000 people involves many things as well as agriculture. I refer, for example, to health and education, and possibly a whole host of other factors that need to be considered.

That matter rests, I presume, entirely with the Premier, to determine whether a sister-State relationship is to be considered in its own right. Until those other factors are determined, it would be quite unwise, in our view, to proceed to establish such a relationship on the premise of our interest and involvement in agriculture in particular.

However, it does not alter the fact that, as these interests are shown by other countries, they are taken on board by the department, especially as they relate to the practice of agriculture, and more especially as they relate to those practices in agriculture in which we claim to be specialists. On that note, we would need to have regard to the climatic conditions that apply in China agriculturally, and we would have to consider carefully precisely what we have to offer.

I understand that during the interim period we may best be suited to providing expertise in the field of stocking and perhaps pasture. However, I understand that, in relation to the cereal-growing scene, it is unlikely that we will be involved in China to the extent that we are already involved in Iraq.

I refer also to a subject raised by the member for Fisher, part of which involves information that I was unable to provide before lunch. I can now tell the Committee that 782 poultry farms are registered in South Australia; that there are 1 092 500 laying hens (that is, hens that are over 26 weeks old); and that the production from those hens is 17 500 000 dozen eggs, from which sales to the tune of 12 400 000 dozen eggs are made on the shelf, 1 500 000 dozen in the form of local pulp, and equivalent to 3 600 000 dozen in the form of export pulp.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: This is now the third or fourth Minister who has misled the Committee. This morning the member for Salisbury asked the Minister

whether proposals had been put to Cabinet regarding China, and the Minister said "No". Now the Minister has given a clear admission that proposals were put to the Government. The Minister cannot hide behind the claim that he went to the Premier. The Government is the Cabinet—it is not the Premier. Did the Minister mislead the Committee this morning when questioned by the member for Salisbury? Did he not understand the question? I believe the Minister misled the Committee. What is the precise nature of proposals in regard to China that were forwarded to Cabinet by the Minister?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: I deny having misled the Committee on this subject. When questioning me on this subject the member for Salisbury directed his question to the sister-State relationship that he believed should apply between us—

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: You understood wrongly.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: If I understood wrongly in that respect, I quickly apologise. The position has been checked and I can tell the Committee what I believe to be the position. If that is considered to be misleading the Committee, then I do not agree with it. The member may desire to put further questions to me on this subject.

The Hon. J. D. Wright: I do not accept that. The Minister did mislead the Committee. When I asked my questions earlier I said that we were not getting all the facts, which are now coming out. I said that there was a proposal, and now the Minister has apologised to the Committee for what he considers to be a misunderstanding on his part. The questions of the member for Salisbury were clear and I, being inexperienced in this area, understood them. It is not good enough for the Minister to say that he did not understand the questions—he set out to deliberately mislead this Committee. Now the Minister says that other information has come to hand, but the Minister has many officers sitting with him, and they should have advised him if he had a memory slip. I will take much convincing that the Minister did not try to mislead the Committee. Unfortunately we had a bit too much information for him. I want to know, and the people of the State are entitled to know, what is the extent of proposals put to the Government by the Minister?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: Again, I enjoy confirmation from my senior officer that no proposals have been put to our Government by China, nor have we put any proposals to China. We have not entered into a sister-State relationship with China, and no such relationship is proposed at this time.

The Hon. J. D. Corcoran: We are talking about a proposal from you to Cabinet.

The Hon. J. D. Wright: The Minister used the word "Government".

Members interjecting:

The Chairman: Order! The Deputy Leader has asked a question and the Minister is answering. Has the Minister completed his answer?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: I understand that the Deputy Leader seeks further information from me, and that he wants me to tell him what I put to Cabinet relating to agricultural co-operation with China.

The Hon. J. D. Wright: That is right.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: As I have indicated to the Committee, I have raised that subject in the form of a proposal to Cabinet.

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: This morning you said "No" to that.

The Chairman: Order! The opportunity will be given to the member to ask a question later.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: The question whether I have submitted details from the Department of Agriculture in a

minute strictly involving agriculture, not covering the other factors relating to a sister-State relationship, was the subject canvassed widely this morning.

I pointed out to Cabinet in broad terms the benefits accruing to South Australian manufacturing industries (seed-producing, fencing material, etc.) by our not only continuing with the commitments which we undertook to continue and which were inherited from the previous Government but also further investigating other fields. We have made a decision which is consistent with the statements I made immediately after we came into Government that we should do this steadily, consolidate our position and become more properly informed on what this inter-country arrangement involved for us. The department and the people concerned were involved in that process before anyone rushed into considering whether there should be sister-State relationships and contracts, etc.

The Hon. J. D. Wright: In the light of the revelations from the Minister this afternoon, it is clear to me (as it must be to every member of this Committee) that this Committee was misled this morning by the Minister. If I was carrying out my duty, I would move condemnation of the Minister, but I place on record that the Minister stands condemned by members on this side of the Committee. To move a motion along those lines now would take an hour of the short time left in this debate and restrict the time we have left for questions. That is the only reason I have not moved such a motion. The Minister has clearly lied, in my view, to this Committee.

Mr. EVANS: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. What is the ruling in this Committee regarding the Standing Order of the House relating to the use of the word "lie" or "lying"?

The Chairman: I was about to take up that point. The words "lie, lies, or liar" will not be permitted. I ask the Deputy Leader to withdraw the word "lied".

The Hon. J. D. Wright: I will withdraw, on your advice, Mr. Chairman. It is clear that the Minister did not intend at any stage to tell the truth about the matter raised by the member for Salisbury. The truth was not told in this Committee this morning, and it took further questioning to extract from the Minister what the truth of the matter is. My condemnation of the Minister is on record. We condemn him for his action. If this Committee had surplus time at its disposal, I would have moved a motion to that effect. I am sick and tired of Ministers getting up in the House and in this Committee and not telling the truth. Can the Minister say what happened to the discussions regarding the Mongolian situation when this Government came to power? As those discussions were well advanced when the Minister came in to office, what happened about this matter?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: It is my understanding (and I say that, because what happened before I came into office is difficult for me to determine in precise terms) that a desire was expressed during the reign of the previous Government that there be a sister relationship between South Australia and Inner-Mongolia. If the Deputy Leader wants the details applicable to that, I have no alternative but to call on the Director-General to explain the discussions in which I expect he would have been involved, prior to our coming into office, concerning this matter. I was certainly made aware in the interim period that a sister-State relationship had been discussed.

However, it is not my role, as Minister of Agriculture, to pursue that sister-State relationship subject, other than so far as it applies to our agricultural role. I invite the Director-General to comment on the history of events before we came to office, if that is what the Deputy Leader

wants.

Mr. McColl: I am not entirely certain of the respective dates but initially our association with China and particularly with respect to a particular agricultural project related to a proposed livestock project in the Province of Hunan and at the time, I recall, the previous Minister had made fairly firm arrangements for a technical mission from the Department of Agriculture to go to China to look at this project.

At that stage, the Commonwealth Government intervened and the project was picked up by the newly-created Australian Overseas Projects Corporation. A mission was gathered together by that corporation and one of our officers was a member of that mission. That mission did a feasibility study and, as a result, proposals were called for and a private consulting firm in Victoria was given the responsibility of undertaking that project.

During the course of these negotiations, there was discussion at the same time with Inner Mongolian representatives, initially with respect to a sister-State relationship but also with respect to the possibility of some advice regarding agro-pastoral development, sheep husbandry improvement, and general livestock management. I think that, as the Minister has indicated, the proposition regarding Inner Mongolia relating to the sister-State relationship was not picked up by the new Government, and I think the Minister has given adequate reasons for that. The Minister has also explained that the proposition before Cabinet related to a co-operation agreement, a much lesser arrangement than a sister-State relationship.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The question has been asked by the Deputy Leader and it would be only reasonable that conversation was kept to a level such that the answer could be heard.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I apologise for that interruption, but my colleague wanted to put a very important question to me.

Mr. McColl: I was at the point where I was indicating that the Minister had informed the Committee that a proposition had been placed before the Government in Cabinet in respect of a co-operation arrangement with Inner Mongolia. That is the present situation, as I understand. In respect of dealing with this matter, it is within the portals of Government and is no longer within the department.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I ask the Minister how long ago the recommendation from the department, through him, was made to the Government, whether he supported the recommendation from the department, and when he expects the Government to determine its attitude. If the Government has determined its attitude, what is that attitude?

Mr. LEWIS: I rise on a point of order. Does that question seek information in relation to the spending of money, or are the mechanics of Government involved? I cannot see the relevance and I ask for your ruling.

The CHAIRMAN: As I see the position, there are two reasons why the question can be permitted. First, in the vote there is a line for the Overseas Projects Division and, secondly, we have been accepting questions on policy. It is fairly wide but I would see the question, for that reason, as being in order.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: I believe that it is relevant as it is an important subject. It is important that not only the Opposition and this Committee but also the public of South Australia know what our attitude is with respect to inter-country involvement. I am interested, as I have told the Committee several times, from an agricultural viewpoint. On that premise, five months ago I brought this

subject to the attention of Cabinet with the information that I have explained in some detail. I brought to the attention of my Cabinet colleagues my impression and attitude in a number of instances before, at about that time, and since, in relation to our on-going involvement.

It ought to be appreciated that in or about April of this year we were in the final stages of negotiation of the agreement with Iraq, and within a few weeks of that date Cabinet agreed that I go to Iraq and finalise that contract on the Government's behalf. The members of the Committee would be well aware of what has taken place since then, as I have provided progressive reports to the Parliament on a number of occasions as to our involvement with that country. I believe that the Government's application to this subject has been responsible, and consistent with our announced policy in this regard. We have not in any way ignored or overlooked the commitments that we inherited. We are approaching this total inter-country relation subject as it applies to agriculture most responsibly.

With respect to the sister-State relationship, I appreciate that it has very wide ramifications and involvement with a number of other Ministers. For that reason I am not prepared, as I was not this morning when the subject was opened up in the first instance, to comment on which countries we will enter into a sister-State relationship with. I can only deal with the involvement with other countries as it applies to agriculture. I believe that that is being done appropriately.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: My question requires just a "Yes" or "No" answer. Is the matter still before the Government, or has it made a decision? If it has, does the Minister intend to put it back to the Government again?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: That matter, accompanied by a number of other matters related to our inter-country involvement, is before the Government. I cannot give a "Yes" or "No" answer in this instance. The Government, as a result of the input via me from Agriculture, has chosen, as I further indicated this morning, to send me to the other side of the world in a matter of a few weeks on a carefully prepared programme to become better informed and to come back and advise the Government so that it can deal accordingly with it.

Mr. MATHWIN: I ask the Minister a question in relation to the line "Purchase of livestock and equipment". I see that the amount proposed this year is \$100 000. Last year the amount voted was \$45 000 and actual payments were \$7 830. What kind of livestock and equipment is the department interested in purchasing?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: The purchase of livestock and equipment will amount to \$100 000; provision for this was previously made under the line "Regional Operations—Purchase of livestock and equipment", for which there is no provision this year. There is a carry-over of funds of \$23 500 from the 1979-80 financial year to meet commitments like the purchase of tractors (one tractor is to be purchased for the Northfield Dairy Research Centre and one for the Struan Research Centre), and the balance of the \$76 500 is for replacement of machinery and equipment that will cost in excess of \$1 000 per item for use by laboratories and individual officers in addition to research centres in regions that were previously funded under the Treasury lines. A sum of \$20 000 has been allocated for acquired plant and book value for Samcor on the transfer of meat hygiene staff from the corporation.

Having explained precisely what the \$100 000 is intended for, I believe that it is relevant to justify the apparent large increase. I had the pleasure, a couple of weeks ago, of visiting the Minnipa Research Station and witnessing the condition of its equipment. On that several

thousand acre property, a wide range of cereal grains is produced, and the staff of the station are expected to store some of that grain in an old shed. One can appreciate what happened to the carefully harvested, clean and selected grain varieties during the mice plague. Hence, there has been a call from that quarter for improved silo facilities. I had the opportunity of looking at the station's machinery and it was quite clear to me that, if staff are expected to work efficiently and effectively in that research station, the machinery must be upgraded. The same applies to the sheep shearing facilities.

I would hope that that kind of need is brought to my attention during visits to the outer areas of the regional centres around the State and we, as a department, should seek from the Treasury each year sufficient increased funding to cater for the needs of those regional staff members. It is for that kind of reason that provision has been made in this Budget for the equipment that I have outlined.

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: I intended to raise questions, because I was not able to question the Minister further previously, in regard to overseas projects and I now take the chance to do so. I regret that my questioning was interrupted, because this matter is very important. It was suggested that I was leading off this morning about sister-State relationships, and this has been used as an excuse for the fact that the Minister has not felt it necessary to answer correctly. I believe that he has misled this Committee most seriously; he wasted the time of this Committee this morning by virtue of the answers that he gave and, indeed, that was not for want of time because, in the 1½ hours during which the Committee sat this morning, and of the 58 minutes taken by the Minister and by his Director-General, 55 minutes was taken by the Minister.

I asked on numerous occasions this morning whether any efforts had been made by the Minister, his staff or department, or by the Overseas Projects Division, regarding co-operation between the South Australian Government and China. I did not at any stage mention sister-State relations. However, I did mention Victoria and New South Wales, and said that they had some agreement with China. If the Minister checks *Hansard*, he will see clearly that I did not use the words "sister-State relationship". We have had one set of answers this morning, culminating in the answer that no submission was made to Cabinet, and this afternoon we have started off hearing two replies that have contradicted that. The Minister indicated that he had put a proposal to Cabinet, and then took the matter further, saying that he had raised this matter in Cabinet on numerous occasions.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: No, not this one.

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: I take issue with the Minister. If the Minister reads *Hansard*, he will see clearly that he said that it involved not just one contact with Cabinet five weeks ago but numerous such contacts. This is a gross misleading of the Committee, and it ill behoves the Minister to behave in this manner. This Committee is supposed to be ascertaining the facts. Instead, however, this morning's proceedings were a total waste of time. Also, the Minister has been taking excessive time to reply to questions asked of him. One could perhaps tolerate that if one knew that what the Minister was saying was truthful and honest. However, when the Minister has been deliberately misinterpreting and giving answers that are not correct, it does not help this Committee. This sort of behaviour does not augur well for the future of the Estimates Committees system in this Parliament.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: I am disappointed that the honourable member has chosen to adopt this line, because I have set out from the beginning of this meeting to bring

to the Committee information that I believe to be true and useful. I take exception to the honourable member's claim that I said that I had on numerous occasions brought to the Government's attention the matter of our relationships or proposed relationships with China. I referred to the occasion on which I brought this specific matter to the Government's attention and numerous other like matters involving other countries that I have brought to Cabinet's attention. I do this regularly, and we are all given the opportunity in Cabinet to do so, both formally and informally. We can draw to our colleagues' attention matters that we believe to be important.

I have told the Committee many times that I believe that agriculture, in its own right, is an important subject. I have said this in the Chamber and publicly, and I remind the Committee of it again. I make no apology for having drawn this matter to the attention of my colleagues in Cabinet, privately, and in the Party room.

I do not believe that I need to recap on the details that have already been explained to the Committee. Opposition members will undoubtedly use this occasion, if they can, to make political capital out of this or any other subject. That is their right, and I do not deny them that. However, I would have thought that a lot of other important material relating to the lines would be raised. I am absolutely amazed that so much time has been spent by Opposition members on the matters that they have raised and by my having to explain those matters. I also realise that other members who are not members of this Committee (I refer, for example, to the member for Flinders) would like—

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: If you told the truth in the first place, we would not have to pursue it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Interjections are out of order.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: I do not intend to take up issues of that kind, unless the Committee as a whole or any of its members want to pursue them. However, I believe that to take up such matters is not to make the best use of this occasion.

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: I suggest that, when the *Hansard* proofs become available, the Minister should read the report of what he said to the Committee this morning and this afternoon. He will see clearly that what Opposition members are saying is correct. The Minister stands condemned because of the answers that he has given and, if anyone has been keeping a side-liner from asking questions, it has been the Minister with his activities.

Mr. LEWIS: I point out that, for all the time that the Opposition has been questioning the Minister, it has focused on \$104 000-worth of expenditure in a Budget involving \$23 000 000. If that is the importance that they attach to the affairs that the department handles in the interests of rural communities in this State (the farmers and those who depend on them in the towns where the services are provided), I can only say, "God help the farmers." Opposition members are more concerned about what is happening outside this country than about what is happening inside South Australia.

This department was established in the first instance to ensure that agriculture can not only continue to flourish but also improve on the well recognised high standard of efficiency and productivity that South Australia enjoys.

I refer to the allocation for "Administration, Finance and Policy". I seek information regarding the reason for the variation in that allocation, and should like to know whether the Minister and the department are aware of recent developments in technology in relation to the control of mice plagues, which developments were written up in recent months in *Scientific Australia* and which were

the subject of an article on the A.B.C. *Weekend Magazine* programme last Sunday.

I refer to an ultra-high frequency sound which attracts all mice from considerable distances but which cannot be heard by humans. This could go a long way towards eliminating future mice plagues if it was properly researched and a cost benefit analysis conducted. Has the department heard of that technology and, if it has, is the department presently investigating it as part of the area of administration, finance and policy expenditure, as well as some other area of research?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: The sum of \$2 107 857 is proposed under "Administration, Finance and Policy" to cover the salaries of the Director-General, four Directors, four Policy and Planning Unit staff, five Agricultural Chemicals Registration Section staff, 41 Administrative Services Branch staff, 12 Management Services Branch staff, and 12 Mathematical Services Unit staff. The actual expenditure in 1979-80 exceeded the vote because of salary increases in that period, and the higher proposed expenditure for 1980-81 reflects the pro rata allocation by the department of available funds for the year. I point out that the vote for that administrative line does not include funding for regional operations, which is covered on page 70 under "Regional Operations". The regional operations and the internal staff categories to which I referred are not consistent with the information set out in the programme papers: in the official papers presented to the House they are separate, and in the programme papers they are collated as one line. The two collective totals of estimates coincide with the Budget Estimates, but they are not written up accordingly.

Mr. LEWIS: The Minister made no reference to the investigation and adaptation of ultra high-frequency sound technology to attract mice, which have invaded houses, sheds and stores, to their demise (no pun is intended) in a set trap. Is the department aware of this technology and investigating it?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: I have the benefit of an experienced officer in vertebrate pest control, Mr. Barrow, being present, and I will ask him to reply to the member.

Mr. Barrow: The Vertebrate Pest Control Authority does employ a research team, which has been working for about three months. I cannot say whether those officers knew of this recent development prior to the publicity given to it. However, I expect that they would have known, and I am confident that they are following it up.

Mr. TRAINER: The information I seek relates to a question asked earlier by the member for Mallee. In relation to another line the member alleged this morning that control of pasture aphids had ceased because of the reduction in that line from \$447 000 last year to no allocation this year. The Minister was quite scathing in his reply about that allegation and was emphatic that the function of aphid control was continuing under the line "Plant Industry Division". Will the Minister confirm whether or not I correctly understood his statement this morning?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: I do not concede that I was scathing in my reply to the member for Mallee, but I agree that I set out to put the record straight with respect to where the funding is provided for this on-going service. The line "Control of Pasture Aphid" provided \$447 000 in 1979-80 and \$410 015 was actually spent. That line makes no provision for control of pasture aphid this year because the function of our officers and expenditure in connection with this matter are dealt with under the line "Plant Industry Division", which has \$2 060 000 allocated to it and which provides for the salaries and wages of staff of

the division. This division consists of an amalgamation of the old Horticulture and Agronomy Branches (excluding staff now located in regions), the Parafield Plant Research Centre, and the Fruit Fly Eradication Unit. The wages of employees engaged on road blocks have been provided under the regional provision for 1980-81. Actual expenditure for 1979-80 exceeded that vote owing to high grain inspection costs.

That is why there was a difference between what was spent and what was provided for in the previous year 1979-80. It is relevant to say that in that year we had record grain exports from South Australia, including a higher than usual bagged wheat component. In fact, our barley exports were up 63 per cent and our wheat exports were up 21 per cent in that year. Accordingly, the additional expenditure for that period is well justified. "Plant Industry" includes "Plant Health" as well as "Plant Industry", whereas "Animal Industry" and "Animal Health" are treated as separate lines.

Mr. TRAINER: What reference is there under "Plant Industry Division" to the control of aphids?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: If the member wants me to list the functions of the pasture aphid control project and what is proposed, I can provide him with that information separately.

Mr. TRAINER: I would prefer to have that information provided separately.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: I can assure the member that the South Australian Department of Agriculture is conscious of the need to protect our pastures, and dissolving the special aphid task force which was under contract between 1970 and 1980 was done with care and attention to our responsibilities to the rural community. The on-going role has been taken on by the departmental officers.

The CHAIRMAN: Will the Minister furnish that detail?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: I will furnish the detail constituting the expenditure in the new line "Plant Industry Division", and demonstrate specifically where the \$2 060 000 will be spent in regard to staff and operations.

Mr. MATHWIN: Turning to the line "Regional Operations", the previous allocation was \$3 419 000, and \$3 789 592 was spent. The proposed allocation for this year is \$4 744 000, which is nearly \$1 000 000 more than actually spent last year. Will the Minister indicate where that extra money will be applied?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: A system of regional servicing has been established in this State, and I believe that it has a lot of merit. An allocation of \$4 744 000 has been provided to cover the cost of regional operations and to provide for the salaries and wages of the staff of the Central, Eyre, Murray Lands, Northern and South-East Regions, including Turretfield, Parndana, Barossa and Lenswood Research Centres (Central), Minnipa Research Centre (Eyre), Loxton and Wanbi Research Centres (Murray Lands), and Struan and Kybybolite Research Centres (South-East). Those funds include the wages of employees engaged on fruit fly road-blocks which were previously charged to the Plant Industry Division.

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: Turning to the line "Economics and Marketing", we know from the information provided that the vote has been decreased by \$36 000 from \$239 000 to \$203 000, an even greater decrease (\$89 660) on the amount actually spent last year. My first question relates to research done in the marketing of market garden produce. This has been a matter that I know has been the subject of some attention in the community for some time now, certainly among market gardeners and small fruit and vegetable shopowners, as well as consumers. What

work is being done by the economics and marketing section to assist in the orderly marketing of fruit and vegetables with the prime aim of making sure that the consumer is paying lower prices and, secondly, of achieving a fair return for the amount of effort involved in producing the crops?

I know that last year the Government was taking some initiatives to promote the Middle East in connection with exporting market garden produce. In fact, I attended a meeting at which an officer of the Department of Agriculture spoke with 40 or 50 market gardeners and outlined to them the advantages of trying to break into the Middle East market.

The point was made that this might be the long-term hope of many market gardeners in South Australia to solve the structural problems that exist on the local State and national markets. On my recent overseas trip, I spoke with officials of the Food and Agriculture Organisation about the promotion of market garden produce in various parts of the world. I was somewhat concerned to learn that a project being run by the F.A.O. involves the promotion of market garden produce in certain countries in the Middle East. That organisation has officers in those countries to advise local farmers on the technical specifications and various facts they need to know, as well as on the various marketing aspects.

While the scheme undertaken by the Department of Agriculture to promote this field of export for our gardeners was doubtless a worthwhile and imaginative one, I think that, now that we have information that F.A.O. is actively involved in this area, the department should be reconsidering to what extent it is advising market gardeners in this State that the Middle East represents the solution to the income problems they face because of the structural problems of the industry in this State. I would also appreciate any comment the Minister may care to make on whether the reduction in the vote will affect the department's ability to assist market gardeners and other people in primary industry in their efforts to achieve a better and more profitable marketing of their products.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: As two officers previously funded under the line "Economics and Marketing" are funded here under the line "Plant Industry Division", the former line is substantially reduced, there being only a transfer involved there. The economic aspects of this are being handled by the Economics and Marketing Branch, but marketing and market development comes under the Plant Industry Division. There is no question of a reduction in funding or service in that respect. The honourable member said he had attended a meeting with an officer of my department: I have noted what has been said and undertake, on reading the report of this Committee, that if I have missed any specific questions I will provide an answer for the honourable member.

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: My other question related to the marketing of local market garden produce in the Middle East and to the possibility of more orderly marketing giving a better return to the grower and a fair price to the consumer.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: The matter of Government involvement in industry practices generally, or in methods of marketing, is largely the result of a desire expressed by the industry affected by any change from the current system. It is very clearly a part of our policy in Government not to dictate to industry what it shall do in relation to its own practices. I note the points expressed by the industry and if, legislatively or administratively, we are able to assist in regard to its practices we require justification for the move. I do not believe that as a

department, or as a Government, we have failed to consider the expressed desires of primary industry including the market gardening community.

I am sure that the honourable member recognises and appreciates the attention we have given during our first 12 months in office, we have given to those whose properties and family circumstances have been affected by massive storm damage.

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: I appreciate the Minister's comment that he does not propose to ride roughshod over an industry and impose any moves to alter the way marketing is done. However, I know that the Minister has received expressions of concern from people in the market gardening system about how the system operates in all its facets. Therefore, that gives the Minister the right to examine whether there is any basis for concern. I want to know what the Minister has done about those expressions of concern.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: From time to time in the past 12 months we have received representations, mainly from my colleagues on behalf of their constituents, about fruit and vegetable marketing in South Australia. The previous Government set up a committee to investigate the desirability of relocating the Adelaide principal market at a place other than East Terrace, Adelaide, and the committee's conclusion, with considerable industry support, suggests to me (and I have accepted the recommendation) that the holders of East End market sites co-operate with respect to their upgrading and provision of facilities in that area and that it should remain a principal marketing site for market garden produce.

Farmers' markets, as such, have not received the sort of support from the vegetable and fruit growing fraternity that I thought might be forthcoming. Accordingly, we are not prepared to move to support those. Other than those two facets of marketing, I am not aware of any other real area of concern. A study of certain aspects related to the potato industry is being undertaken by the department and I think that, on that subject, it would be appropriate to call on Mr. McColl to speak.

Mr. McColl: The department has had discussions recently with representatives of both the Potato Board and the Potato Growers Association with respect, on the one hand, to the technical research we are undertaking, and, on the other hand, to the desire to have a study by a production economics survey of the potato industry to provide a firm basis regarding future research and advice for the industry.

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: There are two areas involved and the Minister has referred to one but not to the other. Regarding the price advertising mechanism that exists for the sale of market garden produce, I know that there have been complaints about the system of notifying prices in both the print medium and the electronic medium, and this area could usefully be investigated. Overseas, Governments are involved in assisting with broadcasting regarding commodities.

In connection with growers' markets, the Minister has said that he has not been aware of large-scale interest of market gardeners in wanting to be involved in growers' markets. I receive complaints from growers in my district who are trying to get into the one market we have, that at North Haven. They claim that more than half of the market is let out to non-market gardeners, such as Central Market operators and businessmen amateur gardeners who do not need to rely on the market. The people for whom the market garden is intended cannot get into it. There is a waiting list for allotments at that market. That suggests that there is a demand for the sort of thing that a growers' market can provide.

The third matter relates to the plant industry. Has the department considered establishing a research facility for market garden produce as a whole, for tomatoes, cucumbers, capsicums, and so on, in order to improve the quality of the seeds and plants so that we can match the thrust of competition from interstate and provide a better product for the consumer?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: The member has referred to market reporting, research facilities, and on-site marketing. In relation to the North Haven scene, that land remains and the operation is administered by the Department of Marine and Harbors. I do not think it appropriate for me to speak about that, but I know the member's interest in the matter.

Regarding reporting and the specific research function as it applies to the growing of tomatoes, I think that also is an area that would be appropriate to put to the officers so that the Committee can enjoy directly the benefit of what they say.

Mr. McColl: With respect to research, I have a list of projects, with projected objectives. I could easily read that to the Committee but I do not think it would be very fruitful to do that. Can we provide the information?

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: We would very much appreciate that.

The CHAIRMAN: We would like you to pass on the information to the Committee so that it can be incorporated in *Hansard*. Is that in order?

Mr. McColl: Yes. The list of projects is as follows:

PLANT INDUSTRY DIVISION

Function/Project	Project Code	Fund Source	Objective
RESEARCH			
Vegetable Herbicides	2VAA	State	Finalise programme for butternuts, gherkins and rockmelon. Devise methods to control escape weeds in onions. Devise suitable methods for weed control in culinary beans. Monitor problems in all crops. Prepare extension material at completion.
Vegetable Variety Assessment	2VAB	State	Continue (year 2) variety evaluation in greenhouse tomato, eggplant and pepper; and outdoor tomato. Commence (year 1 of 2 year programme) study of cultural problems in a range of culinary bean varieties. (See also Alternate Vegetables.) Prepare extension material as interim reports.
Vegetable Soil Analysis	2VAC	State	Develop a field programme to enable use of soil analysis in two major crops for assessing fertilizer needs. Prepare extension material reporting on first years results.
G/H Vegetable Culture	2VAD	State	Develop cultural methods for out of season rockmelon culture. Prepare progress extension material if experiment is successful.
Alternative Vegetables	2VAE	State	Assess control measures for tip burn in Chinese Cabbage. Continue artichoke selection in co-operation with growers. (See also Vegetable Herbicides and Vegetable Variety Assessment.) Prepare extension material if results positive in tip burn experiment.
Vegetable Spacing	2VAF	State	Determine spacing for maximum marketable yield in early sweetcorn. (See also Vegetable Variety Assessment.) Prepare extension material if promising results obtained.
Potatoes	2VAG	State	Continue programme aimed at quality production for particular end use—tuber damage, seed cutting, top killing, variety evaluation. Prepare extension material as interim recommendations.
Agronomy Potato Programme	2V46	CESG	Development and extension of management options for production of potatoes of high quality for various markets.

Mr. LEWIS: My first question relates to the item "Overseas visits of Minister, Minister's wife (where approved) and officers", for which \$33 000 was allocated last year and only about half of that amount was spent. An amount of \$33 000 is allocated again this year. Will the Minister outline when that money was spent, such as was spent, and for what purpose? What proposals are there, if any, apart from those that he mentioned in his explanation this morning, in relation to overseas projects?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: The provision of \$33 000 in this line is for an overseas visit by me. Provision is there for my wife, should she travel with me, and also there is provision for the Director-General, Jim McColl, to travel

with me. In addition to the information and fact-finding visits by other officers of the department which need to continue, as I am sure the members of the Committee will appreciate—

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: And agree with.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: I recognise the appreciation that the Opposition members are expressing on this subject. They see that there is a need for officers to follow up the sort of inter-country involvement we have. I take it, by the favourable comment made by interjection, that they accordingly support my personally visiting areas with the Director-General for the purpose of becoming further informed. That is appreciated. I conclude with a couple of

specific comments about the objectives of that trip, which will eat substantially into the line. It is to familiarise myself with the department's existing and intended projects, to follow up with overseas Governments further projects, to resolve all outstanding issues with existing projects, to reinforce co-operative and harmonious relationships with overseas Governments, and to explore the trade possibilities, particularly those based on the successful transfer of agricultural technology. I believe that that fourth point (the last conveyed) is of extreme importance.

We must set out to sell the technology in which we are experts and lay a foundation in these countries where we have become involved for South Australian based industries to provide their products, including machinery, housing, fencing, and all other associated equipment that goes with establishing farms. I agree with the tenor of the questioning directed to me this afternoon. There are tremendous opportunities on the overseas horizon. It is important that the Government of South Australia remain and indeed continue to be involved. I will not be pushed into doing it more quickly than we are able to cope with on the basis of obtaining the very best harmonious results.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I refer to page 377 of the programme papers and particularly the section headed "Objectives—Department of Agriculture". It states:

To oversee the State's rural industries and their producers and to induce this sector of the economy to maximise its contribution to the economic welfare of the State.

I do not know whether it is a new idea or an old one. Will the Minister say what the term "oversee" means, and does he have the agreement of farmers to introduce such a situation?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: That is a good question. I understand that the words used in this item on page 377 result from discussions held between officers of my department and those of Treasury in collating this massive document. I suppose the fact that my officers were at least to some extent involved by way of producing material and input makes me responsible for the words in the column. Accordingly, the reference to the word "oversee"—

Mr. TRAINER: Overseas projects again?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: No, it is not spelt that way. I regard it as being there for the purpose of responsibly reviewing rural practices within the State so that we are properly equipped to provide services as and when they become obviously needed. To oversee in the sense of dictation is certainly not the intent, if that was read into the article by the honourable member.

I repeat that it is not our intention to dictate to industry what it shall or shall not do. It is our intention to research the subjects applicable to our rural industries, to test those subjects within the range of our facilities both in the black stump and out in the various regional research stations. After determining what we believe to be in the interests of the rural community, we aim to demonstrate what can be done—not dictate what shall be done. The decision by the rural sector to adopt partially or wholly the findings of the Department of Agriculture is a decision which does and should remain entirely in the hands of the individual. That is consistent with my Government's policy and my interpretation of the word "oversee" in that paragraph.

Mr. LEWIS: I refer to the line under "Contingencies"—"Advisory Board of Agriculture, Women's Agricultural Bureau Council and State Committee of Rural Youth Council—Expenses". How much of the \$28 000 is for the Rural Youth Movement, and what is the break-up of that sum allocated? Does the Government recognise the considerable contribution that the Rural Youth Movement, as well as the Agricultural Bureau, has made to the improvement of understanding of desirable

cultural husbandry practices through exchange of information, people moving from locality to locality, and the development of the necessary leadership skills that ensure that the communities in which the people have to live as well as the industries associated with them are well catered for in that area? There are three members of the House of Assembly who owe no small debt to the opportunities that they have had in leadership training through the Rural Youth Movement. I refer to Mr. John Olsen (member for Rocky River), Mr. Peter Blacker (member for Flinders), and myself. If the Minister would give the Committee a breakdown of that figure, I should be interested to pursue the matter.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: The line that has been referred to involves an allocation of \$28 000, of which \$13 500 is to fund the role of the advisory board; the sum of \$8 250 is to fund the women's bureau; and \$6 250 will be for rural youth.

Mr. LEWIS: In view of that, and recognising that the former Government considered that the Rural Youth Movement was anything but desirable to it politically (and that opinion was expressed by more than one Minister in more than one place at that time, and this group has now reached the sorry stage where it has been financed to the extent that it could pitifully fail), will the Government consider putting the Rural Youth Movement under a more appropriate department that can offer it the necessary funds to ensure that the training that these young people need is still available to them, as is the case in every other State, where adequate funds are made available?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: The matter of the department to which the Rural Youth Movement is attached is of interest to the local member. I am aware of his previous involvement in this matter. About two years ago the Rural Youth Movement did a study into this matter to determine to which department it wanted to be attached. By the movement's own decision, it sought to remain associated with the Department of Agriculture. The movement has from time to time appealed for funds. I do not know the history of events with respect to the former Government or about what its attitude was to rural youth. However, I see that it has a real role to play and that the movement could well stimulate its activities by a closer involvement with the Agricultural Bureaux throughout the State from which we receive nominations and ultimately make appointments to the Advisory Board of Agriculture. In that way, input from the rural youth group could be very important to the Government of the day. So, I certainly do not disregard the role of the Rural Youth Movement.

It seems, from observations made in recent years, that the rural youth activities have become more socially oriented than agriculturally oriented, but there may well have been a need for the movement to do this in order to gain patronage and membership support. In return, its executives may over the years have felt that they needed to orient their activities towards social functions in order to preserve that support.

Be that as it may, there is a line which specifically provides for the Rural Youth Movement. The Government regards the movement as an arm of agriculture, and we will do all in our power to encourage its activities at bureau level. I have recently recognised the role of the Advisory Board of Agriculture in the form of discussing its functions with the past President and the new President. The purpose of those discussions was to see what their attitude would be towards having a greater involvement in the advisory capacity, taking on board jobs that we specifically give them from my office level, and seeking their co-operation in that regard. Right up the line, from

the Rural Youth Movement to Government, and right down the line from the Government to the Rural Youth Movement, there is an opportunity for involvement, to the benefit of all.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I refer to the operation of the South Australian Meat Corporation. The Minister will recall that the former Government made a number of decisions regarding management and the policies affecting Samcor. He will also recall that among those decisions was a change in the board membership: a new Chairman was appointed, as were some new members. It was decided to remove the competitive barriers that were set up to protect Samcor in conjunction with the introduction of legislation relating to meat hygiene.

It was decided that surplus land held by Samcor would be sold to relieve Samcor of some of its capital burden, and that the loss at the Port Lincoln Meat Works, which was estimated at that time to be \$1 200 000, would be carried by the Government. That was a conscious decision, as the Government believed that it would be completely wrong to put 150 people out of work in order to make that sort of saving. Since then the meat hygiene legislation has been passed. The Minister would be well aware of that legislation because he was involved in it. I take it that the Bill has been proclaimed.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: It is due to be shortly.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I should like to know when it will be proclaimed, and whether the surplus land has yet been sold and, if it has not, why not? Earlier this year the Premier announced a further change to the board when he announced the appointment of Mr. Graham Inns as, I think, a full-time Chairman of the board.

I would like to know something about Mr. Inns's exact role, and whether any new initiatives in relation to the management of Samcor or new policy decisions have been taken since that appointment was made. I should also like to know about any other activities that may have been undertaken in relation to Samcor. I will be particularly interested in the Minister's attitude to the servicing element of the Samcor operation. If all the protections that Samcor has enjoyed over the years were to be removed, it would be involved in a truly competitive market, and it should not be expected to bear that burden to the extent that it has done so in the past.

The CHAIRMAN: I realise that meat inspection comes under the "Contingencies" heading. Also, questions were asked regarding policy. The next vote to be considered by the Committee deals specifically with the South Australian Meat Corporation. I ask the Minister to answer the questions within the ambit of the vote that the Committee is now considering, and the remaining part of the question can be answered during the debate on the "Miscellaneous" vote.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: The first point raised by the member concerned the proclamation of the meat hygiene legislation. The Bill is not yet proclaimed and we have just completed the regulation details applicable to it. The regulations are still to be prepared for tabling in Parliament, but it is anticipated that that will be done and that the Act and associated Acts dealt with by Parliament at the time will be proclaimed on 1 January 1981. There is a possibility of that occurring before 1 January 1981, but that is the expected date. In regard to the land sale and the so-called current state of the game, I intend to ask the full-time Chairman of the Samcor Board to reply. However, I would first like to outline to the Committee what the Government is considering in relation to the functions of the Gepps Cross abattoir, incorporating the matter of land sale.

It is intended to sell what is regarded as surplus land in

the Gepps Cross meat works area. It is proposed also, in conjunction with the consideration of a corporate plan for the function of the premises, to transfer a significant part, if not the whole of the accrued debt that Samcor has been required to service, back to the Treasury to relieve the Samcor management and board of the responsibility of servicing a debt which, as has already been pointed out by the member, would be unreasonable if Samcor is to compete on the open market with other trading companies in South Australia. The details of the corporate plan, the consolidation and transfer of funding indebtedness are, as I have indicated, before the Treasurer, and I am unable to foreshadow what his decision will be, although I believe that in the department and certainly with the recent assistance of our full-time Chairman, Mr. Inns, a considerable amount of work has been done on that subject. It needed to be done, and I take the member's point that it would be unfair to expect Samcor to operate and compete on the open market when encumbered with its present financial burden.

With the benefit of that concentrated application to the job, with the benefit of the proposals that have been advanced so far, and with the benefit of the opportunity to have further discussions with the Treasurer and to ascertain all the details that may be wanted in addition to what I have set out, I would ask Mr. Inns, as Chairman of the Samcor Board, to comment further.

Mr. Inns: The Minister has covered most of the questions that the member raised. My role as Chairman of Samcor is a full-time one for the ensuing six months until a restructuring exercise has been completed. Essentially the outstanding questions that the member raised were, first, whether the surplus land at Gepps Cross has been sold. I point out that 164 hectares to the east of the Main North Road has been identified as surplus to Samcor's requirements. The board will advise the Government that that land is available for sale. The answer is "No", the land has not been sold, although valuations have been obtained and the method of disposal will be included in a report that I will be providing to the Government in the near future.

The second question concerned the role of Samcor. Several options are open to the Government, and those options will be canvassed in the report that I hope to have before the Government in the next four to six weeks. The former Government indicated that Samcor should not continue as an open-ended service providing a service capacity to meet all needs of the community in the future. That has been the continued role since about July last year and, in order to maintain a portion of the stand-by capacity, the former Government did make available to Samcor the sum of \$1 550 000.

The future servicing role of Samcor will be treated at some length in a report that I will give the Government during the next four to six months, and the method by which any stand-by capacity might be identified will be certainly an integral part of that report. I think that covers most of the points raised by the member.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: Can the Minister say whether the Government has given further consideration to the future of the Port Lincoln meat works? It is vital that the meat works be retained, despite the fact that it is in a loss situation. Has the Government a long-term view and has it voted further sums to the meat works for the next financial year?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: As the Chairman of the board has been in Port Lincoln recently, he may be better equipped to answer those questions. In regard to the Government's policy, we committed ourselves when we came into Government to retain that meat works for the

time being, and every effort has been made by Mr. Inns and his team in recent months to obtain as good a footing as possible and still provide a service facility for Eyre Peninsula. From the information I have received, I do not think there is any hope of its paying in the commercial sense, and the decision to retain the meat works has so far been a recognition by the Governments (our predecessors as well as ourselves) that it is a service that we are providing for Eyre Peninsula.

I can appreciate the frustrations of people who have been trying to operate the works over the years in the face of continued losses and a lack of patronage, with business going past its door to other places of sale and meat processing. Under new management and with the benefit of the contribution the Mr. Inns can make, I hope progress can be made, and I will ask Mr. Inns to comment further.

Mr. Inns: True, the Samcor Board and management have put in much thought about the future role of that establishment. The Samcor Board met at Port Lincoln only 10 days ago, and a greater part of the agenda was to discuss its future role. The riding instructions from the Government to the board indicate that the Port Lincoln works should remain open in the foreseeable future and until such time as the various options that may be available have been fully explored.

Of course, those options cannot be concluded until the effects of the new meat hygiene legislation have been seen to have an effect on the Port Lincoln works and other works on the Eyre Peninsula and in the Iron Triangle region. The regulations and hygiene requirements that the meat authority imposes on country abattoirs are unknown, at this stage, and whatever requirements of that nature are imposed on the four major meatworks in the Iron Triangle and on Eyre Peninsula will have a great effect on the future operation of Port Lincoln. As the Minister said, we have taken a great number of steps to ensure that management and operation efficiency is at a premium at Port Lincoln. We have changed the management there. A new General Manager took up office four months ago and already there are signs of improvement in profitability. I use that word advisedly, because as the Minister said, there is no way Port Lincoln in its current operations can run at a profit but improvements in efficiency certainly have been made. We will be reporting to the Government by the end of this year on the options that are available to it regarding the future of the Port Lincoln works.

The CHAIRMAN: I point out to the Committee that we have three more lines and that we are due to finish this vote at 4.30, so I appeal to the Committee for brief questions and brief answers. Are there any other questions from members of the Committee? As there are not, I call the honourable member for Flinders.

Mr. Blacker: I would like to follow up the question raised by the member for Hartley about meat inspection. Has any consideration been given by Samcor to upgrading the Port Lincoln works to U.S. standards? I am told that this upgrading could be achieved for a sum of about \$200 000, which would give a vast opportunity for meat processors to make greater use of the facility. Meat and stock have been going past that works. Not so long ago Samcor was buying livestock in the Port Lincoln yards and road-freighting it to Gepps Cross for processing. That upset the meatworkers at the Port Lincoln works. I cannot say definitely whether that practice continues, but it has happened on numerous occasions in the past. Can the Minister indicate whether this proposal has been looked at?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: The works at Port Lincoln are of general export standard and not U.S. export standard. That is one of the options under consideration

by the Samcor Board on behalf of the Government at this time. The matter of Samcor management purchasing and transporting stock from Port Lincoln to Gepps Cross is something I note, but to my knowledge that is not occurring. It may have occurred in the past, I do not dispute that at all, but Mr. Inns has said that that is not occurring.

Mr. Blacker: It was occurring, because I have verification of that fact. What was hurting more was that, at the same time that Samcor was purchasing stock at the Port Lincoln yards and transferring it to Gepps Cross, Port Lincoln meat works was laying off men.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: We have no control over other meat traders buying in Port Lincoln and selling at Gepps Cross.

Mr. Blacker: No, Samcor was doing that. Under "Animal Health", "Animal Industry Division", or "Extension and Information Services", would come the position of animal adviser on Lower Eyre Peninsula, which was for many years ably serviced by Mr. Des Harbel. That position is at present vacant. Unfortunately, Mr. Harbel has recently resigned and left us with the situation where we do not have an animal adviser on Lower Eyre Peninsula. The only animal adviser on the whole of the peninsula now is, I understand, at Cleve. I believe that this situation arose because another officer was appointed to work in liaison with Mr. Harbel but for some reason was transferred to Coober Pedy. Soon after that transfer took place, Mr. Harbel resigned, so we have only the one animal adviser on the whole of the peninsula. I hope that, under the line "Extension and Information Services", which has an increase in funding, this situation may be rectified.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: I appreciate the position regarding the absence of an animal health adviser in the region referred to by the honourable member. Consideration is being given to a replacement from our own departmental resources.

Mr. Blacker: For stationing in Port Lincoln?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: Yes.

Mr. Blacker: What involvement has the department had in the preparation of attacks or counter-attacks on the Animal Liberation Movement? I ask this question because at least one seminar on this matter which I attended has been held at the Waite Institute. My primary concern is that the interests of the animal production industry are fully represented. I will not tolerate cruelty to animals, but by the same token I think the whole exercise of intensive husbandry in pigs or poultry, which are the first two sections that appear to have been singled out, should be looked at in a realistic manner. I think it is only fair to say that an animal living under stress conditions will not produce, and for an animal to produce it has to be in an ideal situation and have suitable accommodation.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: I had the pleasure recently of meeting Miss Townsend representing the Animal Liberation Group in the Eastern States. I understand that the group's activities are much more brisk there than they are in South Australia. I asked a number of questions about alleged objectives that that organisation is considering, and I am pleased to report that she tended to back off from some of the objectives I understand were being promoted. It is clear, in my view, that we need to monitor carefully the activities of any group that seeks to interfere unduly with the practices of our primary industry. I do not want to go into details of their objections to the debeaking of birds, or to the methods of docking lambs' tails, castrating calves, and so on, which they apparently canvassed, but it is obvious to me from talking to her and one or two people who have experienced an

invasion by that group into their ordinary good management practices that we need to be conscious of its activities.

I have been reminded of this by the United Farmers and Stockowners Association as well as by the member for Mallee and others. In recent times I have been reminded by my colleague (the Hon. Ian Smith, in Victoria) of the importance of keeping abreast of the Animal Liberation Movement. He claims that in that State the movement has interfered unduly in good management practice. As far as this State is concerned, I believe that the liaison and relationships amongst our farmers, the department, and the R.S.P.C.A. are good and that a balance of good sense has been observed.

I assure the member that, if any aspect of interference with our primary industry management practices is forthcoming from the Animal Liberation Movement or any other movement of that type, my position will be one of protection and support for the rural sector. I am satisfied that practices in the rural sector have developed over the years and have become sound and humane. To suggest that we give local anaesthetic to a lamb before cutting it for castration, docking its tail, or mulesing its backside, or whatever else, is unreasonable and a procedure that the stock industry could not tolerate.

I have spoken on this matter with Christina Townsend, and I believe that she appreciates the position. I have told her that, if she or any representatives of the organisation are in South Australia and wish to discuss animal management with officers of our department, they are welcome to do so. The opportunity for consultation is there. The opportunity for confrontation has not developed in this State and, hopefully, it will not develop.

Mr. Blacker: I take up the point raised by the member for Mallee regarding the Rural Youth Movement. I have great sympathy for the movement and view with concern the fact that the Government has seen fit to reduce the provision to a small figure, bearing in mind that it takes in the Women's Agricultural Bureau and the Advisory Board of Agriculture. A few years ago 10 employees were involved in the movement, and I think this provision is an indication of how the movement has been scaled down.

The Minister's impression of the movement appears to be that it is a social organisation. I suggest that he become more involved in rural youth. I am involved on a fairly regular basis, several times a year, in debating, competitions, stock judging, and activities of that kind. To refer to the organisation as being principally social (I think they were the words used) is a wrong assessment.

I notice that the overall figure for "Total Salaries" on page 69 of the Estimates has been reduced by about \$500 000. Can the Minister say whether there will be any reduction in service as a result of that? I acknowledge that some of these moneys are charged to other accounts.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: Regarding the funding for rural youth, about \$6 250 has been provided, as against \$8 000 last year. That relates only to travelling, and the figure proposed is considered adequate for the purpose in the coming year. However, the actual total financial input, by our department anyway, is nearer \$30 000, with the head office staff assistance that is provided to the movement. As well as that, as the regional centres have been developed around the State (and recognition of those has been given today), Rural Youth has access to advice, assistance and guidance. I believe that the movement is starting to use that service. I know of officers attached to regional centres who have a keen interest in Rural Youth, as has the local member for Eyre.

Before we get too carried away about how much money should be provided in a direct sense to Rural Youth, we

should have regard to the basis on which the movement operates, that is, with a spirit of independence and freedom of choice, the development of individualism, and so on. I cannot repeat, off the cuff, the aims and objectives, but they are along the lines of individualism and development of the members. I think that that principle should be observed, with the movement not being totally funded for all financial requirements.

Regarding the provision for salaries, the overall reduction under the item "Total Salaries" of about \$500 000 included \$391 415 from the provision that previously applied to fruit fly eradication. Whilst nothing was provided in 1979-80 for fruit fly eradication, the \$391 415 was required, and it was made available. It is not provided for this year, hence it reduces substantially, by nearly \$400 000, the figure mentioned by the member.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: It will be forthcoming if you need it?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: Yes, it has been before and it will be available if required in the future.

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

Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Forests,
Miscellaneous, \$5 431 000

Chairman:

Mr. E. K. Russack

Members:

Mr. Lynn Arnold
Dr. B. Billard
The Hon. J. D. Corcoran
Mr. J. Mathwin
Mr. J. K. G. Oswald
Mr. I. Schmidt
Mr. J. P. Trainer
The Hon. J. D. Wright

Witness:

The Hon. W. E. Chapman, Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Forests.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr. J. C. McColl, Director-General, Department of Agriculture.
Mr. N. J. Cooke, Superintendent, Administration, Country Fire Services.
Mr. P. R. Harvey, Director, Department of Agriculture.
Mr. J. C. Potter, Director, Department of Agriculture.
Dr. J. Radcliffe, Leader, Policy Planning Unit, Department of Agriculture.
Mr. G. Della, Acting Accountant, Department of Agriculture.
Mr. P. M. Barrow, Director, Department of Agriculture.
Mr. G. J. Inns, Chairman, South Australian Meat Corporation.

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

Department of Agriculture, Capital Purposes generally,
\$200 000

Chairman:

Mr. E. K. Russack

Members:

Mr. Lynn Arnold
Dr. B. Billard
The Hon. J. D. Corcoran
Mr. J. Mathwin
Mr. J. K. G. Oswald
Mr. I. Schmidt
Mr. J. P. Trainer
The Hon. J. D. Wright

Witness:

The Hon. W. E. Chapman, Minister of Agriculture and
Minister of Forests.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr. J. C. McColl, Director-General, Department of
Agriculture.
Mr. N. J. Cooke, Superintendent, Administration,
Country Fire Services.
Mr. P. R. Harvey, Director, Department of Agriculture.
Mr. J. C. Potter, Director, Department of Agriculture.
Dr. J. Radcliffe, Leader, Policy Planning Unit,
Department of Agriculture.
Mr. G. Della, Acting Accountant, Department of
Agriculture.
Mr. P. M. Barrow, Director, Department of Agriculture.
Mr. G. J. Inns, Chairman, South Australian Meat
Corporation.

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

Woods and Forests Department, Advances for Capital
Purposes, \$4 500 000

Chairman:

Mr. E. K. Russack

Members:

Mr. Lynn Arnold
Dr. B. Billard
The Hon. J. D. Corcoran
Mr. J. Mathwin
Mr. J. K. G. Oswald
Mr. I. Schmidt
Mr. J. P. Trainer
The Hon. J. D. Wright

Witness:

The Hon. W. E. Chapman, Minister of Agriculture and
Minister of Forests.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr. P. M. South, Director, Woods and Forests
Department.
Mr. D. M. Curtis, Assistant Director, Administration
and Finance.

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: The lines indicate some

impressive figures anticipated for the coming year for the
Woods and Forests Department in regard to the marketing
and commercial operations of the department. Indeed,
there are two different sets of figures that need
clarification. From the Loan Estimates, the allocation for
harvesting and marketing of logs has increased from an
actual figure of about \$6 900 000 to about \$9 500 000 and
the allocation for commercial operations has increased
from an actual figure of about \$21 800 000 to about
\$23 100 000. In the programme papers we see an increase
under the log sales line from about \$14 600 000 to about
\$17 300 000. I would be interested to know how much of
the increase that appears in the programme papers is due
to increased royalties and how much is due to increased
throughput.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: I appreciate the question
that has been raised and I would like to take a couple of
minutes to explain the financial structure of the Woods
and Forests Department and set out the form of accounts,
because the department is quite unique in its funding, as it
is a revenue-raising department.

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: I rise on a point of order. I do not
wish to make too much issue about the uniqueness of the
Woods and Forests Department; I have asked a question
and there will be an opportunity for the Minister to outline
the unusual funding nature of the Woods and Forests
Department. Only 25 minutes is left and, doubtless, other
questions will be asked. I believe that the Minister should
keep to the question I asked to expedite matters.

The CHAIRMAN: There is no point of order. The
member for Salisbury has asked a question and the
Minister has the right to answer as he sees fit. I can only
appeal to members of the Committee who are asking
questions and to the Minister to be as brief as possible.

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: I aim to be as brief as
possible, but in regard to questions that relate to funding
of this department essentially, I believe that the
Committee should be informed of the financial structure
of the department in relation to the several papers that are
before us, and in reviewing the programme papers, for
example, of the Woods and Forests Department, I believe
that it would be more than useful for me to briefly outline
the effects of the different funding methods employed by
the department in order to tie the statements in the
programme papers to the Budget papers, namely,
Parliamentary Papers Nos. 7, 9, and 11. I agree that the
papers are not consistent in their detail.

Members would be aware that the department generates
income principally from the sale of logs and saw-milled
products, and I will come to that in answering the question
raised. This income is sufficient to meet all operating
expenses of the department and, in addition, it provides a
contribution to the State's Consolidated Revenue to meet
the interest on borrowings from both the State and Federal
Governments. All of the above transactions are recorded
through what is known as the Government's working
account, or an ordinary trading account, as would apply in
a commercial business. Members would also realise that
the department is involved in a continuous programme of
capital expenditure both in its sawmilling and forestry
operations.

To fund the purchase of plant, equipment, buildings and
mobile plant, etc., the department borrows from the State
Loan programme. As mentioned earlier, such borrowings
attract interest and involve repayment of the principal
over a period. In the meantime, I have had my officers
seek to deal with a specific question raised by the
honourable member. The difference between the two log
sales figures referred to on page 423 of the programme
budgeting papers incorporates a larger diameter and

volume constituting some 91 per cent of the difference, and the actual royalty rate increase of 9 per cent from 1 July 1980 constitutes the balance of the difference between those two figures.

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: The Minister seems to have said that there will be an increased volume of pulpwood sold in the coming financial year. Where is it anticipated by the department and the Minister that those sales will be made? Is it anticipated that they will take place in the export sphere or the national sphere?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: It is anticipated that there will be an increase in saw-logging as well as pulp-logging progressively from our resources.

As to the other part of the question, the increase is expected to arise from local use and export use. I think it is appropriate to call on the Director to answer that. He will have more technical detail as to the breakdown that may be anticipated.

Mr. South: There will be a moderate increase in sawlogging sales. There will be increases in pulpwood which, it is almost certain, will be processed domestically. The final market price of the product is not yet definable but that which is used in the State now will constitute more than 50 per cent and has the same marketability as the finished product on export markets.

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: The question of pulpwood sales on the international market is one that engages the Parliament's attention quite a bit, given the events that have taken place this year or, indeed, since the last election. We have had much mention of Punalur, especially associated with Punwood, and various episodes that the Minister has gone through. I am surprised that it is anticipated that there will be increased sales. What is anticipated for increased sales and how is the international price anticipated to hold out for this product in the coming 12 months?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: As the honourable member's question relates to matters raised in the House, I feel obliged to answer it broadly, and on technical details I will refer the question to one or both of my staff. There has been a fair bit of discussion about our round log products and about what is desirable for pulping. I think the honourable member knows the history of events that have taken place as explained in the House. I might say that currently there is a very extensive interest in the purchase and processing of round logs; a number of Australian and international-based companies—in fact some 30-odd applications have been received by our department—have shown interest in this very resource. We anticipate that a considerable number will ultimately make a submission to the Government for consideration as to whether they are parties with whom we are to deal in the future.

Hopefully, the one selected, or the combination of companies selected, will be in a position to install facilities in the South-East, which will not only receive and process our product but also will create the degree of employment that we need in that region. As far as the price on the international market and the future price of pulp products is concerned, I am not in a position to forecast. However, my Director or finance officer may be in a position to do so. The indications I have observed since becoming very interested in the subject of timber resources show that the price has stabilised over recent weeks and it may even come back from the extreme level that is prevailing at present.

The honourable member will be aware of the marked incline in the price of timber generally and pulp products in particular over the last 12 months or so. It is evident from the information I have received that the price has

levelled out in recent times. I say that simply as conveying what I understand to be the position from those with whom I have had contact. As for saying whether it is going to go up or back, substantially or marginally in the future, I will leave to Mr. South.

Mr. South: The situation is that there are a number of different products that could be produced with the quantity of pulpwood currently for sale, and the behaviour of prices for the different commodities produced could be quite different. For example, the price of wood chips on the international market fluctuates violently. The price of pulp does not fluctuate nearly as much. There are several types of pulp. In fact, the sale of the wood likely to be made early in 1981 stabilises all this by the sale of the wood at a royalty value to a processing company. It is not certain at this point of time what that processing company will do, as it has not been chosen yet.

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: With regard to the future, I made the comment last night to the Minister of Fisheries and I make it again about the need for future analysis of pricing commodities, because it is an important area to go into. It seems that the responses that I have had so far indicate that there is not that much investigation or research into that area. I am fully aware that no-one can predict what prices will be paid for wood chips, pulp or whatever in the years ahead, but there are methods of scientific analysis that we have to hand whereby we can at least hone down the range of prices that we are likely to face and have a reasonable indication of the trends that are going to take place. I appreciate the comments that have been given in that area.

It has been mentioned that there are some 30 applicants presently indicating interest to the department to take over the project that lapsed early this year. The project was to proceed earlier this year. It would have created some 500 or so jobs in the South-East. I would like to know what delay is anticipated in the creation of those jobs by any new proposals that might come before the Government of an identical or somewhat different nature. How much longer will it take for those jobs to come into existence?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: The figure of about 500 jobs was mentioned by the representative of Punalur Paper Mills as an estimate of what would be required, directly and indirectly, if he proceeded with his unit. We cannot tell at this stage precisely which of the applicants will be the successful tenderer (if that is a fair term to use), nor can we determine precisely which form of processing and or pulping or further processing they may choose to install. To say at this stage that there is going to be the same number employed in a future plant to be installed would really be quite a wild comment to make. Incidentally, regarding the figure of 500 employees anticipated to be needed at those premises, our people estimate that to operate that proposed plant effectively a figure nearer 300 employed directly and indirectly would be closer to the mark.

However, that is a matter of history. We are interested to hear from those persons who have shown an interest in the matter and sought from us some sort of detail as to what we have in mind regarding quantities of wood for sale and the period over which that supply will be available. More than 30 persons or companies were in this category, and a number of those have indicated that they will work up their submissions. However, that detail is yet to be released publicly, and I do not intend to go into it at this stage.

Mr. LYNN ARNOLD: The real crux of my question was not so much the number of jobs (I appreciate that the 30 applicants are applicants for information) but when we can

expect those jobs to come into existence. I realise that these people may have a wide range of jobs that they expect the scheme to provide. How long will the delay that has occurred for various reasons hinder the creation of the jobs in this project?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: We are now moving into the technical area of how long it takes to install the plant, how much it can produce, and so on. I do not want to give the impression that I am passing the buck to officers, but I believe in these circumstances that it is important that the expertise of the Director on this subject should be called upon.

Mr. South: Regarding employment, about 50 per cent of the employment envisaged in the previous project was connected with the harvesting part of the operation. This will remain the same; only the numbers involved in the. However, in regard to the delay in employment of people to do this, we will be back in the same position, although perhaps a firmer position, by the end of February 1981 than the position that we were in at the end of August 1980. So, the delay is seven months before we are back in the same position, although, as I have said, the position will be firmer, as will the job potential.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I congratulate the Director, his departmental officers and their predecessors on the excellent work that has been done in building up this magnificent organisation to the standard that it has now reached. Is the Minister impressed with the operation, and has he any intention of following the philosophy expounded by his Party of selling off any of this operation to private enterprise?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: I am impressed with the achievements of the Woods and Forests Department over its years of operations and, like the member for Hartley, have pleasure in endorsing that view. In fact, I have conveyed it to the officers when it has been appropriate to do so. I recognise that on the 74 000 hectares of forests that we have in the South East we produce a tremendously valuable resource and, within the framework of the Government's policy in relation to the Woods and Forests Department, I assure the Committee that we have not considered selling off to private enterprise our woods and forests operation. We recognise it as a State resource, and we appreciate its current, and indeed potential, value.

There are within the department functions that I believe ought to be constantly under review, as should apply in a private sector operation. However, the general principle still stands of retaining our forests as an asset of the State. On the brief experience that I have had so far, they should be preserved.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: What about the milling operations?

The Hon. W. E. Chapman: I see them as part of the overall woods and forests operation. Growing the trees is one thing. Milling, and accordingly employing the labour to mill, is, from my observations, running pretty successfully. I do not have any complaints about that side of the operation. However, I intend to examine the marketing side of our product. We have, as the member for Hartley, a former South-Easterner recognises, a wide range of marketing involvement. It is not that I am not satisfied with the department's function in relation to this role, but we should be looking at it, if for no other purpose than properly to understand it, and to appreciate whether it should remain the department's function to market its own product. I appreciate that some of the marketing is done via agencies within and outside the State. Because of the massive amount of material that is growing, harvested and marketed each year, it is important that we ensure

that the marketing operation is as carefully and effectively run as it can be.

Mr. Blacker: Has the department any plans to upgrade the facilities at the Wanilla forest? I understand that some sizeable equipment has been delivered there in the past two years. However, it has never really been set up or become operational. Although I have not inspected the area, I have been given to understand that this equipment is not operational. It has the potential to provide a reasonable output and labour for at least four or five additional personnel. Also, there is a sizeable demand for preserved fence posts and that type of product. I can appreciate that the marketing operation at Wanilla may be somewhat limited, but certainly the fence posts and log type of operation can become a larger venture than it is at present.

I have in my possession a table giving details of the operations of the Woods and Forests Department operation at Wanilla. It deals with the plantation areas, softwood and hardwood areas, native forest, and unplanted land, and gives statistics on the volume of sales production and intake. As the information is of a statistical nature, I seek leave to have the table inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

NOTES ON WANILLA FOREST RESERVE OPERATIONS

Plantation Areas	hectares
Softwoods	71
Hardwoods	351
Native forest and unplanted land	210
Total Area	632
Age Distribution	
Softwoods	1957-1975
Hardwoods	1890-1980
Statistics 1979-80	cubic metres
Volume of Sales	201
Production	165
Intake	176

Note:

Pine SQ VI or lower. Say average 10m³ per hectare p.a. total yield. (Output now could be up to 6 000 posts if suitable production and marketing can be developed).

Manpower: Officer in charge plus four is standard and unlikely to change in the foreseeable future. Currently there is only officer in charge and three.

Hardwood: The current output could be doubled if satisfactory markets were found, and this would not affect labour markedly in the near future. Wanilla development under review.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Mathwin): The questioning on this vote is concluded.

Environment, \$9 789 000

Chairman:

Mr. E. K. Russack

Members:

Dr. B. Billard
Mr. G. J. Crafter
Mr. I. P. Lewis
Mr. J. Mathwin
Mr. H. H. O'Neill
Mr. J. K. G. Oswald
The Hon. R. G. Payne
Mr. K. H. Plunkett

Witness:

The Hon. D. C. Wotton, Minister of Environment and Minister of Planning.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr. P. W. Ellyard, Director-General, Department for the Environment.

Mr. G. R. Inglis, Acting Deputy Director-General.

Mr. N. H. Johnson, Acting Director, Administration and Finance.

Mr. K. W. Lewis, Chairman, Implementation Steering Committee, proposed Department of Environment and Planning.

Mr. R. K. Paech, Acting Chief Administration Officer, National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Mr. N. P. Newland, Superintendent of Field Operations, National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Mr. L. Djordjevic, Acting Accountant.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Mathwin): I declare this vote open for discussion. The member for Mitchell.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: In his Budget speech the Premier stated:

In preparing this Budget, the Government has paid considerable attention to . . . these elements. In respect to Revenue Account, it has had all departments and relevant statutory bodies examined carefully:

Certain factors are then listed, including "savings which might be made". Can the Minister tell the Committee whether any such savings were made in the Department for the Environment as a result of the review, and in what areas those savings were made?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: The department and I, as Minister, looked closely at areas where we could cut down expenditure. We also looked at areas of responsibility that perhaps should not be with the department. Two such areas were public golf courses (in particular, Belair golf course) and caravan parks which were under the management of the National Parks and Wildlife Service. They are the two main areas that our committee thought should be looked at in regard to savings of cost and manpower. At this stage I can report to the Committee that we are still looking at that procedure and at how we can pass over some of those responsibilities. We have set aside six months (and that period will expire at the end of the year) to examine how we can carry out that procedure. We believe we can make a substantial saving through passing over the responsibility of those areas involving the golf course and caravan parks.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: The period mentioned when those activities will occur is in the current six months, whereas the quote that I read to the Committee was in the past tense and indicated that examination had already taken place and that savings had been made. I take it that the answer to my question is that no savings were made on the examination carried out in the department in connection with the Budget document to which I have referred.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I believe that the request was made that we should look at how we can cut savings in the current financial year. That is how I answered the question.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: Can the Minister say what steps at his instigation have been taken in the department to carry out the election promise of the Liberal Government that expenditure would be strictly controlled and managed, and that low-cost government would apply if the Liberal Party was elected?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: The best answer I can give is that I have looked closely at the proposals that have been put to me as Minister by various divisions in my

department. I have been most conscious of the need to continue the management in areas that I believe, as I said earlier, should be the responsibility of the department, and the question I have just answered related particularly to that matter. We have also found it necessary, because of the financial situation, to make cuts; for example, I had a proposal before me when I came in as Minister to spend \$3 300 000 on the Thorndon Park project. I found it necessary to reduce that expenditure to \$1 800 000. I felt that that was one area where we could cut down in expenditure. Generally, I have tried to look at all proposals that have come before me to make sure that we can reduce costs wherever possible.

Mr. LEWIS: My question could be related to the whole of this vote, or to the very first line. I would like to know what the Minister or his officers use by way of criteria or yardsticks to determine which projects they will fund and the extent to which they will be funded from public revenue. Is any attempt made to quantify benefits that accrue from the costs incurred in any project? If it is, how are they determined? If it is not, why not, and is it simply a matter of plucking figures out of the air and attaching them to projects that seem to be popular?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I am pleased to say that soon after coming to office I requested a meeting with the divisional heads and other officers of the department to look at the matter of priorities within the department. It was a joint effort to look, first, at priorities and, secondly, at how we could best carry out the policies of the Government. We had a couple of meetings to do just that. Also, officers of the department had discussions with a view to their presenting me with a list of priorities so that we could determine exactly in which areas we were going to look at funding first and how we were going to look at priorities over the next 12 months. I regard that as being essential. As the honourable member and I believe the Committee would appreciate, the responsibilities of the Department for the Environment are diverse: it is a wide portfolio. With the resources available, it is vitally important that we look at priorities and continue to look at them and monitor exactly what we are doing in the department. I have wanted to make that a continuing situation where we meet and look at priorities to make sure that we are sticking to them. It is extremely important that that should happen.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Mathwin): I would like to explain to the Committee that it is my intention to allow a member to proceed with his line of questioning before allowing another person to ask a question. I am entirely in the hands of members as to whether questions are on the same line.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: I would have appreciated your giving that ruling one or two calls earlier, because I was cut off in midstream in a line of questioning. Now you have made that clear to the Committee, I am sure we can work under those conditions.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: The member asked three questions which were not on the same subject. I am sorry if I broke his line of questioning. He will get the next call. The honourable member for Mallee.

Mr. LEWIS: What evidence was there of the previous Government's regard for a continuing review, if there was any review, of the priorities in any shape or form?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I cannot answer for the previous Minister. It was obvious that there was a change of direction in some areas. So far as priorities are concerned, I think that that would depend entirely on the Minister who had responsibility at the time. I certainly made it my business, as soon as I could after coming into office, to look closely at the priority situation. We are in

the process of setting up a management information system whereby, in fact, we will be relating closely our budgeting programme to the priorities we have. For the Committee's information, I will invite Mr. Johnson to explain to the Committee just how that system will work.

Mr. Johnson: The department has investigated and implemented a fairly detailed financial information system. The department investigated the various means of controlling its financial resources via a consultant. Ultimately, we established a detailed system for monitoring expenditure by divisions and costing by activities and functions, which to some extent anticipates the programming and budgeting system currently being implemented by the Treasury Department.

The department was most concerned about the ways and means of achieving such a system, being a small department and not having computer or other resources, or similar high level resources to those normally associated with large departments. As such, we were the first department to implement the Public Service Board's new common accounting and reporting system, which is a computer system common to all Government departments and which allows the close monitoring of expenditure against Budgets on all lines that I have just described. Later, we looked at the need for controlling our expenditure and the time spent by our weekly-paid and salaried officer staff on field activities in the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Once again, we have to find means to do this for a small department. We had to go to a service bureau and adopt one of the very latest systems available in the world. I understand that we were the first organisation in South Australia to adopt this system, which is currently being perfected and which will enable us to report all those things one needs to report against the use of labour and salaried officers on activities and projects. At present we are perfecting our overall financial reporting system.

Mr. LEWIS: I thank the Minister and his officers for providing that information. I take it that the management information service established within the department is linked into the Public Service Board's proposed control unit, which will enable divisional heads, departmental heads and the Minister to apportion the value of dollars spent in each area more effectively than has hitherto been possible. Would that be a fair statement of the situation?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I suggest that that is the purpose for setting up the system. We believe it will do just that.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: I turn now to salaries provided under "National Parks and Wildlife Division". I remind the Minister that in a letter dated 7 July 1980 he referred to a question that had been raised in the Legislative Council concerning national parks officers, and he included a list of persons employed in the National Parks and Wildlife Division.

That list consisted of 84 staff members and 113 weekly-paid persons, a total of 197. However, in the Auditor-General's Report, under "National Parks and Wildlife" the figure of 208 is given and is qualified by the following note on page 89 of the report:

Includes Parks and Reserves Development Trust employees.

Can the Minister explain the apparent discrepancy in the figures? Over the years members have come to accept the Auditor-General's Report as being reasonably accurate.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: As far as the Auditor-General's Report is concerned, at the end of June 1980 the figure for staff employed is 202, and that is correct.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: The letter from which I am quoting is signed "David Wotton, Minister of Environ-

ment" and is dated 7 July 1980, seven days after the date on which the Auditor-General's Report was prepared, and the figure given in the letter was 197 persons.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I accept what the member is saying and I would like to have time to seek that information and bring it back.

Dr. BILLARD: I want to pursue a question raised by the member for Mallee about how priorities are being allocated in the department. I realise that the Department of Environment covers a lot of areas, all worthy of having State funds invested in them, but obviously the problems cannot be solved in one, five or 10 years. The department is concerned with gradually building up a heritage in many areas and in many ways, so I appreciate the difficulties.

I note substantial changes in many provisions in the Estimates. It seems to me that the items where there have been most changes are those that refer to operating expenses, minor equipment, and sundries. Under "Contingencies", there has been a big increase in the Co-ordination and Policy Division for operating expenses, minor equipment and sundries. In the provision for the National Parks and Wildlife Division, a similar item is described as "Improvements and General expenses incurred in normal operation and maintenance", and there is a sizeable increase.

In the Botanic Gardens Division there is a big increase in the provision for purchase of plant and equipment, and that description is a little more definitive. In the Projects and Assessments Division there is a big increase in the provision for operating expenses, minor equipment, and sundries. Can the Minister be a little more definitive as to why substantial increases in the vote have always tended to occur in those areas?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: In the Co-ordination and Policy Division, the increased provision for operating expenses reflects the transfer of the Relics Unit from the Projects and Assessments Division, and the substantial amount for field motor vehicle replacement follows the normal two-year replacement requirement. The major portion of the required amount is for the Relics Unit and includes \$24 000 carryover from the previous year.

Regarding the National Parks and Wildlife Division, the additional expenditure in 1979-80 arose from higher fuel costs. As we regionalise, this will become a greater problem. Also, the increase relates to travelling expenses and excess water charges, to name a few items. It is anticipated that this higher level of expenditure will continue into 1980-81, and the contingency cost of additional staff provided for the law enforcement function should be added.

Another significant expenditure is the operational cost of completing capital works from Loan and Trust funds in the previous year. In the Projects and Assessments Division, the amount is the provision for normal operating expenses, plus the air quality section. We are looking at a figure of about \$88 000 for that section, and there are the costs of publicity material on the vegetation clearance policy. At the beginning of this year I announced that the Government would be following up with this policy of providing incentives for private landholders to retain areas of native vegetation on their properties. It has been necessary to set aside a certain amount to advertise that and to provide pamphlets advising landholders how the scheme will operate and how they can be part of the overall scheme.

Regarding the Botanic Gardens Division, the provision for purchase of plant and equipment involves the replacement of obsolete plant. It has been necessary to look carefully at the plant we have under the National Parks and Wildlife Division. That has required a higher

than normal allocation on this line. Also, we are about to purchase a Bobcat. I understand that that machine is for clearing wooded areas and is to be used particularly in the Mount Lofty area. Also, a vibrating roller and a tractor have been purchased. So there has been a substantial increase in plant under that line.

Dr. BILLARD: I want to pursue the question of priorities. The Minister has reassured me somewhat on that score about the money occurring under those lines. One of the things he mentioned was that funds were being allocated to encourage others to conserve, rather than simply acquiring things magpie-fashion for the State's heritage and then having to look after them. One of the priorities that we should have is to work out what we have in the State.

I note with interest reference to the Ecological Survey Unit, albeit operating on a State-wide scale and therefore being limited regarding matters that it can pursue. I refer to page 436 of the programme papers which gives some detail of what the unit does. It seems that this sort of operation is vital and should rank high in our priorities, because we cannot hope to start conserving things that we want to conserve until we find out what we have got.

What is being done with this work? Is a high priority being given to it? I have had the pleasure of seeing that unit and what it does, as I am interested in the application of computers in that way, and I know that that unit operates within the department. Is the department looking at encouraging research institutions outside the department to do work in the same area and assist in establishing what is called in the programme papers a natural resource inventory, which is very important to the department?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I am glad that Dr. Billard has drawn the Committee's attention to the Ecological Survey Unit, which I agree does a splendid job. We have used the service provided by that unit. In the past it has carried out a very worthwhile and satisfactory survey on the unnamed conservation park¹ which, as the Committee will appreciate, is a very large area of land in the North-West of the State. Mr. John Douglas, the Director of that unit, has on a number of occasions shown slides and made presentations to the public explaining what has been done concerning that park.

The unit is at present also carrying out a survey at Balcanoona, which I believe will be most useful to management. It is also our intention to carry out a survey of the Coorong, which is another area, as the Committee will appreciate, of high sensitivity and people use. I believe that the work being done by the unit is indeed commendable.

To answer the second part of Dr. Billard's question, the department is currently looking outside for expertise in many areas. As Dr. Billard mentioned, because of the diversity of the department, it is possible for us to involve outside organisations and people with expertise. Mr. Inglis can comment on the LANDSAT Committee, which has been formed to include a number of Government departments.

Mr. Inglis: The committee that has been set up is called the South Australian Committee on Remote Sensing, its members comprising C.S.I.R.O. representatives and representatives from the tertiary institutions, as well as representatives of Government departments which are potential users of LANDSAT imagery. The committee has set up a substructure of subcommittees to look at the appropriate type of equipment that could be provided by Government and the facilities that could usefully be provided by C.S.I.R.O. and the tertiary institutions. It is the focal point for co-ordination between the State and Commonwealth Governments in respect of liaison on

LANDSAT activities, and it is the clearing house for ensuring that duplication of programmes within Government does not occur and, similarly, that duplication of equipment purchase does not occur.

As Dr. Billard will recognise, the equipment needed for LANDSAT analyses is very expensive. Both the training of imagery and the computer analyses require large computers, and it would not be sensible to provide a duplication of services across Australia. The Commonwealth Government took the initiative to make sure that these committees were set up in each State to try to avoid that type of duplication. That is as much detail as I would like to go into unless there are further questions.

Dr. BILLARD: There is one thing that I was interested in that the Minister has not really answered at this stage: that is, whether the department has considered sponsoring out work to outside organisations that would undertake research work. For example, I believe that the department could play a co-ordinated role in defining the priority areas of the State's resources that needed mapping to build up this natural resource inventory. I realise that the LANDSAT data is part of it but it is only one part of it. The discussion that has ensued over the Redcliff site highlights the need generally for us to be pursuing this on a State-wide level, whether or not we have any specific industrial development in mind.

For this reason I think the department could play a useful role in defining the areas that need research, not necessarily doing everything itself but parcelling the work out to other institutions, including universities, tertiary authorities, etc., and sponsoring the work and ensuring that it is done in that way.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I apologise for not answering that question. We are using outside organisations. We have worked closely in the past with C.S.I.R.O., for example, which has developed our computer programme for us, and we have found that to be a very successful working operation. We have also worked with the university on projects, but I believe that we need in the future to emphasise the benefit of environmental studies that can be carried out by outside organisations. We have looked very closely at the creation of the new Department of Environment and Planning so that we can set up the machinery to involve outside organisations much more than they have been in the past.

Mr. CRAFT: I refer the Minister to page 436 of the Estimates of Resource Allocation, from which I note that the Black Hill Native Flora Park management is concerned with the provision of resources to administer and manage the Black Hill Native Flora Park, which is established to promote and propagate native species that are useful to the community. Later, the following is stated:

The propagation and promotion of plants shown in the landscape feature are made available for sale to the public.

As part of this component, the park is involved in the propagation of hybrid varieties of the larger Australian species.

Is that, in fact, a correct description of the functions of that park management?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: The honourable member would probably be aware that I have been looking at whether that is one of the park's functions. In fact, only yesterday I organised a meeting and invited representatives of the Campbelltown council, the Black Hill Trust, the Nurserymen's Association and the National Parks and Wildlife Service to discuss this matter. I have said publicly that I did not believe that it was the role of the Department for the Environment to carry out this work. I have found that an agreement drawn up between the previous Government (when Mr. Broomhill was Minister)

and Campbelltown council provided that the commercial side of the nursery should continue. I therefore believe that it will continue.

Following yesterday's meeting, I want to look at some of the suggestions that were made. However, I believe that at present this is an accurate description of the function of the Black Hill Native Flora Park. I am concerned about the department's involvement in the commercial side of the nursery, and this is something at which I am still looking.

Mr. CRAFTER: I take it from the Minister's reply that there will be some reduction in sales at the park in the years ahead. Is that so?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: No. I have not said anything about a reduction in sales. In fact, I put to the meeting yesterday that, if the commercial side is to continue, it should continue at a rate of 150 000 plants a year. So, there will not be a reduction. During the past year, about 34 000 plants were sold from the Black Hill nursery.

Mr. CRAFTER: Can the Minister explain the increase of \$155 000 in the allocation for the Black Hill Native Flora Park management (shown on page 437 of the Estimates of Resource Allocation) over the figure for 1979-80? I notice that there is no anticipated increase in manpower, which remains at 26, or in the Loan figures. However, there is a substantial increase in management costs.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: An additional sum of \$105 000 has been provided for the salaries and wages of three officers and six weekly-paid employees, this having been funded previously through the Black Hill Native Flora Park Trust. As the Black Hill segment of the trust's development operation is now substantially complete, it is considered that it is no longer appropriate that operational costs should be allocated from those funds, which, I think the Committee will realise, are generally provided for development purposes. Also, in addition to that \$105 000 for wages, we are also looking at an increase of about \$50 000 for contingencies.

Mr. CRAFTER: If there is an increase of six in the staff, that does not show up in the manpower figures. Was there a reduction of six staff somewhere else?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: The manpower figures relate to the end of June, and the matter to which I have just referred is an ongoing matter.

Mr. CRAFTER: I take it, then, that the true manpower figure for 1980-81 is, in fact, 32.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: We have found that the figures in the programme papers relating to manpower have been taken on an average. However, we are working on the actual figures relating to the number of persons employed at 30 June.

Mr. CRAFTER: I refer to the comments that the Minister made regarding the meeting that he had yesterday. Various groups are interested in the future policy with respect to the Black Hill Native Flora Park. I noticed with some concern that the Minister excluded from the discussions (I am not sure whether it was done intentionally or unintentionally) the interests of consumers.

The Minister said that last year 35 000 plants were sold and that a level would be reached at 130 000 plants. I know from walking through my district how many people are planting native trees and are interested in this subject. Can the Minister explain the omission of representatives of these people from important meetings such as that which was held yesterday, and say whether in future some attempt will be made to include in such discussions the consumers of native plants and perhaps societies interested in the propagation of native plants?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I point out to the Committee that we have on the trust a representative of the Society for Growing Australian Plants; that person is a permanent member of the trust. Also, I have received representations from consumers, who have expressed concern about the possibility of the closure of this service. I refer to the work being done by the Botanic Gardens, for example. People are able to go there and observe or take note of plants that they like, and then go out and purchase them.

The same thing could happen regarding the Black Hill Nursery. The direct answer is that I have had representations from consumers and, as a member of the Black Hill Trust, we have a representative of the Society for Growing Australian Plants.

Mr. MATHWIN: I seek information regarding "Coast Protection Division" (which includes the board). The line "Director and General Staff" has been increased from an actual payment in 1979-80 of \$198 644 to \$205 000. Does it relate to an increase in salaries? In regard to "Coast Protection Division" (page 74) under "Purchase of motor vehicles" \$14 000 is allocated. Under "Purchase of plant and equipment" \$16 000 is allocated, and \$5 000 is allocated under "Purchase of office machines and equipment," making an overall total of \$21 000, yet a much smaller amount was allocated last year. What type of equipment is to be purchased? The Minister is aware that the operation of the board has been an interest of mine for many years, even before I came into this Parliament. I was a member of a seaside council and was on the original organisation that looked after the coast in those days. The recommendations of the Seaside Councils Committee many years ago probably initiated the present set-up. My deep interest in this matter is reflected in my concern about what appears to be an escalation of costs.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I appreciate the member's interest in the work of the board. Recently I invited members from both sides of the Lower House to attend a seminar in the department and look at the work of the Coast Protection Division and the board. I learned of the members who had districts bordering the coast and was interested to learn how many members in the Lower House represented districts bordering the coast. This is an important matter to all of those members.

Under "Coast Protection Division" the increase from \$198 644 to \$205 000 is not a significant increase and merely provides for the full year's cost of existing staff as at 30 June. The member then referred to the purchase of motor vehicles. Provision has been made for the cyclical replacement of motor vehicles, which generally works on a two-year interval. There is also an increase in the provision of office machines and equipment. This provides for the purchase of a graphics computer terminal. The line "Purchase of plant and equipment" provides for equipment which has been purchased and which will be purchased and includes a stereo zoom scope, which will be used for the easier identification of hazard areas along the coast. It is a significant piece of equipment and is much needed for the division.

Mr. MATHWIN: I do not expect the Minister to have an immediate reply to this question, but in regard to the \$14 000 allocated for the replacement of motor vehicles, how many vehicles will be replaced? Turnover is usually every two years or thereabouts, and it is rarely that the Government or local government experiences a loss in such matters, but \$14 000 would involve more than one vehicle unless it is intended to buy a Volvo, and I cannot imagine that the Minister would encourage the department to make such a purchase. I would be happy to receive that information later.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: Regarding the turnover period,

it relates either to a two-year period or a specific mileage, and in this case we are looking at the replacement of two vehicles.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: I refer to "Co-ordination and Policy Division" and the line "Director, Co-ordination, Policy, Heritage Unit Officers and Administrative Staff". Last year \$290 673 was spent yet \$471 000 is proposed for this year. The contingencies provision under the same heading also reflects a considerable increase. Probably no other line in the Budget this year has surprised me so much, especially in the light of the Minister's record before he became a member of the Government. When he was in Opposition and shadowing the portfolio that he now holds, the Minister was critical of the Co-ordination Policy Unit in the department and, more than once, he criticised the previous Minister roundly for establishing such an organisation and incurring expenditure in those areas. I can recall the member, as he then was, trying to make the point that there were more persons needed elsewhere and, perhaps to bolster his claim in support of that argument, he may have said perhaps more than he wishes to remember now about policy and co-ordination. It seems that now that the Minister is in the job he has had an opportunity to have a rethink of this area and sees the need for additional expenditure. I would appreciate any comments that he may have on the matter for the benefit of the Committee.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I would like to do that. I refer specifically to the lines referred to by the honourable member. First, under "Co-ordination and Policy Division" the line "Director, Co-ordination, Policy, Heritage Unit Officers and Administrative Staff" relates to the fact that during 1979-80 the 10 officers of the Relics Unit were transferred from the Projects and Assessments Division and were amalgamated with the Heritage Unit.

This, together with the appointment of the new Senior Heritage Officer, accounts for the variation in the proposed amounts for salaries and wages. The total amount includes the salaries of three Aboriginal rangers who were also included in this area of funding for the first time in mid-1979-80. "Operating expenses, minor equipment and sundries", under "Co-ordination and Policy Division", we see an increased provision which reflects, as I mentioned earlier, the transfer of the Relics Unit from the Projects and Assessments Division and the transfer of the motor vehicle replacement provision in accordance with the two-year vehicle replacement requirement. The major part of the increase involves the Relics Unit, including a \$24 000 carryover from the previous year. An additional vehicle is being provided for the new Aboriginal ranger.

As far as this general subject is concerned, I was critical in Opposition. I do not believe that it is necessary to have a separate division dealing with policy matters. In fact, with the new Department of Environment and Planning, we will be achieving co-ordination and policy by other means. In other words, there will not be a separate department dealing specifically with co-ordination and policy. I believe strongly that policy should be something that works up through the officers who are involved in the department and does not necessarily relate to a group of people who are set aside to look at just policy matters. I believe that under the new department we will be able to achieve a co-ordination policy through means other than the setting up of a division especially for that purpose.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: I congratulate the Minister for the brilliant flash of memory he has displayed. It is not often on this Committee so far that we have been able to get Ministers before the Committee to remember things they said last year or early this year. I appreciate that the

Minister has had what I might term the guts to own up to what he said on an earlier occasion. It does not go unnoticed amongst those of us who are spending this short sojourn in Opposition. I notice that the Minister has said that he proposes to do certain things by other means and that he does not believe in having a separate Co-ordination and Policy Division. Is he prepared to give the Committee a little further information on how he proposes to carry out this funding within the new amalgamated department?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I would like the Chairman of the steering committee of the new Department of Environment and Planning, Mr. Lewis, to answer that question.

Mr. Lewis: It has been the opinion of the reorganisation task force and the implementation steering committee, following a study of what the new department will do, that the development of policy which is in the final analysis a Government decision, anyway, should involve those people who are face to face with problems in the community and who see those problems, and that this experience should gradually build up through the organisation to the executive where the benefit can be obtained from all the senior people in the department and not from any one isolated policy unit which is not in day-to-day contact with the people affected by the policy. The new departmental structure at present does not contain a separate Co-ordination and Policy Division.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member for Newland.

Mr. O'NEILL: Mr. Chairman, I indicated my wish to ask a question about half an hour ago.

The CHAIRMAN: It has been the practice in this Committee, a practice that has worked very well, that the member who has the call has the right to pursue a question. Then we have adopted the procedure, which is fair to all, of going from side to side, a procedure I am now continuing.

Mr. O'NEILL: I was serious, Sir; I thought you might not have seen me indicate.

The CHAIRMAN: I have the honourable member's name on the list. The honourable member for Newland.

Dr. BILLARD: I would like to ask two small questions and one more substantial one. First, a comment was made by the Minister earlier relating to public golf courses and caravan parks, responsibility for which was being moved; I have looked through the papers and cannot find where it is going. Where will it be transferred? The member for Norwood, when discussing manpower, specified in relation to the Black Hill Native Flora Park management, at page 37 of the programme papers, what those manpower figures meant. I came away from that discussion a little more confused than when I went into it. As I understand the matter, the figures in those programme papers relate to 1979-80 and refer to averages throughout the previous year, whereas the proposed figure represents the actual number as at 1 July. Is that what the Minister is saying, that there were additional staff at the Black Hill Native Flora Park who are not reflected in those figures?

As I read it, that is the reason it is not reflected: the so-called proposed figures for 1980-81 refer to figures as at some time at the start of this financial year. If there was an increase in staff there cannot be the same average for both years. Thirdly, will the department's amalgamation lead to savings in overheads and administrative costs at staff and other cost levels, and, if so, how and where?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: Turning to the question of where the responsibility for caravan parks and golf courses is going, I have said in the House, and publicly, that we

would be examining just where the management of these areas could be placed. I have said earlier that I do not believe it should be the responsibility of the Department for the Environment to be managing golf courses and caravan parks.

We have found that it is a very complex issue. If, for example, we are looking at leasing a golf course out, whether to local government or private people, we experience difficulty in trying to come to a lease arrangement or a cost involved in leasing. We have set aside only until the end of the year to come up with the answers, and I believe, from the discussions we have had, only this morning, that we are well under way. The club that uses the Belair golf course, for example, has waited on me and put forward suggestions on how it may be involved in the management of that area.

There was a possibility that the golf course would be sold. I assure the Committee that that will not happen. It will be retained as part of the Belair park but it is necessary to look at who accepts responsibility for management. The next question related to Black Hill staff and I ask Mr. Johnson, the officer responsible for staffing, to explain the position.

Mr. Johnson: I understand that the proposed figures include the staffing as at 30 June, to which should be added any subsequent increases in staff. The figure of 26 has been referred to regarding staffing. The figures for Black Hill are: salaried officers 7, trust officers of a salaried nature 3, weekly paid officers 7, and trust officers of a weekly-paid nature 13, giving a total of 30. Black Hill is a project that is seen as escalating or changing all the time as far as labour is concerned, and at about that time an additional four men were engaged in one gang to proceed with the on-going project.

I am not clear about the overhead question but I refer back to the previous situation, involving a saving of \$155 000 in salaries and wages. The staffing situation remains the same. Staff previously funded from the trust are now being funded from revenue, which relates to these budgetary papers.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: The third question related to savings that could come as a result of the amalgamation of the two departments. One of the main reasons for the reorganisation is to overcome any duplication in effort that there has been in having two development control departments. I believe that we can improve areas or implement efficiency and effectiveness. We will do so in regard to South Australian Government policies in these areas. As a result, I believe, there will be significant savings financially and in manpower. I ask the Chairman of the steering committee, Mr. Lewis, whether he has anything to add.

Mr. Lewis: I have little to add. I think it is too early to quantify figures. We know that in some administrative areas, because of the amalgamation, there should be significant savings in the senior staff. There are other areas where activities are not being carried out in accordance with the Government's priorities or the levels of activity that would be seen as appropriate to the Government's policies. We have clear instructions that the staff ceilings for the new department certainly will be within the staff ceilings of the present departments.

The CHAIRMAN: We have been following a procedure that, where a question has been asked and the member wants to pursue answers to that question, I have allowed the member to ask several questions. I appeal to the Committee not to ask unrelated questions where that is unfair to other members. Any questions should be on one line. There should not be unrelated questions.

Dr. BILLARD: In relation to the amalgamation and the

possible efficiencies that may be achieved, it was mentioned that a management information system was operating in the Department for the Environment. Is the Department of Planning compatible with that? Would there be problems of administration in bringing them together?

Mr. Lewis: The present state of reorganisation is that we are in the process of completing stage 1, which comprises a conceptual organisation of the new department and the functioning of a management information system to support that department. We are about to start stage 2, which will include the design and installation of a comprehensive management information system but it will incorporate many features that have been developed already, particularly in the Department for the Environment. Features also would have been developed in the Department of Urban and Regional Affairs. The system will be comprehensive and integrated. It will be compatible with the new programme and the performance budgeting system being developed in the Treasury.

Mr. O'NEILL: I am concerned about the ruling you gave, Mr. Chairman, because I have been sitting here patiently waiting. I have four unrelated questions but they refer to what has gone before. I ask you to stop me when you think I am transgressing.

Has the Government any plans to limit the commercial activity of the Black Hill Trust, as far as plant sales are concerned, to that of being a wholesale supplier to commercial retailers?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I said earlier that I had indicated that, if it continued, we would apply a limit to production. I also indicated to the meeting that, in setting that limit, we might look at setting a percentage for wholesale purposes.

The CHAIRMAN: Is the honourable member's next question related to Black Hill?

Mr. O'NEILL: No.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member will get the call later.

Mr. LEWIS: I refer to the provision for contingencies in the National Parks and Wildlife Division.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: I rise on a point of order. I do not wish to cut across a member's right, but I was trying to obtain the call. My question relates directly to the answer that has just been given, and I think we had a deal on that procedure previously.

The CHAIRMAN: We have had some difficulty. We came to the understanding in the past couple of days that I would give a member a chance to pursue a question. If another member wished to follow up, I would give the call to the other side.

I think honourable members would understand that it would be possible for a member to take to up an hour on questions on one line. The honourable member for Mallee.

Mr. LEWIS: I got to the point of saying that I visited Tintinara on the weekend and met an old-timer who made the comment that the place was going to the dogs, and he meant that literally. He was referring to the increased danger to livestock, both sheep and calves, that resulted from attacks by dingoes that live in Ngarkat National Park. My question is in relation to the normal operation and maintenance of parks. Can the Minister give us any information on how we may solve this problem created by dingoes and, for that matter, other native animals that graze on the pastures of adjacent landholders' farms? Can the Minister give any indication of how the department proposes to deal with that problem of farmers' land adjacent to unallotted Crown lands? Can the Minister relate his remarks to the circumstances at present

prevailing around Ngarkat?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: The division certainly recognises the need to control the numbers of wild dogs. I recognise the member for Mallee's concern in this matter. As the Committee would appreciate, previously he has brought this matter to my attention by way of questions in the House, and I know that he has brought it to the attention of my colleague the Minister of Agriculture. I think the member for Mallee would appreciate that Mr. Chapman and I are working closely together to try to overcome some of the problems being experienced by landholders. We certainly recognise the need to control and cull wild animals. There is also a need in some areas to look more closely at providing adequate fencing. There has been a call from pastoralists for quite some time to look at the matter of fencing. With limited resources, it is not possible to start a major programme, but I recognise the problem that the honourable member refers to.

The National Parks and Wildlife Division is represented and now plays an important part on the Box Flat Dingo Control Committee. I have had some dealings with that committee, and I believe that it is doing an excellent job. I am very pleased indeed that there is co-operation between the National Parks and Wildlife Division, the landholders, and the council representatives on that committee. We are aware of this problem, and we intend to do all that we can to overcome the problems that landholders are experiencing, particularly in that area.

Mr. LEWIS: Is one of the options that the department is considering in this regard the provision of fencing materials to the adjacent landholders after he has entered into an agreement with the department to have the fence erected within a given acceptable time or otherwise pay for it, and then he provides the labour to erect the fence? I know the department only came to be the owner of a substantial part of the Ngarkat National Park barely 12 months ago—I think it was two days before the election (it was gazetted on the Wednesday after Cabinet met). An unallocated Crown land area suddenly became the responsibility of the Department for the Environment, and that area had never been fenced or managed before. The responsibility for the control of weeds and vertebrate pests had never been accepted by anybody in any Government department, and the landholders were frustrated.

At that stage they were not breaking the law to go into the unallocated Crown lands and shoot the animals, but now they may be. That is what I suspect will develop unless the department comes up with a fairly smart solution. I do not think it is entirely the responsibility of the department. I seek the Minister's opinion on what I have put to him. Is it one of the options being considered and, if it is, how far are we towards getting the solution for fencing the park?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: The National Parks and Wildlife Division has a fencing policy which meets some of the cost of fencing. It does not provide a dingo-proof fence because, as the member would appreciate, a special type of fencing is required, and coping with problems associated with dingoes is expensive. However, I shall be happy to take his suggestion on board so that the division can look at it and assess whether we are able to assist in that way.

Mr. PLUNKETT: I refer to the line "Terminal leave payments" on page 73 of the Estimates. Can the Minister tell me why the amount voted for 1979-80 was \$35 000 and the actual payments were as high as \$107 204?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: In 1979-80 we showed a substantial variation from the voted amount owing to resignations and retirements, including two staff officers

from the National Parks and Wildlife Division, one from Botanic Gardens Division, and the retirement of the Director of the Coast Protection Division. Unfortunately, the latter retirement came about as a result of ill health. There were also a number of weekly-paid employees' terminations. The 1980-81 figure includes provision for the retirement of the Director of the Botanic Gardens Division. As the Committee will appreciate, Mr. Noel Lothian, who has been Director of that division for many years, is to retire this year on Christmas Day.

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

Mr. PLUNKETT: I should like to go further in relation to the reply that the Minister gave me regarding the Black Hill Native Flora Park. I am very concerned regarding whether the Government still intends to sell to the public the native trees and plants that are grown there.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I have already said that I discovered that an agreement was reached between a former Government (of which Mr. Broomhill was Minister) and Campbelltown council.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: How long ago, and what was the term of the arrangement?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: No term was stated.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: So, it is in perpetuity.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: This matter has been brought to my notice. I have had discussions with Campbelltown council. Indeed, that is what yesterday's meeting related to. There are a couple of things on which I wish to check as a result of that meeting, and I will make a positive statement about this matter in the next few days.

Mr. PLUNKETT: I want to know whether the public will still be able to buy trees and plants from this park. Apparently, the Minister does not have that information.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: Yes, I have. I did not realise that that was the question. The public will still be able to purchase from the nursery.

Mr. PLUNKETT: Can the Minister say for how long this will continue, as the questions which I wish to ask and which follow from this concern valuable equipment? I have been to the area and looked at the whole complex over the past three or four years. For how long does the Minister intend that the public will be able to buy native trees from the Black Hill Native Flora Park?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I have already made the point that, although I am aware of the honourable member's concern about this matter, I will be making a public statement about this matter in a few days. I need to clarify a couple of matters following a meeting that I had yesterday with various groups interested in this matter.

Mr. PLUNKETT: I still need the same answers, which I am not getting. The Minister has said that he will be able to answer these questions in a few days. In the House, the Minister said that he did not consider that the Government should compete against private enterprise, and in this respect I refer to such firms as Lasscocks, for example. Indeed, the stuff that is grown at these places is not readily available in other areas around the State. That is why this place is so popular and why so many people go there to buy.

Mr. LEWIS: Have you?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Interjections are out of order.

Mr. PLUNKETT: I have done so. I have 52 trees around my small Housing Trust house, and many of those trees have been bought from this park at a minimum cost of 50c or 60c each. I am concerned that the people of Adelaide will be forced to buy trees at the exorbitant price of, say, \$3, \$5 or \$10, and that trees and shrubs will not be available.

Even though the Minister has said that he will give me a reply in a couple of days, I would like to know whether, if

the member for Mallee or I went out there and wanted to buy a certain native tree, it would be possible for us to do so and, indeed, for how long it would be possible.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I have already answered that point. If the honourable member wanted to go to the Black Hill park tomorrow, he would be able to make a purchase. He has already said that plants are available there at a reduced price.

Mr. PLUNKETT: Not at a reduced price: at a very low minimum cost.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I suppose that the prices charged at Black Hill are common prices. In fact, the only difference would be that some of the plants sold there are a little smaller than those available at private nurseries. However, I think that it is a fairly common price. There are a couple of things that I want to check, and I will be making a public announcement about this matter within a couple of days. I cannot say more than that at this stage.

Mr. PLUNKETT: The Minister has still not answered my further questions. I know the value of the special equipment that is at this park. Indeed, it is very expensive equipment, and I have asked what is to become of it. Will it be handed over to private enterprise at a minimum charge? Surely, the Minister can give some indication regarding the future of the place.

Discussions were held yesterday with Campbelltown council, and it is clear that what the Minister said in the Lower House would happen is not quite what will happen. When the Minister spoke in the House regarding the future of this park, he said that he did not think it should compete with private enterprise. However, there has been a change since yesterday's meeting. I suggest that one of the reasons for the change is the agreement which was made between the former Government and Campbelltown council but of which the Minister was unaware. I know that the park sells trees at a low cost, and the Minister has said that there is a difference in the size of the trees. If a person wants a native plant he will go out and get one. I could refer to Lasscocks—

Mr. Lewis interjecting:

Mr. PLUNKETT: Mr. Lasscock, to my surprise, is one of the people who has been put on the board. There is not one nursery around Adelaide where one can buy the product that is grown in the Black Hill Native Flora Park.

Members interjecting:

Mr. PLUNKETT: I do not think that the member for Mallee has any right whatever to interject with what is his stupid idea of a joke.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Interjections are out of order. The Chair will decide and control that part of proceedings. The member for Peake.

Mr. PLUNKETT: Can the Minister say whether it is true that since yesterday he has had a meeting with members of the Campbelltown council and other people? Has there been any discussion about the special equipment and other plant? None of the nurseries around Adelaide have such valuable equipment. I am referring to the specialised equipment that has been bought for such special purposes. The equipment is completely different from the equipment normally found in other nurseries, because in this nursery specific plants are grown.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: Obviously, the member for Peake is fairly confused about a couple of things. The member suggested that it was only yesterday during the meeting that I discovered that there was an agreement, but that is not the case. True, the matter was discussed yesterday with the council, with the Nurserymen's Association, with the trust and National Park representatives.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: When—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! It makes it difficult for *Hansard* and it is also difficult for supplementary questions to be asked.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: I will book the next call.

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot give the member the next call but I will put his name on the list.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I refer to discussions some weeks ago with the District Clerk of the Campbelltown council. He showed me copies of letters that had been sent between the previous Minister and the council. For the information of the Committee I clarify that it is not the Government's intention to sell off that equipment. Black Hill Native Flora Park is carrying out a useful operation in educating people, and it is carrying out a specialised responsibility in research and development. There is much that can be done in promoting our flora and fauna, and it is important that that should continue. I have no intention whatever of selling that equipment. Further, the member for Peake said that Mr. Lasscock was a member of the trust, to his surprise. I might say to the member and to other members who interjected at that time that I believe it is sensible to have a person appointed to the board who comes from an experienced family in nursery procedure and the nursery business, because the work that is carried out in an educational capacity and in research and development is to be commended.

It is only sensible that Mr. Lasscock should be on the board to help in that area, especially because of his experience. Again, to answer the member for Peake, I am not in a position, and it is not my intention at this stage, to say exactly what will be happening about Black Hill Native Flora Park. It is necessary for me to follow up a couple of matters that were brought to my notice yesterday. I have not had the opportunity to do so today, and I want to make those investigations before I make a definite reply.

Mr. PLUNKETT: The Minister has said that he cannot give me a definite answer about selling the equipment or whether he will give it to private enterprise—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Minister was definite.

Mr. PLUNKETT: He was definite to one extent. Does the Minister intend utilising the equipment? That is the question that is relevant. I know of cases involving departments where equipment has been shelved in cases where matters have been transferred to private enterprise and that equipment is no longer used. In regard to the Minister's statement about Mr. Lasscock, it is the young Mr. Lasscock who is involved and it is not the Mr. Lasscock who started the business originally. I have bought many plants from him and he does not know much about the products that we are talking about at all.

The CHAIRMAN: That is not relevant.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: The Minister brought it up.

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister said that there had been an appointment.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: He stated the name.

The CHAIRMAN: The name was first mentioned by the member for Peake in relation to a nursery. I feel that his eligibility or otherwise to be a member of the trust is not relevant and should not be debated.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: On a point of order, I ask you, Mr. Chairman, to re-examine the decision that you have just given. There is more than one line in this document referring to Black Hill Native Flora Park. Surely germane to any discussions before the Committee would be members of any group involved with the operations or persons working at such a park. To suggest that the member for Peake is not able to refer to a member of the trust, especially when that member has already been eulogised and spoken about by the Minister, would seem to be an unusual constriction of the debate which ought

not to be allowed to occur.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the member for his comment. I would like to say this: for the member for Peake and, indeed, for all of us, it is the first time that we have been in such a Committee. The member indicated that the line he referred to dealt with wages and terminal leave payments. That was the original question, but I did allow latitude because the member got straight on to the Black Hill Native Flora Park. I thought that the member, after a private discussion that we had, was going to talk about termination of employment at the park. I have allowed latitude, but the member has got away from the topic. Regarding the line "Director, Horticultural, Technical, Clerical and General Staff," yes, that is fair comment, and I appeal to members to come back to that matter.

Mr. PLUNKETT: This is the first time the Committees have met and, naturally, there is a lot of inexperience. I would like to be guided by your ruling, Mr. Chairman. The question I asked was on terminal leave payments. I am not trying to make any gains: I am concerned about the people employed at the park. The question I asked was a lead-up to the people who operate the equipment that is worth \$250 000. I know them personally and I have seen the plant. It is plant that not everyone can use. I am using the terminal leave item and associating it with the \$250 000. That amount could be connected with people involved in terminal leave.

The CHAIRMAN: I realise that, and that is why I have allowed it. I thought the member was asking a supplementary question to find out whether people would be receiving terminal leave payments.

Mr. PLUNKETT: The Minister has referred to the agreement with the Campbelltown council and to other things. Earlier he said that a person could go to the park, see a tree or plant, and obtain it. Did he mean that it could be obtained from the park or that a person would then have to go to one of the nurseries in the Adelaide area and buy it? I have been to the park over the past four years and have studied the equipment. It is specialised equipment. Will the people operating the plant continue as Government employees, or will they be farmed out to private contractors, as happened in the Highways Department and the Engineering and Water Supply Department?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I appreciate the member's concern. It is not our intention to dispose of the equipment. I have looked at it and I know the type of equipment that it is. There is expensive equipment there. Also, I will say that people will not be moved from that area. I have already said that they certainly will not be farmed out to work for private enterprise nurseries, or anything like that.

I have told the Committee of the work that they are doing there in educating people and in the research and development areas. It is my intention that that will happen. I have recently received a report on alternative uses for the equipment and for the nursery, whether we continue commercially or not. I repeat that the Government has no intention of selling the equipment or putting off anyone working on it, because we recognise the need to retain the facility for educational research and development purposes, as well as perhaps the commercial area.

The CHAIRMAN: This will be the last call for the honourable member for Peake. I ask him to appreciate that he has had 26 minutes of questioning, which is a reasonable time.

Mr. PLUNKETT: I do not think the Minister has answered the question about which I am concerned. He agrees that the equipment is specialised. It could not be

used anywhere except in that nursery. Is the equipment still being used, or has it been mothballed until the Government, the council and the people on the board decide what will happen? I saw Highways Department bitumen plant worth \$1 000 000 that had been reconditioned more than 12 months prior to the election, and it was given to private enterprise.

I know that I am getting away from the matter under discussion, but any person who stands on his feet for taxpayers is concerned. What happens to the men is important, but what happens to the equipment is also important. Is the equipment being used, are the men who have been operating it still employed on that, or what has happened to them?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: The equipment is being used and being used to the same capacity as it has been, as far as I know. The operation has not been reduced in any way. Regarding employees, I have pointed out to the Committee that the people employed in that operation are still employed.

Mr. OSWALD: There probably is a simple explanation to my question. There is provision under the Coast Protection Division for the transfer to the Coast Protection Fund of \$100 000. This amount is transferred to the fund each year, and the fund is large, standing at \$706 000. I am curious to know why, in a time of restraint, we continue to transfer this amount.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: That money is used as a supplement to capital funds and is used for development work carried out by the Coast Protection Division.

Mr. OSWALD: Would it have restricted the work of the division if that grant had not been made this year?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: Yes, it certainly would have restricted development work.

Mr. O'NEILL: I refer to coast protection, and I was interested in the last reply. I note that the amount for "Operating expenses, minor equipment and sundries" is increased by nearly \$5 000 on the sum actually spent last year, that the transfer to the Coast Protection Fund has been maintained. My question relates to the possibility of an oil pipeline under the sea from the north of Adelaide to Port Stanvac. Has the department committed any funds to an assessment of the environmental impact in that area? If so, what funds have been committed to this exercise, and what dangers are foreseen by the department?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I will ask the Acting Deputy Director to answer that. Mr. Inglis, previously Acting Director of Projects and Assessments, was responsible for that area.

Mr. Inglis: The department has not devoted any specific funds to that assessment but it is well aware of that proposal. It would normally carry out that assessment within the funds voted to the Projects and Assessments Division. The second part of the question related, I think, to the dangers foreseen, and that would be the possibility of rupture and leakage of the contents of the pipeline and the necessary contingencies arrangement that would have to be made to contain such a spill.

Mr. O'NEILL: Can the Minister say what amount would be necessary to carry out a study of sufficient magnitude to alert the Government to the dangers?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I will ask Mr. Inglis to answer that.

Mr. Inglis: Without giving the amount in money terms, it would be about two to three man weeks of work.

Mr. O'NEILL: Could that be converted to money terms, because that is what it is all about?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I suggest that that information is not available, and I do not think that it is the sort of answer that I should give off the top of my head. However,

I will make that information available for the honourable member. The figure of \$5 000 has been suggested, but I would like time to clarify that.

Mr. O'NEILL: I refer again to coast protection, including environmental protection and specifically pollution control. Concerning the sum set aside by the Environment Department to investigate the dangers that may accrue from the establishment of a uranium treatment plant in any coastal area of South Australia, I should like to know what studies have been undertaken and what is the likely cost of those studies.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: Again, I will ask Mr. Inglis to answer that, as it is important that the information be provided. Also, Mr. Inglis is the representative of the department on the Uranium Enrichment Committee, and he should be given an opportunity to answer the question.

Mr. Inglis: The investigations into the environmental impact of the uranium enrichment plant are being carried out in two stages. As the proposal is only in the feasibility consideration stage, no specific assessment of any site has been carried out, although an assessment of the technology has been carried out by the department in the last year. No money or time has, therefore, been allocated to complete that study, since it is over. However, there is an allocation, again, within the general manpower planning of the Projects and Assessments Division for updating that study during the following year. That work is being carried out by two officers and, again, would probably involve three to four man weeks, amounting to about \$5 000 or \$6 000 expenditure for this year.

Mr. O'NEILL: I refer to page 443 of the programme papers: under the heading "Environmental Awareness and Education Programme", how much has been allocated by the department for the purpose of alerting or educating the people of South Australia to a state of awareness if—

Mr. LEWIS: I rise on a point of order. What has the question got to do with the coast protection vote?

The CHAIRMAN: I am waiting to hear the full question before I determine that.

Mr. O'NEILL: Thank you, Sir. You show much more perspicacity than the member for Mallee. In view of the recognition by the department of dangers possibly inherent in the oil pipeline and the handling of radioactive material in uranium treatment plants, I am asking how much has been allocated to educate the public to an appropriate state of awareness of any possible dangers to the environment in South Australia.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: No specific sum has been set aside for that exercise, but I point out that with any environmental assessment carried out there would be the period made available for public participation, as has been the case with the Redcliff project or any other assessment carried out. On the question of what we are doing to educate people and to find out how people are thinking about these matters, the department has just recently carried out a community awareness study on environmental matters generally and particularly in relation to environmental protection. That has been a very wide study over a large cross-section of the State, and that will help us a great deal to understand the thoughts of the community in these areas. As regards public involvement, that would apply as part of any environmental protection assessment.

Mr. O'NEILL: My last question, for the benefit of the member for Mallee, relates to marine vegetation, and I refer to page 432 of the programme papers, under the heading "Environmental Assessments", which states:

The variations which have caused the significant increase in expenditure to this programme of \$50 000 for normal c.p.i. and salary increases as well as \$50 000 for vegetation

clearance.

In view of the fact that we are talking about environmental matters, I can only assume that that applies to the removal of exotic plants rather than indigenous ones. Can the Minister say what that \$50 000 is for in respect of vegetation clearance?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I explained earlier this year that the Government announced the project in regard to the protection and conservation of native vegetation on private property. In fact, the Government has put aside \$150 000 as an incentive for private landowners and to encourage and assist them in retaining native vegetation on their own properties. We believe that that is a good way of involving the public. The \$50 000 mentioned there has been set aside for publicity material. We are in the process of putting out a brochure that we will make available so that people know the terms of reference and can learn more about the project itself.

This project has been welcomed right across the State. We have had a terrific response and many inquiries about it. It is a very popular project, which will do a great deal to preserve the natural vegetation in South Australia. I think that we all recognise the need for that.

Mr. MATHWIN: I rise on a point of order and ask for your ruling, Mr. Chairman. For nearly two weeks, this Committee has been following the procedure of a member being allowed to pursue a point. The member for Florey has said that he is following a particular line in relation to environmental matters. He could also follow a line in relation to finance and ask questions about anything in the book. If an honourable member is allowed to pursue a line of questioning, I presume that it must be on a specific point.

The CHAIRMAN: I uphold the point of order. The honourable member for Mallee drew my attention to this matter, and at that stage I thought that the question was in order because it was associated with uranium and the effects of an enrichment plant. I think that the member for Florey has departed from that. I therefore call on the member for Mallee. The honourable member for Florey will have the call later.

Mr. O'NEILL: I rise on a point of order. With due respect, I started asking about coast protection, and uranium came into the matter in relation to the effect that it had on the coastal environment. It could apply to marine vegetation.

Dr. BILLARD: But it didn't.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Chair has made a decision. I considered that the honourable member had strayed from the original subject matter, and I have ruled that the member for Mallee has the call.

Mr. LEWIS: At least tonight we are not being treated to the comedy of a long-haired—

Mr. O'NEILL: On a point of order, I ask what the question is.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask honourable members to refrain from making comments concerning incidents that have already occurred in the Committee. We have only until 10 p.m. tonight to deal with the relevant matters, and I appeal to all members to come straight to the point in relation to the information that they require. I am sure that, if that happens, the Committee will get much more work done.

Mr. LEWIS: I ask for your ruling, Sir, on the events to which I was referring. Is the Hon. Mr. Cornwall allowed to address Committee members from the gallery behind a column and out of your vision, the same as the Hon. Mr. Chatterton did last night, running messages to and from his wife?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Chair has no control over

that. It has control over the precincts of the Chamber only. This practice has perhaps been carried on here and in the other Committee. However, many things will be noted during these Committee meetings, and in future amendments will be made. In the meantime, I appeal to members to conduct themselves in a reasonable manner.

Mr. O'NEILL: He has no respect.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. O'NEILL: I am sorry, but I was talking to the people at the back.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! It has been the practice for honourable members to remain in respect of the Chair, quietly. There has been considerable audible conversation, and sometimes the proceedings have been made difficult. Members have been assembling in groups and I have not interfered. I see that the member for Florey is now leaving the Chamber. Will the honourable member please resume his seat.

Mr. MATHWIN: Does he think that he is in the Trades Hall bar or something?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I appeal to honourable members. We have only a limited amount of time and, if we conduct the Committee in the best way that we can, it will be to everyone's advantage. After all, we are all members, and I am sure that members know how to conduct themselves. I appeal to you to do so in the best possible manner.

Mr. LEWIS: In keeping with the spirit of your request, Sir, I will ask my question, which relates to the National Parks and Wildlife Division. I am not sure whether my inquiry relates to the line "Reserves Advisory Committee—Members' fees" or to the line "Director of National Parks and Wildlife, Scientific Administrative, Technical, Clerical and General Staff". A mere \$2 000 is allocated for the former line and over \$2 000 000 for the latter line.

My inquiry relates to the way in which the department consults with people who use the resources that the division has the responsibility to administer on behalf of the citizens. I should like to know what the department has done to get information from people who live within the locality in which parks are situated regarding how the management plans might best be implemented in what they consider to be their best interests.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: Soon after taking office, I was concerned (as were departmental officers, and particularly the National Parks and Wildlife Division officers) about the public attitude to the work that these people were trying to do in conserving areas of land in our national parks and reserves. One of the areas of the Government's policy when it assumed office was to examine the setting up of consultative committees. This matter has been examined closely and, indeed, two committees have been established. There is one committee in the lower South-East, and the other is responsible for the Fleurieu Peninsula. We believe that these committees will provide an opportunity for the public to learn about and understand some of the problems faced by officers of the National Parks and Wildlife Division. Indeed, they may be able to help in relation to the liaison that is so necessary between the division's officers and the community.

I hope that we will be able to implement this scheme throughout the State. This depends on the success of the two committees that have already been appointed. The representation on these committees is indeed varied and involves representations of the different interest groups. Already there are signs that the two committees will be useful and that they will work effectively.

Another area in which the establishment of a committee was considered related to the responsibility for Fort Glanville, which is a heritage item and which has been the

responsibility of the National Parks and Wildlife Division. As members may realise, only last week Fort Glanville celebrated its centenary. Beforehand, I met representatives of various interest groups such as historical societies, the Army, the Le Fevre Peninsula Action Group, and other bodies. As a result, a consultative committee will be set up to examine the future management and planning of Fort Glanville.

We intend to do this and have already started on the programme, which appears to be successful. I hope that with the success of those committees we will be able to expand the process of involving the community.

Mr. LEWIS: Is the cost of the establishment of those committees \$2 000 or \$2 000 000?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: It is under "Contingencies", the first line under the heading "National Parks and Wildlife Division".

Mr. LEWIS: That gives me a general picture about the people using the parks and the way in which they are to be consulted. That is commendable. Many problems that have been addressed to me will disappear as a result of that change in approach by the department. There are other people such as beekeepers who use parks, and they are part of the total scene. Different people have different views about whether it is legitimate for parks to be used in such a manner, and I am interested in the extent to which beekeepers are involved in any change in policy. Are they consulted about access or other changes? What does the Minister see as being the ultimate consequences of those changes, because I would not like to think that some of the matters that have been explained to me by constituents would be allowed to continue, say, where one beekeeper, out of jealousy and after finding another beekeeper on a prize location, pours distillate around the hives and on the swarms and sets fire to them. Was either beekeeper entitled in law to be there? That is a moot point, and the whole question of the access of apiarists to parks should be examined. If it is examined, however, how will it be examined, and what other considerations are involved?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: A few years ago an interdepartmental committee was formed to recommend conditions for the issue of beekeeping licences on Government land. I appreciate the concern of the member. The departments that were involved in that interdepartmental committee included the Department for the Environment, the Department of Lands, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Urban and Regional Affairs through the State Planning Authority. With the dedication of the Ngarkat Conservation Park last year, the national parks became more involved than before with the addition of this substantial area of land. I think that is the area that the member is particularly referring to.

The National Parks and Wildlife Division has subsequently and temporarily seconded an officer to examine applications in regard to the recommended conditions concerning the Ngarkat Conservation Park. Since then officers have held discussions with representatives of the apiary industry on problems of joint management. I see that as being an on-going process. Those conditions are being considered presently. We are aware of the concern that the member raises before the Committee, and I hope that my explanation will give him an indication of what we are doing about this matter.

Mr. LEWIS: Still in regard to access, use and abuse of parks by members of the general public in both general and specific ways, I have referred to one example in which the micro-environment was threatened, where a fire was apparently lit by an irresponsible apiarist. In another case, an exotic plant—Paterson's curse—was introduced to

areas where it had never previously been. That was probably another beekeeper wanting to extend; and there are other examples, not related to beekeeping, of abuses through misuse involving people with steel plates on bull bars driving through parks and knocking down vegetation to provide easier access to a camping spot, or chopping down trees to make seats or to obtain wood for barbecue fires. I am concerned about such actions.

In the past we have had a plethora of acquisitions and an expansion of the total area to be held by the department to provide parks, which is perhaps not such a bad thing: one must take it while it is there and before it disappears. Nonetheless, we have ignored our responsibilities as a community and as a Parliament, including the Government, in ensuring that adequate regulatory agencies and necessary staff are available. What is the department's policy to be during the coming 12 months in regard to the provision of sufficient staff and rangers to look after the property which the department owns in the name of the public and which is being maintained for posterity?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: There has already been an increase in staff in relation to eight new positions to upgrade the law enforcement section. We recognised that there was a real need in that area to increase the staff. I would like to be able to tell the Committee that we are going to increase the staff substantially, but unfortunately I cannot say that. We are looking at the possibility of seconding weekly-paid employees from the Public Buildings Department. In fact, we are doing that now to a small extent, and I would like to explore that possibility even further. Another initiative that we have undertaken—in fairness, the previous Government commenced it and we have followed it up—is in regard to the regionalisation of the National Parks and Wildlife Division.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: The Flinders Range was the first.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I am not sure. The Government sees this as an important initiative in bringing the staff closer to the public, and it will certainly be pressing on as far as that is concerned. We have officers in Port Augusta, Mount Gambier and Berri, so we certainly recognise this situation.

We are very much aware of the problems that are experienced as more and more people come to realise the potential of the parks that we have in South Australia. As I have said on numerous occasions, one of the things that I have enjoyed very much since taking office is having the opportunity to travel around the State and look at many of the parks and reserves. I think that, as people come to realise the potential of the magnificent parks and reserves we have, we will gradually see more support in this area. We do have problems as more and more people come to know about these parks and use them more. As the member for Mallee has mentioned, the matter of firewood is a real problem. In some of our more popular parks we are finding that people go to all sorts of extremes to obtain firewood. I was interested during a recent trip I made to New South Wales to look at the parks over there to note that some of the parks supplied a substantial amount of firewood for people to use in barbecues. I recognise that that is becoming a concern as more and more people come to appreciate our parks.

Mr. LEWIS: Will these people seconded from the Public Buildings Department be screened for suitability to determine whether they are psychologically appropriate for the task? Will they be trained, or given any instruction at all? What courses are available to those people who have been recruited as officers of the National Parks and Wildlife Division to train them as rangers or enforcement

agents in relation to the regulations that govern the use of and access to parks?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: The people I have been referring to as being seconded from the Public Buildings Department will receive training through the supervisors and rangers responsible. We are very much aware of the need for the upgrading of staff development. In fact, I am sure that the Committee will be interested to know that in the new Department of Environment and Planning training will have a high priority. Staff development will play an important part. That will assist in the training that the member for Mallee is referring to. We certainly recognise the need for that training and staff development.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: Can the Minister tell the Committee what is the relationship, in respect of the amalgamation to occur between the Department for the Environment and the Department of Planning, with respect to the consultants, P.A. Consulting Services Proprietary Limited, and the steering committee? We have a fairly high-powered steering committee chaired by a very senior officer of the Public Service, and other senior members of the Public Service are on that committee. In addition, we have P.A. Consulting Services Proprietary Limited involved. Can the Minister give an explanation as to why, earlier this evening, through him we heard an explanation given that stage 1 was already (I believe I am near the mark in saying) in existence, because the document we have here is titled "The Rationale and Definition of The Proposed Organisation Structure" and is dated September 1980. It is also titled "Stage 1—Report 1". Will the Minister explain why the amalgamation has proceeded to this stage with the report being available only some few days ago, according to the date on it?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I will ask Mr. Lewis to answer that question. Before he does, I think the point made was that stage 1 was nearing completion. I do not think it was said that stage 1 was completed.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: I said "in existence".

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: It is certainly not in existence. I think Mr. Lewis made the point that there are two stages and that stage 1 is nearing completion. The member for Mitchell has referred to the importance of the steering committee and to the consultants. Mr. Lewis will refer in more detail to those. It was felt that it was necessary that we have a steering committee with certain expertise. Members of the steering committee are under the chairmanship of Mr. Lewis. That steering committee consists of the Director-General of Environment, Dr. Ellyard, the Acting Director-General of Urban and Regional Affairs, Mr. Speechley, and Mr. Mitchell, Assistant Commissioner with the Public Service Board. We feel that the expertise those people have will help to form a strong steering committee. I ask Mr. Lewis to answer that question in more detail.

Mr. Lewis: The Implementation Steering Committee, of which I am Chairman, is responsible to the Chairman for all the details associated with that reorganisation. It is a massive task. We are responsible for the consultants and for organising accommodation for the new department, and a whole number of other matters that go with a new organisation. As I said before, there are two stages to the reorganisation and stage 1 is now approaching completion. Stage 1 comprises the investigation and design of the conceptual organisational structure of the department. As I said earlier, the definition of the management information system is required to support the department, and a plan of action for stage 2 of the reorganisation, which is the detailing of the organisation, and the implementation of it are to get the department up and operating by 1 July next year. On the question of the

consultants, they were appointed to lead the attack force of two officers each from the Department of Urban and Regional Affairs and the Department for the Environment, and an Assistant Commissioner of the Public Service Board in order to go through the very large task of documenting all of the information which has been gathered and to interview something of the order of 200 members of the staff.

Also, it is necessary to analyse their submissions (that is, of both departments) and to prepare, after analysis, a proposed organisation structure, which is the document that has been referred to. That document is classified as the draft proposal. It is now out for circulation to members of the staff. In other words, it is the task force's report presented by the consultants. It is now out for comment by all members of the staff of both departments. It has also been looked at by the Implementation Steering Committee and the Public Service Association. At the conclusion of all those submissions they will be analysed and a final proposal will then be drawn up to complete the first stage.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: I thank the Minister and Mr. Lewis for the explanation. I cannot find the words "draft proposal" in the document that we had, although it has been said that it is a draft and is available for comment by the staff. Has the Minister been able to be apprised of the general tenor of the submissions received from the officers concerned?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: Those submissions have not come to me and I ask Mr. Lewis to answer. I make the point, as Mr. Lewis has done, that that document was prepared for the staff of the two departments. It was made clear to the staff that it was a draft proposal and that they would be given the opportunity to comment and forward submissions to the steering committee.

Mr. Lewis: The tenor of the submissions has been very wide and varied. There are a number of areas within the proposal where some members of the staff and others have expressed concern, and those matters are being re-examined. It would be difficult to say at this stage, because we have not received all of them, particularly the submission from the Public Service Association, what the right answer would be.

With a large number of staff, there is always conflict between what some believe and what others believe. If one took the two major issues, one would say there was a preponderance of opinion that the Management Services Division and the Administration and Finance Division should be combined and that there is too big a managerial task for the Management Development Division. There are other issues but we have not any finalisation.

Mr. MATHWIN: What is the present thinking of the department and the Coast Protection Board in relation to the sand replenishment scheme, which has been in operation for some years? Is this to be continued? There has been criticism of this operation in the past and some criticism has been well founded. Further, what are the department's thoughts on the erection of groynes on the foreshore?

The Minister would be aware of concern about the erection of groynes along the excellent foreshore. At Glenelg many years ago, the Playford Government put in the largest groyne that we have, and we know the problems and damage that it has caused. I have seen models of groynes at many exhibitions at the university. In the early stages of the foundation of the Seaside Councils Committee and the Coast Protection Board, there were demonstrations of what happens on beaches, and it was obvious that the erection of any man-made groyne has a colossal impact on the surrounding environment.

It has been proved beyond doubt that, when a groyne is

erected, there is a scouring on one side. The only alternative would be to do what the U.K. and some countries in Europe have done. They have groynes as close together as 200 yards, and these cause a big problem for the environment. Their only advantage is that people can undress on the beach in comfort and they protect people from the wind and rain.

Over the past four months, people have written to the local newspaper supporting this type of protection or replenishment, as they call it, but people who have seen models at the university would know that there were problems and no advantage to the environment.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: The expenditure comes under the capital programme, but I would be happy to answer the question.

The CHAIRMAN: The matter deals with the Loan Estimates and I ask the honourable member to reserve the question until then. Are both parts of the question associated with that?

Mr. MATHWIN: The erection of groynes is not in the Loan programme.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: Coast protection is important and I could answer on that. There is no doubt that the sand replenishment programme is the most cost effective way to protect the coast. The only alternative seems to be expensive engineering works. It is interesting to consider the amount of sand that has been moved on South Australian beaches and the cost involved in transferring the sand. In June this year we had one of the worst storms for 10 years but there was little damage to the foreshore compared to damage in previous years. Much of the reason for that relates to the sand replenishment programme. Regarding the groynes, the Coast Protection Board feels strongly that they do not work and they are not a solution to the loss of sand from our coastal beaches.

All that they appear to do is transfer the erosion problem along the coast. The member for Glenelg has referred to some of the problems but, as far as South Australia is concerned particularly, the groyne is recognised as interrupting the littoral drift. It is recognised that on South Australian beaches groynes have not been successful and will not be successful. I would be quite happy, because I know the member for Glenelg's interest in this matter, to consult with the Coast Protection Division and give him more details. As to the question that he raised in relation to sand replenishment, it is very expensive, but a very necessary programme. We would be happy to provide more detailed information in relation to the construction of groynes along the coast for the honourable member's information.

Mr. MATHWIN: I thank the Minister for that and I look forward with great interest to receiving the information that he will supply. I ask him to couple that with further information in relation to the replenishment programme and the problems associated with it. Has the Government considered further use of repumping, either from the sand bar or the sand banks, back to the beach area? I know that there was some talk of this happening and maybe it has happened in some parts. It certainly has not been a big problem as far as we are concerned as a State. The Minister would know that this has been used with great success in parts of America such as California and also in Holland. I know that it is fairly costly, but one should consider the cost of the sand replenishment programme, with carting sand from the Largs area and down as far as Brighton and Seacliff. That sand in some cases has been very light, and a lot has blown away. Has any assessment been done as far as the department is concerned as to the costing and possible greater use in future of pumping the sand off the shore back on to the

beaches?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I am pleased to tell the member for Glenelg that we have sent one of our officers, Mr. John Beare, to look at this process. It is a very exciting technique and one which we believe could be used very effectively on our beaches. In fact, as the member for Glenelg and the member for Morphett would appreciate, we have had problems in the Patawalonga area. We believe that, if this process could have been used there, we might have overcome some of those problems. We recognise the advantages to be gained from these techniques. We have sent Mr. Beare to the United States to look at the process closely. Whilst it is a very expensive operation, I am sure that it could be very effective on South Australian beaches.

The CHAIRMAN: I draw the Committee's attention to the fact that an hour and five minutes is remaining and there are another four votes. It is left in the hands of the Committee but I draw its attention to the fact that on this vote I would like to give consideration to the member for Flinders, who has been waiting for some time.

Mr. CRAFTER: I raise a question in regard to some of the votes. Comments have been made as to the effectiveness of these Committees, particularly by the member for Mitcham. The Minister made a statement about the effectiveness of the Policy Division of the former Environment Department. I preface my remarks by saying that I served in the State Public Service for some 11 years and value highly my experience there and the reputation of public servants. I raise this matter with some concern and refer to the number of advisers present tonight and the cost to the Government of advice given to this Committee. This is the seventh committee that I have served on during these sittings of Estimates Committees, and there is by far the greatest number of supporting staff here tonight that I have seen.

I am concerned that members of the Committee do not have access to the expertise available on matters before the Committee from public servants. Earlier this afternoon there were some 27 public servants at the service of the Minister. At the moment there are only 20 in the Chamber, and I do not see how the Minister could fruitfully use those advisers here and now in a practical way. Certainly, we do not have access to those advisers. Will the Minister provide, for the purpose of assessment of the feasibility of these Committees, the names and details of the experience that these officers bring to the House, the cost of their wages, salaries and other expenses, as well as the amount of time and preparation that they have put into these documents? On my rough calculation, the amount is in excess of \$10 000 for the lines that we are considering. That may well be worth while but it is the sort of information that we ought to have if we are going to review the effectiveness of these Committees. I believe there is great value in this process but I believe many improvements could be made. I am somewhat concerned that the best use is not being made of the vast resources of the Public Service.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I do not know how I am supposed to answer that. I take it as a comment rather than a question. I do not believe that it would appear that the member for Norwood is critical of the fact that I have a number of officers with me. However, I would certainly query the number that has been raised by the member for Norwood. He suggested that there were 27 officers from my department. I would query that, and I would be pleased to take it up with the honourable member at a later date. I believe that it is important, with the diversity of the departments that I am responsible for, that is, the Department for the Environment and the Department of

Urban and Regional Affairs, to have officers available.

I believe that, if technical questions were asked, it was the right of the Committee to have that information made available. That is the reason I have asked officers of my departments to be here. I say "departments" because we have been here since half past four and we are only virtually starting on one department. Officers from the Department of Urban and Regional Affairs have been here since half past four. As to the cost that the member for Norwood referred to, I suggest that there is no additional cost whatsoever in the fact that I have officers here tonight. In fact, I commend the officers for making their time available to be here to answer any technical questions that might be asked of them. I recognise the point that the member for Norwood has made that the people here this evening represent the two departments and have a great deal of expertise. I believe that the honourable member would know that, as I have already introduced the officers at the table.

I hope that officers from the Department of Urban and Regional Affairs will have an opportunity to be introduced, too, if the Committee examines that vote this evening. I take the point made by the member for Norwood regarding expense and, indeed, I think that it is important that the officers are present. Indeed, I go further and say that a number of Ministers have brought the same number of officers to assist this Committee and to answer any technical questions if they are requested to do so.

Mr. CRAFTER: I, too, commend the officers. I imagine that some of them wonder what on earth they are doing here; that is my concern. However, I should like to ascertain this information so that we can assess the value of the work that is put into these Committees. I should like to know the names of the officers who have been asked to attend, what expertise they bring to the Minister, and hence to this Committee, and the cost, which surely must be calculated in terms of expenditure in the areas of salaries and wages and related payments that are put in the direction of this Committee rather than in some other area of the Public Service. I ask this question so that an assessment can be made of the effectiveness of this use of our public servants.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I shall be pleased to provide a list of the officers who are present tonight and their qualifications. They are senior officers, and no overtime is involved. These officers have been here since 4.30 p.m., and I suggest that it is not a great deal of time between 4.30 p.m. and the time at which they hope to go home. I suggest that some of the officers are here in their own time and for their own interests, and I commend them for that.

Mr. Blacker: My question follows on that asked by the member for Glenelg and relates to sand replenishment for the beaches adjacent to the Adelaide metropolitan area. This may sound an airy-fairy suggestion, but it has occurred to me that the possibility of shipping sand in may not be as silly as it first sounds. We have shipping and loading facilities on lower Eyre Peninsula, and sand could easily be shipped in. There are the normal shipping arrangements, which could be negotiated by contract with the Government, if that was possible.

I raise this point because, although the matter of pumping sand from off shore was referred to, supplies of sand off shore are not perhaps as readily available as some people believe. If it involves a comparison of trucking sand over many kilometres and shipping it here, with a ship floating off shore and pumping the sand in by means of floating pipelines, the proposition may be able to be arranged.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I shall be pleased to consider

the matter of shipping sand. I cannot say that the department has looked at this matter in any great depth. However, I also make the point that it depends a great deal on the sand that is available; the member for Flinders has already referred to that matter. I shall be pleased to look more closely at the honourable member's suggestion and to come back to the honourable member with information from the officers of the Coast Protection Division.

Mr. Blacker: I assure the Minister that the source of supply of sand would be virtually unlimited. I now refer to another matter than concerns me. Has the department or the Minister undertaken a detailed environmental assessment of the upper reaches of Spencer Gulf? I ask this question as a result of a recent assessment made by the Government in relation to the Dow petro-chemical project at Redcliff. It came out, as a result of that assessment, that detailed work needs to be undertaken before final approval can be given to a complex being constructed at that site. I shall be most interested to know whether these detailed studies have been initiated, and when we can expect such detailed assessments to be available for public perusal.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: It was certainly recognised (and I am sure that the member for Flinders has now had an opportunity to read the Department for the Environment's assessment report) that there was possibly a greater environmental impact on this part of Spencer Gulf than on any other area, and it was important that more information was gained.

Information is needed to determine the dispersal of thermal and chemical pollutants in that area and their likely impact on the marine environment. However, the department considered that technical options in plant design exist now to make the impact environmentally acceptable. We have already made the point that more information is needed and that inspections will be carried out in that area. I ask Mr. Inglis, who was the Acting Director when the assessment was carried out on the Redcliff project, whether he has anything to add.

Mr. Inglis: The position at the end of the assessment was that Dow was requested to continue over the next one or two years a period of detailed studies in the marine area so that it could accurately design its plant to minimise its effect on the environment. The studies would relate to the intake and discharge of cooling water so that there was no scouring of the sea bottom and so that the return of the hot water did not cause any disturbance to the organisms on the sea floor.

The second type of study that had to be carried out was that the effect of chlorination of the cooling water did not cause any detrimental effects on larvae and juvenile fish in the area. When a large amount of cooling water is used for a factory, it is necessary to add chlorine to it to stop growths inside the plant. Some of that chlorine is discharged with the water into the gulf and, if it is in excess, it can cause damage to organisms.

The third study that had to be carried out as a precaution was to ascertain exactly what would happen to any spillage of ethylene dichloride in the gulf, the route by which it would be adsorbed on to the sediments, and the way in which it would eventually evaporate into the atmosphere, and oxidise into innocuous products. Those studies will take some time to complete and will be difficult and extensive studies. The details are still being worked out.

Mr. Blacker: Is Dow Chemical Company still pursuing those investigations?

Mr. Inglis: The latest advice I have is that Dow committed itself to the Premier to continue those studies.

Mr. Blacker: Will the department have a watching brief over the activities of the company when it undertakes those studies?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: Yes.

Mr. Blacker: Am I correct that earlier this afternoon reference was made to \$150 000 for the preservation of bush land on private property?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: Yes.

Mr. Blacker: How will this work? Is the land to be paid for on a per acre basis? How is the tenure of the area secured? Could a landholder be assisted monetarily for the preservation of land and then sell his land so that the funds spent would be wasted? Would the department be making regular inspections? Is the land to be fenced? I have several managerial questions in this vein.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: The member would appreciate that the legislation dealing with this matter in setting up heritage agreements under the Heritage Act (and that is how they will work) has been introduced in the House. Much of this information will be available. I would be happy to make it available so that the member can take part in that debate if he so desires.

Mr. OSWALD: Most of that information is contained in your second reading explanation.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: Yes. In regard to financial assistance, it will be made available through providing incentives. We will work through a reduction in rates and taxes, or as an incentive in assisting in the provision of fencing. We will help by providing management expertise in these areas. These matters will all be part of the incentives that will be provided to private landholders. In regard to the department's future role, it would be necessary for there to be an on-going role in these areas but, again, it would depend on the staff available and the number of people who take advantage of the scheme.

Mr. Blacker: Finally, in regard to the \$150 000 and security of tenure, will there be a caveat over the land?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: Yes.

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

Department for the Environment, \$2 000 000

Chairman:

Mr. E. K. Russack

Members:

Dr. B. Billard
Mr. G. J. Crafter
Mr. I. P. Lewis
Mr. J. Mathwin
Mr. H. H. O'Neill
Mr. J. K. G. Oswald
The Hon. R. G. Payne
Mr. K. H. Plunkett

Witness:

The Hon. D. C. Wotton, Minister of Environment and Minister of Planning.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr. P. W. Ellyard, Director-General, Department for the Environment.

Mr. G. R. Inglis, Acting Deputy Director-General.

Mr. N. H. Johnson, Acting Director, Administration and Finance.

Mr. K. W. Lewis, Chairman, Implementation Steering

Committee, proposed Department of Environment and Planning.

Mr. R. K. Paech, Acting Chief Administration Officer, National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Mr. N. P. Newland, Superintendent of Field Operations, National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Mr. L. Djordjevic, Acting Accountant.

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

Minister of Environment, Miscellaneous, \$169 000

Chairman:

Mr. E. K. Russack

Members:

Dr. B. Billard

Mr. G. J. Crafter

Mr. I. P. Lewis

Mr. J. Mathwin

Mr. H. H. O'Neill

Mr. J. K. G. Oswald

The Hon. R. G. Payne

Mr. K. H. Plunkett

Witness:

The Hon. D. C. Wotton, Minister of Environment and Minister of Planning.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr. P. W. Ellyard, Director-General, Department for the Environment.

Mr. G. R. Inglis, Acting Deputy Director-General.

Mr. N. H. Johnson, Acting Director, Administration and Finance.

Mr. K. W. Lewis, Chairman, Implementation Steering Committee, proposed Department of Environment and Planning.

Mr. R. K. Paech, Acting Chief Administration Officer, National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Mr. N. P. Newland, Superintendent of Field Operations, National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Mr. L. Djordjevic, Acting Accountant.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Mathwin): I declare the vote open for discussion.

Mr. PLUNKETT: I refer to the line "Assistance to Councils—Boating facilities on inland waterways". No allocation was made last year but \$40 000 is proposed for 1980-81. What is the reason for this expenditure?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: This sum is provided for expenditure in addition to the normal grant to a number of environmental organisations. It provides \$40 000 financial aid to councils providing boating facilities on inland waters. Under Government policy on recreational boating, the Coast Protection Division will give advice and some financial aid to councils that provide boating facilities on inland waterways, and that sum will go towards that programme.

Mr. PLUNKETT: How much of that allocation will be available for expenditure on the Patawalonga basin?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: This allocation was made particularly for the Murray River and does not relate to the Patawalonga. Coast Protection Division funds go toward work carried out on the Patawalonga.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: In regard to "Grants to various organisations and programmes", almost \$61 000 was spent last year, and \$64 000 is proposed this year. Will the Minister provide me with a list of organisations and programmes on which this sum will be spent? To save time, the information can be provided later.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: It will be provided at a later date. I should explain to the member that I have not yet announced where the money will be spent.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: I had that in mind in framing the question.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: As I would not want to preempt my announcement, as soon as it is made I will supply that information to the member.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: In regard to "Implementation Steering Committee Expenses—Establishment of Department of Environment and Planning", \$65 000 is allocated, and I understand that a further \$65 000 in the department will also be provided so that \$130 000 can be spent. Is it mainly in regard to consultancy fees?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: Yes.

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

Urban and Regional Affairs, \$2 918 000

Chairman:

Mr. E. K. Russack

Members:

Dr. B. Billard

Mr. G. J. Crafter

Mr. I. P. Lewis

Mr. J. Mathwin

Mr. H. H. O'Neill

Mr. J. K. G. Oswald

The Hon. R. G. Payne

Mr. K. H. Plunkett

Witness:

The Hon. D. C. Wotton, Minister of Environment and Minister of Planning.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr. K. W. Lewis, Chairman, Implementation Steering Committee, proposed Department of Environment and Planning.

Mr. D. Speechley, Acting Director-General, Department of Urban and Regional Affairs.

Mr. T. Phipps, Acting Director, Metropolitan Division, Department of Urban and Regional Affairs.

Mr. J. Harris, Director, Country Division, Department of Urban and Regional Affairs.

Mr. D. Hughes, Director, Resource Division, Department of Urban and Regional Affairs.

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

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: In relation to "Country Division", in the provision for the "Director, Managers and Project Officers", there is virtually no increase (it is an increase of only about \$206). Is there curtailment of activity in Country Division capacity? An amount is not shown for possible inflation or wage indexation.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: The salaries of the Director, Country Division, the Manager, Country Policy, and

Country Sector Managers are charged to this line. Support staff on secondment to the Country Division are charged against the Resource Division. There is not any falling away of responsibility regarding the Country Division.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: The amount spent last year was \$207 794, and the amount proposed this year is \$208 000. That does not appear to allow for increased wages, although that is normally covered in these lines.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: The vote for 1979-80 included the salary of the Executive Officer, Mr. Alan Hutchings, of \$29 000. However, only \$2 328 of this amount was charged against this line, as part of the way through the year Mr. Hutchings was transferred to the General Projects Group. This resulted in a saving last year, on country salaries, of \$26 672. This was offset by the cost of indexation and award increases during 1979-80. That probably explains why there was not so much available last year.

Dr. BILLARD: I refer to "Metropolitan Forecasting and Development Co-ordination", which is dealt with on page 455 of the programme papers. I should like more detail on the function of this group. The programme papers state that the group provides forecasted information to Government agencies, and so on, and later states that the group assists in the co-ordination of Government and local government activities along the Murray River. To what extent does it provide forecasted information to local government?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I do not think we can say that it provides a great deal of information to local government. It is mainly involved with population projections, household projections, and so on. The information obtained as a result of these surveys is made available to other departments and is useful in their work. The group does not really assist local government in any specific way.

Dr. BILLARD: Does information also flow from agencies? Is there a flow the other way, too? Is there information on what is possible in these areas to serve as transport facilities, and what is not possible?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: Yes, that happens. It is a two-way thing. We have feedback in those areas, and that is recognised as important information that comes to the department.

Dr. BILLARD: It is planned to have an increase in manpower of slightly more than 50 per cent, at least in the Metropolitan Forecasting and Development Co-ordination Group. Can the Minister say what these people would be used for?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: It is not really an expansion as such. We have had people who were previously working in that area and who were helping out in other areas. It is not generally seen as an increase in staff as far as that responsibility is concerned. It was well below establishment previously.

Mr. CRAFTER: I seek information on future functions in the general planning responsibility of Government which the State Planning Authority has initiated in the past. I am concerned that there is a downgrading in this area of responsibility, and I am aware of the Minister's statement that the Government intends to place planning jurisdiction with local government where possible. I recall the attempts by the Government earlier this year to refer planning for shopping centre development to local government.

I notice that stage 1 of the P.A. consultants report hardly refers to this function of government. In fact, the State Planning Authority merits only half a page of the quite substantial report. Initially, in general terms, I would appreciate it if the Minister would explain to the Committee the future role that he sees for the State

Government in the planning area generally and why it has been necessary to restructure the department with the degree of haste that we have seen. This report was presented in September and, as the Committee has been told, a substantial amount of work has been done to implement this report. The second stage will take these concepts into some more concrete details.

As I understand it, the mould has been cast for the structure of this department. I know that there is to be a re-writing of the Planning and Development Act, as the Minister has told us. There is also the Hart Report on planning in this State, and the impending need to consider the legislation which expires soon in respect of shopping centres and in particular the draft report on metropolitan centres. It would seem that there is a department being established prior to legislation and prior to the public being involved in this somewhat fundamental change in planning responsibility in the community.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: Let me say right at the very start that this whole exercise in setting up the new department has certainly not been a hasty procedure. When I refer to the period that has been made available for consultation, I might say that that has been regarded as an extremely high priority by the steering committee. Indeed, members of the staff of both departments have been given every opportunity to discuss thoughts that they had in regard to the new department. They have had the opportunity of discussing matters with either the Chairman or the steering committee. They have been informed through meetings of the progress of the procedure that has taken place. They have now received a report, and we made it clear to the Committee that it was a draft proposal. The staff have had it made clear to them, and they have all had the opportunity to comment.

The Chairman of the steering committee, Mr. Lewis, has referred to some of the submissions that have come in and are still coming in. I do not believe that it can be regarded as a hasty process. In fact, some members of the staff would suggest that they would like to see it move faster than it is presently moving.

Mention was made of the legislation. I have foreshadowed that I will be bringing down substantial amendments to the Planning and Development Act. I have said both in the House and outside that it is my hope that I will be able to introduce that into the House this session.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: Will you allow it to go to a Select Committee?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I have made no decision about it going to a Select Committee at this stage. I would suggest that it not go to a Select Committee. I want to make it clear that it is my intention that it be brought in and allowed to lie on the table until adequate opportunity has been provided for consultation. I made that quite clear to the councils that I have spoken to in regard to the introduction of this legislation. I have also taken the matter up with the Local Government Association and have asked it to formulate a committee to enable submissions to come from councils to go the Local Government Association. In turn, I can receive a submission from a representative of the Local Government Association.

Mention has been made of the Hart Report, which has been circulating for some time. The member for Norwood would appreciate that many of the changes that will be made to the Planning and Development Act are a direct result of some of the recommendations that came out of that report. From what I can ascertain, I understand that the previous Minister was looking at that report in the same way in regard to legislation.

I see the planning department as having an extremely important role to play. We have made quite clear that it is Government policy that more responsibility, or a greater sharing of responsibility, should come about between local government and the State Government, and we intend that that should happen.

Mention was also made of the centres policy. A draft Metropolitan Centres Supplementary Development Plan has been introduced for public exhibition. That draft has been prepared by the State Planning Authority, and I look forward to receiving constructive submissions in relation to it. On 25 September, I made a press release in this regard in the hope that people would respond and forward submissions on this matter. The draft will be placed on public exhibition for the statutory two-month period and, after the authority has had an opportunity to consider the submissions that are made, it will forward the final recommendations to me. The draft plan has been prepared following an extensive period of consultation.

I do not want to spend much of the Committee's time going into that in great detail, but I think members would appreciate that the Government has continued on with the retail consultative committee that was set up by the former Government. We have augmented that committee slightly to include a representative from the Small Business Association and a public accountant.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: So, that was a wise provision to make.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: I accept that it has been of benefit; I have no qualms about recognising that. Although I could go on at great length about the centres policy, because it is important, I will not do so. If the Committee is interested, I shall be happy later to discuss that matter further. I make the point that the State accepts its responsibility in planning matters and that this will certainly be recognised in the structure of the new department.

Mr. CRAFTER: I thank the Minister for that explanation, and raise the point that I raised previously. Should the department come before the legislation, which is the charter by which the public servants would operate, or should the departmental structure come after the legislation?

In regard to the draft Metropolitan Centres Supplementary Development Plan, the Government's stated policy was rebuffed and thrown back—creating for the department a new function, a new role, and new demands were made on officers so that new expertise was called for. One of the results of the report to which the Minister has referred is the function of impact assessment and control. That is a new function for the department. That was the basis of my concern, that the department's structure is extremely detailed in the plans now before the Committee. In fact, this prejudices the legislation that will follow. I am glad the Minister referred to the Local Government Association, because local government is concerned in this. If local government is to assume new powers and functions, they will affect its structure, its staffing, its standing, its expertise, and they will alter its relationship with the community it serves. The association, in commenting on the Metropolitan Centres Draft Report, stated that it had a responsibility to state its position to the Government in regard to the supplementary plan redraft. The association's report states:

Firstly, it has been consistently stated that this issue relates to a much wider concern over planning legislation in this State. It is our belief that it is currently unnecessarily complicated, confused and difficult to administer.

It is costly as well, and the report continues:

Secondly, the association believes that this issue is being

treated with undesirable haste. It is further concerned that this measure has been taken while the status of existing supplementary development plans is open to litigation and new legislation on planning and the environment is pending. Should we not defer the restructuring of the planning area of the department until the legislation is settled in the next 12 months?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: It was considered that, with the introduction of the legislation and with the second stage of the new department taking place, they should proceed virtually hand in hand. I still intend that that should happen, which is why I am hoping—the drafting process is proceeding satisfactorily at this stage—that the legislation will be introduced towards the end of the year. As the Chairman of the Steering Committee said, the actual structural work is in process now, and it is important that they should proceed together. Regarding the association's concern with the centres plan, I am aware of the information referred to by the honourable member concerning the Local Government Association, because I have been part of the discussions that have transpired between local government and my departmental officers, and when the actual supplementary plan went on exhibition the association was not as concerned as might be suggested in respect of the original correspondence which I have received and which the member for Norwood has referred to.

The amendments to the Planning and Development Act brought down earlier this year concerning retail development were recognised as part of the interim legislation. I made a commitment that that should be interim legislation, and that we should look at something more positive when that interim legislation ran out at the end of the year.

I am very keen that that should happen. I believe that the interim legislation should not be extended and that we should be able to come down with a positive plan. That is the very reason, of course, why it is before the public for exhibition and comment at this time.

Dr. BILLARD: Is the Minister suggesting that the function of different sections of the department will change after the new legislation comes in, and is the draft organisation being drawn up now being drawn up on the assumption that the new legislation will be operating?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: The steering committee is aware of the legislation that is being drafted at present. Perhaps Mr. Lewis has something further to add, but I do not believe there will be any problems so far as the structure of the new department is concerned with the legislation when it is introduced. Mr. Lewis might add to that.

Mr. Lewis: It is always very helpful to any department to know precisely what is in the Government's mind for the future. I suppose it would have been helpful to know exactly what would be the content of the planning legislation. However, the whole design of the organisation structure is based on programmed areas so that, for instance, in the nature conservation and pollution management areas, etc., we believe that to date there is sufficient flexibility to deal with the indication that we have regarding the future legislation. In any case, prior to the legislation coming into force, the department may have to work with the existing legislation. I believe there is sufficient flexibility in the organisational structure to cope with that.

Mr. PLUNKETT: I will be guided by your ruling, Mr. Chairman, as I would like to ask the Minister a question concerning the beautification of the Torrens River through Hindmarsh and West Torrens, but I do not see anything in any of the lines I can tie it to. In my view it would come

under this provision.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: That comes under the line "Minister for Water Resources".

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: Referring to the Land Commission Annual Report for 1980, which has just become available, at page 3 under the heading "Review of Activities" in the bottom left corner of the page the following statement appears:

Since April 1980 the commission has responded to its restricted role and major reorganisation has been taking place. Staff numbers will be reduced by nearly 50 per cent when the exercise is completed. The majority of surplus staff has already been relocated in other areas of Government.

How many have been relocated in other areas, and where?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: We could provide approximate figures but, if the member wants exact figures, I will have to make that information available later.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: There is a great temptation to say that, despite the battery of advisers present, the information is not at hand. However, because of the lateness, I will say nothing further.

Mr. CRAFTER: I understand that the Land Commission asked the Minister to redeploy about \$18 000 000 that the commission had invested in the short-term money market into other areas of Government activity which probably would be of great benefit to the community. I understand that no action was taken on that request. Can the Minister tell the Committee why?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: Obviously, the member is looking for more detail, and I ask Mr. Phipps to answer.

Mr. Phipps: The situation in regard to the commission's present liquidity is that the State Treasury is well aware of the position. No arrangements have been made to redeploy the commission's liquidity from the money market, pending the outcome of negotiations with the Commonwealth Government on the Commonwealth-States Financial Agreement. The liquidity could be a significant factor in those negotiations, and the State does not want to do anything to pre-empt them at this stage.

Mr. CRAFTER: I know that Victoria and Western Australia have asked the Commonwealth to review their positions, and I understand that this is often a matter of tactical advantage between the States. Has the Minister considered deferring these considerations until Victoria and Western Australia have had their cases reviewed so that, on the basis of that review, he can continue negotiations with the Commonwealth?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: Negotiations are taking place, and I ask Mr. Phipps to answer, because he is part of the negotiating team.

Mr. Phipps: The State has taken the view that no advantage is to be gained by deferring renegotiation any longer. The Government, in its review of the commission, came to the conclusion that removal of the debt interest burden should occur as a matter of urgency, and this meant that negotiations with the Commonwealth should occur as a matter of urgency. The situation regarding losing tactical advantage is that, from discussions with the Commonwealth and the observation of discussions between the Commonwealth and other States, it seems that every State is being treated differently, and South Australia believes that, given its own situation, it is most appropriate that it proceed at this time.

Dr. BILLARD: I refer to relocation of the Land Commission's Golden Grove Development function. I cannot see how that would fit into the pattern. Do the programme papers cover that and, if so, where?

Mr. Phipps: The situation is that the planning at Golden Grove as carried out by the Land Commission in

conjunction with the Municipality of Tea Tree Gully was, in fact, carried out by a senior officer. That officer has since been relocated in the Department of Urban and Regional Affairs and his function and title is "Project Manager, Tea Tree Gully-Golden Grove". The department has him working almost full time on the project, and he has the services of a secretarial assistant. So, the work that has been carried out in the Land Commission has been correctly carried across from the Land Commission to the Department of Urban and Regional Affairs, and the further planning work that is to be carried out will be carried out under a consulting arrangement by agreement between the Municipality of Tea Tree Gully and the Department of Urban and Regional Affairs.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: Mr. Phipps has referred to one of the officers of the Land Commission, Mr. Cochrane, who has been transferred to that responsibility. I now have the information that the member for Mitcham was asking for in relation to other members of the Land Commission who have been transferred. That information is as follows: Mr. E. J. Phipps has been transferred to the Department of Urban and Regional Affairs; Mr. R. Elleway is to be placed when available; Mr. M. J. Toohey is now the Chief Projects Officer in the Department of Lands; Mr. R. G. Hook has been transferred to the Department of Urban and Regional Affairs; Mr. R. K. Kent has been seconded to the Executive Development Programme conducted by the Public Service Board; Mr. K. Burke is to be placed when available; Mr. E. M. Gum has been transferred to the Department of Urban and Regional Affairs; Mr. J. S. Cochrane is to be placed when available; Mr. D. J. Wallace has been transferred to the Public Service Board; Mr. R. Fanton is now a clerk in the Highways Department; Mr. D. Willis is a clerical officer at the Supreme Court; and Mr. J. Peacock is with the Department of Urban and Regional Affairs on contract.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: My question relates to page 333 of the Auditor-General's Report. There is a table which comprises two columns under the years 1979 and 1980 and which refers to the sale of residential allotments. There is a much smaller total in 1980, down from \$404 000 in sales to private individuals by the Land Commission to \$327 000, and other figures speak for themselves. I would appreciate receiving from the Minister some time later the reasons for the reduction in private sales and the fact that no sales were made to the South Australian Housing Trust this year.

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: Mostly it is related to the depletion of lots in the Tea Tree Gully area. There were some very attractive lots, and it was a general trend in development that it was more difficult to sell land under the Land Commission.

Mr. LEWIS: I applaud the general tenor of the planning vote. What happens in circumstances where shopping centres are so reduced in number as to make it possible for a monopoly to procure them all, raise the rents and force the prices up on the goods? Will the department review its policy in that situation?

The Hon. D. C. Wotton: We believe that it is aimed at providing an adequate supply of suitable retail facilities.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! As it is now 10 p.m., the discussion on this vote and on the vote for Minister of Planning, Miscellaneous, \$1 357 000, is concluded.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10.1 p.m. the Committee adjourned until Thursday 9 October at 11 a.m.