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PREM 19/2907

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Confidential FilingFuture of the Victoria and Albert
and the Science MuseumsARTS and
AMENITIESMarch 1982

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PREM 19/2907

STRICTLY PERSONAL



PA NEHRU
Gallery Appeal

Me h
C. D. Powell
Armstrong

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

24 August 1990

NEHRU GALLERY APPEAL

In your absence on holiday, I had a very nice letter from Julie Laird with a slightly different proposal as to how the Prime Minister might help the Nehru Gallery Appeal. She suggested that the Prime Minister might meet privately with a group of four potential major sponsors, together with one or two sponsors who have already made substantial donations, with you in attendance.

I have discussed this with the Prime Minister. We have reservations about getting people along to a meeting where the Prime Minister would be expected to shake them down. But if it would really help, the Prime Minister would be prepared to see a very small group of those who have already made donations, say for half an hour. I suppose that prospect might concentrate the minds of some of those who are contemplating generous action (although we would not want them to turn up with their cheques in hand).

Perhaps you could let me know, on a private basis, what you think about this.

C. D. POWELL

The Lord Armstrong of Ilminster, G.C.B., C.V.O.

CLOSED UNDER THE
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION
ACT 2000

VKS

PRIME MINISTER

cc. Mrs. Ponsonby

Nehru Gallery Appeal

You may recall that Robert Armstrong wrote to you in July about the possibility of giving a reception for potential donors to the Nehru Gallery Appeal. You agreed that you already have a lot of such requests, and there was no case for giving this one priority. You suggested that the Foreign Secretary might like to give a reception in the Durbar Court instead.

Robert appears to be away, but the Nehru Gallery Appeal Director has now written back to ask whether you would instead be ready to meet with Robert, three or four potential major sponsors of the Gallery and one or two sponsors who have already made substantial donations.

I do not think he has a right to dangle the prospect of a meeting with you as a way of squeezing people to make donations. Unless you disagree, I would propose to turn this down.

C. D. POWELL

23 August 1990

I will not half-ass
who have made reasonably
serious gifts but not
potential sponsors. As Robert
knows - I do have my
own charities for which
I try to raise money
not



THE
NEHRU GALLERY
OF
INDIAN ART
1550-1900

From: Julie Laird, Appeal Director, 49A Hornton St., London W8 7NT.
Telephone: 071-938-2705. Fax: 071-376-2454.

C.D. Powell Esq.,
10 Downing Street
London SW1.

21st August 1990.

Dear Mr. Powell,

I am writing during the absence of Lord Armstrong on holiday, to thank you for your kind efforts on behalf of the above Appeal, and also to explain a slight confusion which may have arisen over a possible reception for the Nehru Gallery.

I think the wording of our original letter to the Prime Minister may have given the impression that we were seeking quite major hospitality in the form of an official reception. What I actually had in mind was the thought that the Prime Minister, as Patron-in-Chief of the Appeal, might be prepared to meet privately, for quite a short time, not more than four potential major sponsors of the Gallery together with Lord Armstrong, the Director, and one or two major sponsors who have already made substantial donations, and thereby encourage them to hand over their cheques. I also realised that we should need to be very sure of their response before committing the Prime Minister to such a meeting, and if I could not be so convinced, we should not have pursued the matter. I thought that we should first discover whether there was any chance of such a meeting being arranged for this purpose.

V&A

Patrons-in-Chief The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher FRS MP His Excellency Mr Rajiv Gandhi

Patrons The Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe QC MP HE Mr P V Narasimha Rao The Rt Hon The Lord Carrington KG GCMG CH MC The Rt Hon John Major MP
Vice-Patrons HE Sir David Goodall KCMG HE Mr M K Rasgotra Committee Chairman The Lord Armstrong of Ilminster GCB CVO Vice-Chairmen Mrs Elizabeth Esteve-Coll Sir Jayvantsinhji Gohel CBE
Mr E G J Dawe Mr G S Gill The Rt Hon The Earl Gowrie Mrs P Hamlyn Mr H N Harilela OBE Mr T Harrison FEng Mr S P Hinduja The Rt Hon The Earl Jellicoe KBE DSO MC Mr G Lalvani Mr M Madhvan
Mr V Mallia Mr S Naqvi The Rt Hon Sir John Nott KCB Mrs S K Oberoi Sir Peter Parker LVO Mr A J Patel Mr I K Patel Mr S Paul Mr C R Plummer Mr S Ruparell Mr R Sandhu
Sir Brian Shaw Mrs L Shrivastani Mr N Virani Mr S Vohra Sir Robert Wade-Gery KCMG KCVO

It was extremely kind of you to pass on the idea of a Reception in the Durbar Court to Stephen Wall and to the Foreign Secretary, who is also a Patron of the Appeal, and I understand this suggestion has been favourably and kindly received. However, I am loath to involve anyone in efforts which may be less than highly successful, and I do not think a large Reception would bring us in the kind of funds we currently require at this stage of the project.

We have so far raised £1.5 million in funds received or pledged, with some major sponsorships of £100,000 and over, which is the sort of target I had in mind, to help us reach our final £700,000.

I do hope that this does not seem a churlish response to the trouble that has been taken by you and your colleagues, and that you will understand our reasons for not going ahead with a function of this scale at the present time.

We all hope that you and Mrs Powell may be able to attend the Opening of the Nehru Gallery on 22nd November, and that we may have the opportunity of welcoming you to the V&A.

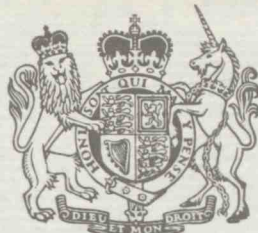
Yours sincerely,

Julie Laird.

ARTS + ANONITIES . From d
the V+A. Mar 82

(NEHRU)

PA



Charles d/r

Office of the Board of Trustees
Victoria and Albert Museum
South Kensington
London SW7 2RL
Telephone 01-589 6371 Ext 302

4/8 pps

From Lord Armstrong of Ilminster

7/11

3rd August, 1990.

Dear Charles,

Thank you for your letter of 31st July

We are of course sad that the Prime Minister cannot be with us for the opening of the Nehru Gallery; but we well understand the pressures on her diary.

It is good of you to pass on to Stephen Wall the thought of a reception for the Appeal. I am sending a copy of this letter to him, and I hope that he will tell the Foreign Secretary that we should of course be honoured and delighted if he were prepared to consider giving a reception in the Durbar Court - an eminently appropriate venue for such an occasion.

Yours ever
Robert

C. D. Powell, Esqs.,
10, Downing Street,
London, S.W.1.

PA NTHRU



A: ARMSTRONG

cc fco

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

31 July 1990

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your letter of 26 July about the Nehru Gallery Appeal. She was most grateful to be invited to the opening on 22 November, but unfortunately already has an engagement at the same time that evening.

You will I am sure remember how many requests the Prime Minister receives to give receptions for good causes. We already have a long queue of commitments stretching through the autumn. I am afraid the Prime Minister cannot see a way to fit in a further reception for the Nehru Gallery Appeal in the timescale which you envisage. But I am copying this letter and yours to Stephen Wall in the Foreign Office, in case the Foreign Secretary might be disposed to do a reception in the Durbar Court.

(C. D. POWELL)

The Lord Armstrong of Ilminster, G.C.B., C.V.O.

LH

PRIME MINISTER

NEHRU GALLERY APPEAL

I attach a letter from Sir Robert Armstrong about progress with the Nehru Gallery Appeal.

He asks first whether you could attend the opening of the Gallery on 22 November. In fact The Queen is conducting the opening and I do not think it necessary for you to be there. Moreover, you are booked to attend the Golden Jubilee of Churchill Songs at the Royal Albert Hall.

Robert also points out that, although £1.4 million has already been raised, something like another £750,000 is still needed, and fundraising is continuing both in India and in this country. He wonders whether you would be prepared to host a reception some time in the early autumn to which sponsors, donors and potential donors might be invited. You have so many of these requests that I think it would be hard to take this on, and I am not sure that it need really have a priority over some of our purely domestic and national causes. We might suggest that the Foreign Secretary could host something in the Durbar Court.

Agree not to attend the opening?

Agree not to host a reception, but to suggest that the Foreign Secretary might like to do this?

Charles Powell

30 July 1990

a:\nehru.dsg



THE
NEHRU GALLERY
OF
INDIAN ART
1550-1900

From Lord Armstrong of Ilminster

c/o Appeal Director, The Nehru Gallery, 49A Hornton St. London W8 7NT.
Telephone: 071-938-2705. Fax: 071-376-2454.

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher F.R.S. M.P.
10 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AA.

26 July 1990. 28/7

My dear Prime Minister,

I am writing to you as Patron in-Chief of the Nehru Gallery Appeal to report progress.

First, we now have a date for the formal opening of the new Gallery. The Queen has graciously agreed to come and open the Gallery on Thursday, 22nd November, at 6.30pm. It would be a great pleasure to us if you were able to be with us on that occasion, to mark the completion of the process which you inaugurated when you came to the Museum in June last year to announce the decision to create the new Gallery and launch the Appeal.

Preparations for the opening of the Gallery proceed according to plan. The work of installation is on schedule. We held two press launches on 5th July, one for the media to make them aware of the Gallery and the Appeal and another which concentrated on the educational programme and was attended by leading members of the Indian community in this country. Rhodes Boyson and Shreela Flather both spoke on the second occasion, and the Museum presented displays of the design of the Gallery, conservation of objects, the education programme, the merchandise connected with the new Gallery which will be on sale to the public, and the Appeal itself.

We have now raised over £1.4 million; but as you will see from the attached report, we need to raise another £400,000 to complete the installation of the Gallery and a further £360,000 to complete the education programme, which we believe will be of great importance and value in its own right, as well as being an adjunct to the Gallery.

V&A

Patrons-in-Chief The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher FRS MP. His Excellency Mr Rajiv Gandhi

Patrons The Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe QC MP. H.E. Mr P.V. Narasimha Rao. The Rt Hon The Lord Carrington KG GCMG CH MC. The Rt Hon John Major MP.
Vice-Patrons H.E. Sir David Goodall KCMG. H.E. Mr M.K. Rosgotra. Committee Chairman The Lord Armstrong of Ilminster GCB CVO. Vice Chairmen Mrs Elizabeth Esteve-Coll. Sir Jayvantsinhji Gohel CBE.
Mr E.G.J. Dawe. Mr G.S. Gill. The Rt Hon The Earl Gowrie. Mrs P. Hamlyn. Mr H.N. Harilela OBE. Mr T. Harrison FEng. Mr S.P. Hinduja. The Rt Hon The Earl Jellicoe KBE DSO MC. Mr G. Lalvani. Mr M. Madhvan.
Mr V. Mallia. Mr S. Naqvi. The Rt Hon Sir John Nott KCB. Mr S.K. Oberoi. Sir Peter Parker LVO. Mr A.J. Patel. Mr I.K. Patel. Mr S. Paul. Mr C.R. Plummer. Mr S. Ruparell. Mr R. Sandhu.
Sir Brian Shaw. Mrs L. Shivdasani. Mr N. Virani. Mr S. Vohra. Sir Robert Wade-Gery KCMG KCVO.

Some of the money we hope to be able to raise in India. In order to provide a tax-efficient vehicle for the Indian contributions, a charitable trust is being established in India, to be called the Nehru Trust for the Indian Collections at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. This will be a great help to us, and we are grateful to the Government of India for its support in this matter.

But we shall still need to raise some of the money we require in this country, and I venture to ask whether you would feel able to give us help for this purpose. I wonder whether you might be prepared to host a reception at 10 Downing Street, some time in the early autumn, to which could be invited at least some of those who are already sponsors or donors, together with a number of people who, with a little further encouragement, might be prepared to become so. Such a demonstration of your practical support for the Appeal would unquestionably do a great deal to ensure success in collecting the funds we urgently need to find.

If by any chance you felt able to agree to this, we should be intensely grateful. We would of course liaise with Charles Powell about dates and detailed arrangements.

Yours ever
Robert

THE NEHRU GALLERY £2.2 MILLION APPEAL (JULY 1990)

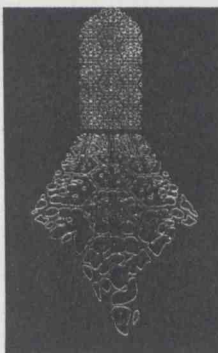
Received: £739,158.

Pledged: Sterling: £366,576.

Rupees: £261,000.

Interest: £ 72,398.

Total: £1,439,132.



THE
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1550-1900

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V&A

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Patrons The Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe QC MP HE Mr P V Narasimha Rao The Rt Hon The Lord Carrington KG GCMG CH MC The Rt Hon John Major MP
Vice-Patrons HE Sir David Goodall KCMG HE Mr M K Rasgotra Committee Chairman The Lord Armstrong of Ilminster GCB CVO Vice-Chairmen Mrs Elizabeth Esteve-Coll Sir Jayvantsinhji Gohel CBE
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Mr V Mallia Mr S Naqvi The Rt Hon Sir John Nott KCB Mr S K Oberoi Sir Peter Parker LVO Mr A J Patel Mr I K Patel Mr S Paul Mr C R Plummer Mr S Ruparell Mr R Sandhu
Sir Brian Shaw Mrs L Shivdasani Mr N Virani Mr S Vohra Sir Robert Wade-Gery KCMG KCVO

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If by any chance you felt able to agree to this, we should be intensely grateful. We would of course liaise with Charles Powell about dates and detailed arrangements.

Yours ever

Robert

THE NEHRU GALLERY £2.2 MILLION APPEAL (JULY 1990)

Received: £739,158.

Pledged: Sterling: £366,576.

Rupees: £261,000.

Interest: £ 72,398.

Total: £1,439,132.

SPONSORS, DONORS AND CONTRIBUTORS.

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The Paul Hamlyn Foundation.

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Anonymous.

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Mr. P. G. Davies & Mr. J. M. Smith.

NEHRU GALLERY OF INDIAN ART APPEAL

Patrons-in-Chief

The Rt.Hon.Margaret Thatcher FRS.MP.
Mr Rajiv Gandhi.
His Excellency Mr.V.P.Singh.

Patrons

The Rt.Hon.The Lord Carrington KG.GCMG.CH.MC.
His Excellency Mr.I.K.Gujral.
The Rt.Hon.Sir Geoffrey Howe QC.MP.
The Rt.Hon.John Major MP.
The Rt.Hon.Douglas Hurd MP.
Mr.P.V.Narasimha Rao MP.(Lok Sabha.)

Vice Patrons

His Excellency Sir David Goodall KCMG.
His Excellency Mr.Kuldip Nayar.
Mr.M.K.Rasgotra.

Management Committee of the Appeal

Lord Armstrong of Ilminster GCB.CVO.
Mrs.Elizabeth Esteve-Coll.
Sir Jayvantsinhji Gohel CBE.
Mr.E.G.J.Dawe.
Mr.G.S.Gill.
The Rt.Hon.The Earl Gowrie.
Mrs.Helen Hamlyn.
Mr.Hari N.Harilela OBE LL D JP.
Mr.Terence Harrison.
Mr.S.P.Hinduja.
The Rt.Hon.The Earl Jellicoe KBE DSO MC PC.
Mr.Gulu Lalvani.
Mr Manubhai Madhvani.
Mr.Vijay Mallya.
Mr.S Naqvi.
The Rt.Hon.Sir John Nott KCB PC.
Mr.Santosh K.Oberoi.
Sir Peter Parker LVO.
Mr.C.R.Plummer.
Mr.I.K.Patel.
Mr.Shantoo Ruparell.
Mr.Roy Sandhu.
Sir Brian Shaw.
Mrs Lakshmi Shivdasani.
Mr.Nazmu Virani.
Mr.Satinder Vohra.
Sir Robert Wade-Gery KCMG.KCVO.

Chairman.
Vice Chairman.
Vice Chairman.



THE
NEHRU GALLERY
OF
INDIAN ART
1550-1900

CC FCO

CDN

13/5 8/12/5

PPS

From Lord Armstrong of Ilminster

c/o: The Appeal Director, The Nehru Gallery, 49A Hornton Street, W8 7NT.
Telephone: 071-938-2705. Fax: 071-376-2454

The Prime Minister
No 10 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AL.

11 May 1990.

My dear Prime Minister,

I am writing to you as a Patron-in-Chief to give you a progress report on the Nehru Gallery Appeal.

As you will see from the enclosed details, we have raised £1,317,130 towards the £2.2 million we need. Of this sum, we have actually received £717,615, which has either been used to pay invoices for work on the gallery or has been placed on deposit. We have sterling pledges of £300,500 and these pledges we are now calling in.

We have also received rupee pledges of £256,000. At the first committee meeting last year the then High Commissioner for India, Mr Rasgotra, told us that permission had been given by the Reserve Bank of India to allow £150,000 to be converted into sterling for this project. Since then we have been working hard to have this figure increased, and it currently stands at £250,000. It also became apparent that if we could create a Charitable trust for the Indian Department at the V&A in India, we should be able to offer the tax exemptions to Indian corporations who would give to the project and go on doing so to enable the extensive cultural and educational programme connected with the gallery to continue.

V&A

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Patrons The Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe QC MP HE Mr P V Narasimha Rao The Rt Hon The Lord Carrington KG GCMG CH MC The Rt Hon John Major MP
Vice-Patrons HE Sir David Goodall KCMG HE Mr M K Rasgotra Committee Chairman The Lord Armstrong of Ilminster GCB CVO Vice Chairmen Mrs Elizabeth Esteve-Coll Sir Jayvantsinhji Gohel CBE
Mr E G J Dawe Mr G S Gill The Rt Hon The Earl Gowrie Mrs P Hamlyn Mr H N Harilela OBE Mr T Harrison FEng Mr S P Hinduja The Rt Hon The Earl Jellicoe KBE DSO MC Mr G Lalvani Mr M Madhvani
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Sir Brian Shaw Mrs L Shivdasani Mr N Virani Mr S Vohra Sir Robert Wade-Gery KCMG KCVO

VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM SOUTH KENSINGTON LONDON SW7 2RL TELEPHONE 01 938 8500/8290 FACSIMILE 01 938 8477 TELEX 268831 VICART G

Following the elections in India, Mr Dawe, Chairman of the Fund-raising committee and a Trustee of the V&A, went to Delhi and arranged for a Trust to be prepared by Mr J.B.Dadachanji on similar lines to the Cambridge University Trust. The Trust will have Indian Trustees and the Secretary will be Mr. R.L.Piplani. We have since heard informally from Mr Dadachanji that the Board of Direct Taxes will use its powers of exemption to grant charitable status to this project.

As you know, such things take time, but we are trying very hard to have this implemented as soon as possible, so that we may call in the rupee pledges.

During the recent State Visit of the President of India to this country, the Director of the V&A, Mrs Elizabeth Esteve-Coll, Dr.Swallow, Head of the Indian Department, and I were granted an audience, and the project and the Appeal were approved by the President and the new High Commissioner. The new Prime Minister of India, Mr V.P.Singh, has accepted an invitation to become one of the Patrons-in-Chief.

As work progresses, plans are being made to incorporate the names of Sponsors in the actual structure of the gallery. We are planning for a formal opening of the new Gallery in mid-November.

I am enclosing a list of all the approaches known to us which have been made and the results. If you have any suggestions for other possible approaches which might help us towards achieving our target of £2.2million, I should greatly welcome them.

^{flat}
Your writing to the Prime Minister of India
has been a marvellous help, and I am
very grateful to you indeed. Charles
Purcell sent me a copy of his letter
to you, ^{flat} and it is clear that your letter,
and the fact that you were prepared to
write yourself, has made all the difference.
Thank you very much.

Yours ever
Robert



ARTS + AMENITIES: *Future of VHA* March 82



FILE 870

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

1 May 1990

NEHRU GALLERY APPEAL

You wrote on 14 February to ask if the Prime Minister would invite Mr. V.P. Singh to be one of the Patrons-in-Chief of the Nehru Gallery Appeal, and at the same time enlist his support for the efforts you are making to persuade the Indian government to grant tax exemption for contributions to the Appeal from Indian corporations. I enclose a copy of the reply which the Prime Minister has now received from Mr. Singh, which I hope you will find helpful.

(C. D. POWELL)

The Lord Armstrong of Ilminster,
G.C.B., C.V.O.



[Handwritten signature]

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

26 April 1990

I enclose a copy of the Indian Prime Minister's reply to the Prime Minister's letter of 19 February inviting him to become one of the Patrons in Chief of the Appeal for the Nehru Gallery of Indian Art at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

I am copying this letter and enclosure to Martin Le Jeune (Office of the Minister for the Arts).

C. D. POWELL

Simon Gass, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

[Red handwritten mark]

subject cc ops
cc Master



PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T75C/90

PRIME MINISTER

New Delhi
April 16, 1990

Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you for your letter of February 19. *Pratap*

I would be happy to become one of the Patrons-in-Chief of the Appeal for the Nehru Gallery of Indian Art at the Victoria and Albert Museum. The project is of special interest to us since this museum possesses one of the finest collections of Indian art.

We will favourably consider suggestions for tax exemptions for contributions from Indian corporations and for conversion of rupee contributions into sterling for remittance to the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Nehru Art Gallery. Our Ministry of Finance will be in touch with Mr. Edward Dawe, a trustee of the Museum, who had earlier discussed these issues with us.

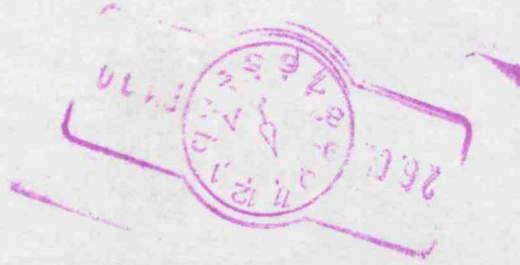
With warm regards,

Yours sincerely,

[Vishwanath Pratap Singh]

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, MP
Prime Minister of Britain
London

ACTS + AGENTS: V+A, NOV 8





10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

File ECL
a Feb
PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T358/90

THE PRIME MINISTER

SUBJECT CC MASTER
OPS

19 February, 1990.

Dear Prime Minister,

I am writing to say how much I hope you will agree to become one of the Patrons-in-Chief of the Appeal for the Nehru Gallery of Indian Art at the Victoria and Albert Museum. I know that Lord Armstrong of Ilminster, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Museum, has written to you about this.

The Appeal seeks to raise £2 million for the re-display of a major Gallery of Indian Art. I believe that the project will bring great benefit to both our countries, to the ties between us, and to the 800,000 people of Indian origin living in Britain. As Lord Armstrong has told you, the plans include an ambitious new education programme.

Since June last year, when I opened the Appeal, over £1 million has been raised from British companies and Foundations, from Indian businesses in this country, and from pledges in India.

I understand that Mr. Edward Dawe, a Trustee of the V and A, was in India recently and met Professor Madhu Dandavate and Sri I.K. Gujral, who were very helpful.

As they discussed, there are two particular problems: the need for tax exemption for contributions from Indian corporations and the need for a further dispensation for rupee contributions to be converted into sterling for remitting to the Victoria and Albert Museum/Nehru Gallery. Mr. Dawe mentioned both these problems to the Minister of Finance. Anything that

your Government can do to help in these matters would be of very great assistance to the success of the Appeal.

Mr. Dawe has now taken the first steps towards setting up a charitable trust in India. It is hoped that this will not only assist with the immediate task of opening the Gallery, but also will enable Indian scholars and teachers to visit and study the Museum's magnificent collection of Indian Art.

I very much hope that you will be able to join me in supporting this important and valuable project.

Yours sincerely

Nayan Shah

Shri Vishwanath Pratap Singh



File to

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

18 February 1990

I enclose a letter which the Prime Minister has signed to the Indian Prime Minister, at the request of Lord Armstrong, to help in raising money for the Appeal for the Nehru Gallery of Indian Art at the Victoria and Albert Museum. Provided that the Foreign Secretary sees no objection, I should be grateful if the message could be delivered.

C.D. POWELL

R.N. Peirce, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

SP



W/S

THE
NEHRU GALLERY
OF
INDIAN ART
1550-1900

From Lord Armstrong of Ilminster

c/o: The Appeal Director, The Nehru Gallery, 49A Hornton Street, W8 7NT.
Telephone: 071-938-2705. Fax: 071-376-2454

His Excellency Mr. V.P. Singh
The Prime Minister
New Delhi
India.

11 May 1990.

Dear Prime Minister,

We are honoured and delighted that you have accepted our invitation to become a Patron-in-Chief of the Appeal for the Nehru Gallery, and I am now writing to give you a progress report.

As you will see from the enclosed details, we have raised £1,317,130 towards the £2.2 million we need. Of this sum, we have actually received £717,615, which has either been used to pay invoices for work on the gallery or has been placed on deposit. We have sterling pledges of £300,500 and these pledges we are now calling in.

We have also received rupee pledges of £256,000. At the first committee meeting last year the then High Commissioner for India, Mr Rasgotra, told us that permission had been given by the Reserve Bank of India to allow £150,000 to be converted into sterling for this project. Since then we have been working hard to have this figure increased, and it currently stands at £250,000. It also became apparent that if we could create a Charitable trust for the Indian Department at the V&A in India, we should be able to offer the tax exemptions to Indian corporations who would give to the project and go on doing so to enable the extensive cultural and educational programme connected with the gallery to continue.

V&A

Patrons-in-Chief The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher FRS MP His Excellency Mr Rajiv Gandhi

Patrons The Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe QC MP HE Mr P V Narasimha Rao The Rt Hon The Lord Carrington KG GCMG CH MC The Rt Hon John Major MP

Vice-Patrons HE Sir David Goodall KCMG HE Mr M K Rasgotra Committee Chairman The Lord Armstrong of Ilminster GCB CVO Vice Chairmen Mrs Elizabeth Esteve-Coll Sir Jayvantsinhji Gohel CBE
Mr E G J Daws Mr G S Gill The Rt Hon The Earl Gowrie Mrs P Hamlyn Mr H N Harifela OBE Mr T Harrison FENG Mr S P Hinduja The Rt Hon The Earl Jellicoe KBE DSO MC Mr G Lalvani Mr M Madhvani
Mr V Mallia Mr S Naqvi The Rt Hon Sir John Nott KCB Mr S K Oberoi Sir Peter Parker LVO Mr A J Patel Mr I K Patel Mr S Paul Mr C R Plummer Mr S Ruparell Mr R Sandhu
Sir Brian Shaw Mrs L Shivdasani Mr N Virani Mr S Vohra Sir Robert Wade-Gery KCMG KCVO

Following the elections in India, Mr Dawe, Chairman of the Fund-raising committee and a Trustee of the V&A, went to Delhi and arranged for a Trust to be prepared by Mr J.B.Dadachanji on similar lines to the Cambridge University Trust. The Trust will have Indian Trustees and the Secretary will be Mr. R.L.Piplani. We have since heard informally from Mr Dadachanji that the Board of Direct Taxes will use its powers of exemption to grant charitable status to this project. As you know, such things take time, but we are trying very hard to have this implemented as soon as possible, so that we may call in the rupee pledges.

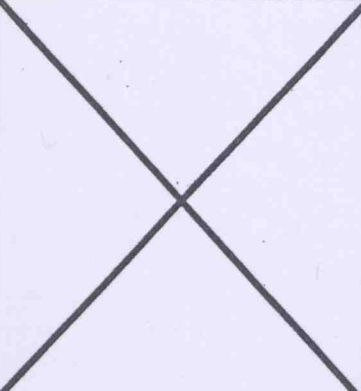
During the recent State Visit of the President of India to this country, the Director of the V&A, Mrs Elizabeth Esteve-Coll, Dr.Swallow, Head of the Indian Department, and I were granted an audience, and the project and the Appeal were approved by the President and the new High Commissioner.

As work progresses, plans are being made to incorporate the names of Sponsors in the actual structure of the gallery. We are planning for a formal opening of the new Gallery in mid-November.

I am enclosing a list of all the approaches known to us which have been made and the results. If you have any suggestions for other possible approaches which might help us towards achieving our target of £2.2million, I should greatly welcome them.

Yours sincerely
Robert Armstrong

A The National Archives

DEPARTMENT/SERIES PIECE/ITEM (one piece/item number)	Date and sign
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Use the card for one piece or for each extract removed from a different place within a piece.

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Enter the piece and item references, .
eg. 28, 1079, 84/1, 107/3

Enter extract details if it is an extract rather than a whole piece.
This should be an indication of what the extract is,
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Sign and date next to the reason why the record is not available to the public ie. Closed under FOI exemption; Retained under section 3(4) of the Public Records Act 1958; Temporarily retained; Missing at transfer or Number not used.



Office of the Board of Trustees
Victoria and Albert Museum
South Kensington
London SW7 2RL
~~Telephone 01-589 6371 Ext 302~~

From Lord Armstrong of Ilminster

14th February, 1990.

My dear Charles,

Nehru Gallery Appeal

Edward Dawe, one of the newly appointed Trustees of the Victoria and Albert Museum, and a co-chairman of the Nehru Gallery Appeal, has just returned from India. He reports that as a result of his visit he believes that it would be useful if the Prime Minister as one of the Patrons-in-Chief of the Appeal, could write to Mr. V. P. Singh to reinforce a letter which I sent him on 18th December (copy enclosed) inviting him to become a Patron-in-Chief, and to enlist his support for the efforts we are making to persuade the Indian Government to grant tax exemption for contributions to the Appeal from Indian corporations and to allow the transmission across the exchanges of contributions to the Appeal received in India: so far permission has been given for up to £150,000 but if that limit were substantially revised (or still better removed entirely) we could expect to be able to raise a good deal more in India.

It would be a very great help to us if the Prime Minister felt able to write accordingly to Mr. Singh: we believe that could remove a lot of impediments at the Indian end.

I am enclosing herewith an attempt at a draft letter, to show you the kind of thing I have in mind.

Yours ever
Robert

C. D. Powell, Esq.,
10, Downing Street,
London, SW1A 2AA.

Instructions for completion of Dummy Card

Use black or blue pen to complete form.

Use the card for one piece or for each extract removed from a different place within a piece.

Enter the department and series,
eg. HO 405, J 82.

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D R A F T

14th February, 1990.

His Excellency Mr. V. P. Singh,
The Prime Minister,
New Delhi,
India.

*A. Tyre W. Pri-
Signature
en*

I am writing to say how much I hope you will agree to become one of the Patrons-in-Chief of the Appeal for the Nehru Gallery of Indian Art at the Victoria and Albert Museum. I know that Lord Armstrong of Ilminster, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Museum, has written to you about this.

The Appeal seeks to raise £2 million for the re-display of a major Gallery of Indian Art. I believe that the project will bring great benefit to both our countries, to the ties between us, and to the 800,000 people of Indian origin living in Britain. As Lord Armstrong has told you, the plans include an ambitious new education programme.

Since June last year, when I opened the Appeal, over £1 million has been raised from British companies and Foundations, from Indian businesses in this country, and from pledges in India.

I understand that Mr. Edward Dawe, a Trustee of the V and A, was in India recently and met Professor Madhu Dandavate and Sri I. K. Gujral, who were very helpful.

As they discussed, there are two particular problems: the need for tax exemption for contributions from Indian corporations and the need for a further dispensation for rupee contributions to be converted into sterling for remitting to the Victoria and Albert Museum/Nehru Gallery. Mr. Dawe mentioned both these problems to the Minister of Finance. Anything that your Government can do to help in these matters would be of very great assistance to the success of the Appeal.

Mr. Dawe has now taken the first steps towards setting up a charitable trust in India. It is hoped that this will not only assist with the immediate task of opening the Gallery, but also will enable Indian scholars and teachers to visit and study the Museum's magnificent collection of Indian Art.

I very much hope that you will be able to join me in supporting this important and valuable project.

CROXLEY
SCRIPT



THE
NEHRU GALLERY
OF
INDIAN ART
1550-1900

From Lord Armstrong of Ilminster

His Excellency Mr V.P. Singh
The Prime Minister
New Delhi
India.

18 December 1989

My dear Prime Minister,

The Victoria and Albert Museum launched a major Appeal on 7th June this year to raise £2 million for the re-installation of a gallery of Indian Art, to be called the Nehru Gallery of Indian Art, in honour of the centenary of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's birth.

The British Prime Minister, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, opened the Appeal, and agreed to be Co-Patron-in-Chief with Mr Rajiv Gandhi. Patrons include Lord Carrington, formerly Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the V&A, Mr Narasimha Rao, Sir Geoffrey Howe, Mr John Major and Mr Douglas Hurd, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The two High Commissioners, His Excellency Mr Rasgotra and His Excellency Sir David Goodall are also Patrons. The Director of the V&A, Mrs Elizabeth Esteve-Coll is a Vice Patron, and I am Chairman of the Management Committee, which contains distinguished business people from both Britain and India.

We were delighted to welcome the Vice President of India to the Museum during his recent visit, when I was able to tell him that, already, in the first five months of the Appeal, we have raised donations and pledges totalling nearly £1.1 million. We are confident that with a renewed effort over the next five months we shall succeed in making this splendid project a reality. I am enclosing further information on the gallery.



Patrons-in-Chief The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher FRS MP His Excellency Mr Rajiv Gandhi

Patrons The Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe QC MP HE Mr P V Narasimha Rao The Rt Hon The Lord Carrington KC GCMG CM MC The Rt Hon John Major MP

Vice-Patrons HE Sir David Goodall KCMG HE Mr M K Rasgotra Committee Chairman The Lord Armstrong of Ilminster GCB CVO Vice Chairman Mrs Elizabeth Esteve-Coll Sir Jaganmohan Lal Kohli CBE
[G] J Dawe Mr C S Gill The Rt Hon The Earl Gwinn Mr P Hamlyn Mr H N Harilela CBE Mr T Harrison FRCGS Mr S P Hinduja The Rt Hon The Earl Joffe KBE DSO MC Mr G Lalvani Mr M Madhvan
Mr V Mallay Mr S Naqvi The Rt Hon Sir John Nott KCB Mr S K Oberoi Sir Peter Parker LVO Mr A J Patel Mr K Patel Mr S Paul Mr C R Plummer Mr S Ruparell Mr B Sandhu
Sir Brian Shaw Mrs E Shindevani Mr N Vireni Mr S Vohra Sir Robert Wedderburn KCMG KCVO

VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM SOUTH KENSINGTON LONDON SW7 2RL TELEPHONE 01 938 8500/8290 FACSIMILE 01 938 8477 TELEX 268831 VICABT G

We believe that this project will bring great benefits to both our countries, and to over 800,000 people of Indian origin now living in Britain and making an important and enterprising contribution to our national life. It is high time that the magnificent collection of Indian Art which is in our care should be given the display it deserves. At the same time we plan an ambitious and far reaching education programme to strengthen the pride of the Indian Community in the achievements of their home country, on, and to help people of British ancestry to understand the ancient civilisation with which their own history is so closely interwoven.

We hope that the Gallery will open in the autumn of 1990, and we expect its formal Opening to be a major occasion.

We should be deeply honoured if you would consent to be a Patron-in-Chief of this Appeal, together with Mrs Thatcher and Mr Gandhi.

Yours very sincerely

Robert Armstrong



file

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

10 August 1982

Thank you for your letter of 4 August about the future of the Theatre and Bethnal Green Museums which the Prime Minister has now seen. She has also seen Sir Derek Rayner's minute of 9 August and the letter from the Private Secretary to the Chief Secretary of the same date. The Prime Minister considers that to leave the question of the future of the two Museums open for the time being as proposed by the Chief Secretary would not be justified given the extent of the campaign in their favour. Nor does she consider that the potential savings from the closure of the Museums is sufficient to justify such a course. Accordingly she agrees with Mr. Channon's recommendation that the Government should make an early announcement that it intends to proceed with the Theatre Museum and to keep the Museum of Childhood open on the understanding that, as Mr. Channon suggests, the Theatre Museum can go ahead within the existing capital programme and the Bethnal Green Museum can be catered for within the existing revenue programme. In this context the Prime Minister has noted that it is likely that the Theatre Museum will charge for admission. She has further commented that some adjustment to the Arts budget may have to be made elsewhere.

The Prime Minister agrees with Mr. Channon that the Government should respond to the report of the Education, Science and Arts Select Committee as soon as possible; she has approved the draft response attached to your letter of 4 August subject to all the amendments proposed by Sir Derek Rayner.

I am sending a copy of this letter to John Gieve (Chief Secretary's Office, HM Treasury), Jim Buckley (Lord Privy Seal's Office), Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office) and Clive Priestley (Sir Derek Rayner's Office).

(TIMOTHY FLESHER)

Miss Mary Giles,
Department of Education and Science

Far

PRIME MINISTER

Agree with Rayner's amendments - all of them

Theatre Museum and the Museum of Childhood

You saw the minute from Paul Channon's office (Flag C) over the weekend. We have received today further minutes from the Chief Secretary (Flag A) and from Sir Derek Rayner (Flag B). These raise rather different issues. The Chief Secretary does not question Mr. Channon's recommendations specifically but believes that the future of the two museums should be settled within the PES framework and particularly at his bilateral meeting with Mr. Channon on 8 September. He does not believe an immediate response to the Select Committee report is required. Mr. Channon argues for a favourable decision on both museums which should be announced during August.

Do you agree with Mr. Channon or with the Chief Secretary?

If you agree with the Chief Secretary, Sir Derek Rayner's minute becomes irrelevant, since it is predicated on an early announcement. Sir Derek does not dissent from Mr. Channon's proposals but makes a number of drafting amendments to the draft reply to the Select Committee (Flag D). These are mainly designed to rebut criticisms of Mr. Burrett and to strengthen those sections on the Government's resolve for getting value for money.

Do you agree with Sir Derek Rayner's proposed amendments?

9 August, 1982

9 August, 1982



Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG

M C Scholar Esq
Private Secretary
No.10 Downing Street
London SW1

9 August 1982

Dear Michael

FUTURE OF THE THEATRE MUSEUM AND THE MUSEUM OF CHILDHOOD, BETHNAL GREEN

The Chief Secretary has seen a copy of Mary Giles' letter of 4 August.

The Chief Secretary believes that the future of the two museums should be decided within the framework of the public expenditure survey, in view of the costs involved - some £4.5 million capital cost and approaching £1 million a year operating costs.

A meeting with the Minister for the Arts has been arranged for 8 September, as part of the series of bilateral meetings the Chief Secretary will be having with spending Ministers. This will offer an opportunity for considering the implications of Mr Channon's proposals and the other recommendations in the Rayner Report in the context of the Arts programme as a whole.

The Chief Secretary is not aware of any pressing need for an immediate Government response to the Select Committee's interim report on the two museums, particularly as the House is in recess. He considers that decisions on its content and timing can readily wait until after the meeting on 8 September.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to the Lord Privy Seal, the Minister for the Arts, Sir Robert Armstrong and Sir Derek Rayner.

Yours sincerely

John Gieve

JOHN GIEVE

Private Secretary

 B

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

FUTURE OF THE THEATRE MUSEUM AND THE MUSEUM OF CHILDHOOD

I have three comments on the draft letter ^{TPM} to the Chairman of the Education, Science and Arts Select Committee sent to your private secretary on behalf of the Minister of the Arts.

TREATMENT OF THE EXAMINING OFFICER

2. The scrutiny was conducted by Mr F G Burrett, CB. Mr Burrett retired last year after a long and distinguished career in the service of the Crown, beginning with war service in the Royal Engineers. He was assisted by a retired museum director, Mr T Hume, and by a security expert from Scotland Yard, Mr M Sharpe, as well as assignment officers from DES and MPO.

3. Mr Burrett's report was a first class example of the scrutiny technique. It made trenchant criticisms of the existing management of the museum, but in a constructive not in a wounding fashion. Its quality has been acknowledged by those best qualified to comment, including the chairmen of the V & A Museum Advisory Council, Sir Alexander Glen, and of the Museums and Galleries Commission, Sir Arthur Drew. Both have written to me in the last week following my own letter to the Times published on 30 July. The Economist, the Financial Times and the Sunday Times have also written well balanced commentaries, as has the Museums Journal (I understand).

CONFIDENTIAL

4. Mr Burrett's reference to the projected Theatre Museum and the actual Museum of Childhood have however brought down on his head an avalanche of abuse and insult. Mr Channon and I have not escaped - I have been traduced in the Standard and elsewhere - but this does not begin to compare with the treatment of Mr Burrett. He has been scornfully handled by the Select Committee and vilified by some of the press (notably the Standard, which led a campaign to save the Theatre Museum, the Observer, the Guardian, and the New Statesman). His integrity and professionalism have been called in question. And because he was a civil servant, he has been treated with peculiar disdain by people many of whom do not begin to match his personal quality or his record of public service. He and Mrs Burrett have borne all this with fortitude, but I am quite clear that he is now entitled to public, warm and convincing support. The draft reply points in the right direction but I should like to see two changes, as follows:

- (1) Para. 2 might begin like this, with corresponding changes in para. 3:

"The Government undertook the scrutiny of the Victoria and Albert and Science Museums because they were convinced that it was right to examine the Museums' activities in this way. I welcome this opportunity to repeat what I told the House of Commons on 27 May, namely that the Government appreciates the efforts which Mr Gordon Burrett, Mr Tom Hume, Mr Martin Sharpe and their assistants made; we thank them for the very substantial help their valuable



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report has provided as a basis for the formulation of policy. We are very grateful to Mr Burrett and his colleagues for the detailed and careful way they made their examination. They were unanimous in their views. As you know ..."

(2) The last sentence of para. 6 might read:

✓ "The personal attacks made on Mr Burrett, who with the support of his colleagues rightly and responsibly raised these matters, are disgraceful."

THE THEATRE MUSEUM

5. The draft reply rather gives the impression that the Government are bowing to the clamour which has been whipped up in recent weeks (paras. 5 and 7). I believe that the issue should be seen to be settled on its merits.

6. I was strongly impressed by the fact that some of those who lent their signatures to the campaign are wealthy and that some earn their living in this country, but live in tax-havens or otherwise abroad. Quite frankly, I think that at a time when the Government is rightly restraining expenditure on the needs of us all (eg the NHS) it is not in its interest to be seen to be giving way to the interest of a noisy and in some cases well-heeled minority. I am aware of many cases in business and community life where people are meeting lack of funds by working to raise them. The Theatre Museum is a classic case where the Government, in my view, is entitled to say that it is willing to go ahead only on something like a "pound-for-pound" footing.

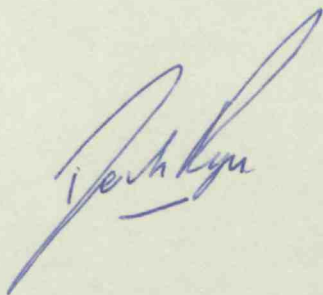
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THE MUSEUM OF CHILDHOOD

7. I have far more sympathy for the Bethnal Green Museum, which exists and which is undoubtedly a Good Thing. I believe that the Government should give a somewhat clearer signal than in para. 9, the end of which I find a little opaque. I therefore suggest that para. 9 might read like this:

✓ "... of Childhood. The Government wish to make their position clear now. They would like to see the Museum kept in being. They hope that the new Board of Trustees of the Victoria and Albert Museum would maintain the museum, which gives immense pleasure and is one of the few attractions available in this part of London. I shall ask the Board to look carefully at the recommendations made in Mr Burrett's report so that its running costs are controlled and covered in ways suitable to the purposes and location of the Museum."

8. I am copying this to the Chief Secretary, the Lord Privy Seal, the Minister for the Arts and Sir Robert Armstrong.



DEREK RAYNER

7 August 1982

CONFIDENTIAL



Department of Education and Science

Office of Arts and Libraries
From the Minister for the Arts

Timothy Flesher Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street

Elizabeth House, York Road
London SE1 7PH

Telegrams: Artsides London SE1
Tel: 01 928 9222

4th August 1982

*c I hope that the
has been named this week before in
David Golder will be the Prime Minister
not with the theatre*

Dear Tim,

*To be aware.
I understand that Derek
Rayner will be the Chief Secretary
will be minuting you on
Monday. Await their comments?*

FUTURE OF THE THEATRE AND BETHNAL
GREEN MUSEUMS

*TH
6/8.*

You may recall that on 21st May the Prime Minister approved the publication of the Rayner Scrutiny Report on the future of the Victoria and Albert and Science Museums. On that occasion Mr Channon announced (see attached copy) only two decisions but said that the Government would consult widely on the other recommendations in the Report. The consultation period ended at the end of July. There are a large number of proposals in the Report which will need further consideration and a Government reply in due course. But there are two particular recommendations about outstations of the Victoria and Albert Museum on which it is highly desirable to make early decisions.

The Report recommended that consideration should be given urgently to abandoning the proposed Theatre Museum in Covent Garden. In the view of the scrutineers it should proceed, if at all, on the basis that a special charge should be made for admission to render it self financing. The Report also recommended that admission charges should be introduced at Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood with a view to securing an income which would cover the Museum's recurrent costs. If that proved impossible, consideration should be given to closing it down.

These two recommendations have aroused a great deal of public interest. There have been debates in both Houses of Parliament, a report from the Education, Science and the Arts Select Committee, Early Day Motions signed by over 100 Members of Parliament, many of them Government supporters, and many hundreds of letters. The Standard also launched a petition to save the Theatre Museum. This petition of over 20,000 was presented to Mr Channon recently. All of these representations have been in favour of proceeding with the Theatre Museum and of keeping the Museum of Childhood open. The Prime Minister also received a letter from the Chairman

... / ...

CONFIDENTIAL

of the Victoria and Albert Museum Advisory Council making their first formal submission to a Prime Minister for over 100 years. She also replied to a letter from Sir John Gielgud. There is a particularly strong feeling among those who have given material for the Theatre Museum that it would be a breach of trust if the Government did not proceed with it.

It would be possible within the existing capital programme for the Arts to go ahead with the Theatre Museum, and, given anything like reasonable success with private fund raising, to run it when it opens in a few years time. The Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood can be catered for within the existing revenue programme - especially with more attention to possible economies.

In the light of all the representations Mr Channon is convinced that it would be wise for the Government to proceed with the Theatre Museum and to keep the Museum of Childhood open and to defuse the situation by making an early announcement. He believes that such an announcement would be very favourably received. Public attention could then focus on the other valuable recommendations of the Rayner Scrutiny Report. Many of these have been welcomed in both Houses and by the Chairman of the Victoria and Albert Advisory Council in a letter to the press.

... Mr Channon has to reply to the Education, Science and the Arts Committee's Report on the Theatre Museum published last week as House of Commons Paper 472. I am enclosing a draft of a letter to the Chairman of the Committee, which, subject to the Prime Minister's approval, Mr Channon would propose to publish at a convenient date during August.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, the Lord Privy Seal, Sir Robert Armstrong and Sir Derek Rayner.

Yours ever
M G E Giles
 Miss M G E Giles
 Private Secretary

D

DRAFT REPLY TO THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
SCIENCE AND THE ARTS - THE THEATRE MUSEUM
AND THE MUSEUM OF CHILDHOOD BETHNAL
GREEN

I am replying to the Report from the Education, Science and Arts Committee, Session 1981-82, House of Commons Paper 472, about the Theatre Museum and the Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood.

The Government very much welcome the Rayner Scrutiny of the Victoria and Albert and Science Museums and are convinced that it was right to examine the Museums' activities in this way. As you know, I announced at the end of May decisions on two major points in the Report and I was, in particular, glad to note that the Committee agreed with the Government's prompt acceptance of the recommendation to change the status of the Museums from departmental to trustee museums. I was glad also to note that the Committee were in agreement with my view that the matter of charging for admission to the general collections of the Museums should best be left for decision to the future trustees of each Museum.

There are many other valuable recommendations in the Report about which the Government will give its considered views at an early moment. We are very grateful to Mr Gordon Burrett, Mr Tom Hume and Mr Martin Sharpe for the detailed and careful way they have made this examination. They were unanimous in their views. Valuable lessons will be drawn from the Report and I was glad to see the recent letter in the press from the Chairman of the Victoria and Albert Museum Advisory Council, putting on record the Council's conviction that there is much in the Report that will assist the Museum in achieving better management and housekeeping.

Two topics in the Report have given rise to considerable controversy. One is the proposal that consideration should be given urgently to abandoning the proposed Theatre Museum (Recommendation 27). The other is the suggestion that admission charges should be introduced at the Museum of Childhood, Bethnal Green, with a view to securing a net income which would cover the Museum's true recurrent costs; should that prove impossible consideration should be given to closing the Museum down. (Recommendation 28).

The Government have considered the Report of the Select Committee, the debates in both Houses of Parliament, the Early Day Motions signed by over 100 Members of Parliament, more than 20,000 signatures on the Standard petition and the several hundred letters that I have received on these two topics. There has been overwhelming support for the construction of the Theatre Museum and for the retention of the Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood.

8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4-5 AUG 1982

In a fundamental examination of the Victoria and Albert Museum it is clearly right, particularly at a time when resources are inevitably constrained, that the priorities of the Museum should be examined carefully. Indeed it would have been quite wrong if these fundamental questions had not been posed. I regret very much the personal attacks that have been made on the scrutineers who rightly and responsibly have raised these matters.

In the light of all the representations that have been received and in particular the report of the Select Committee, the Government have decided that, subject to the successful conclusion of the outstanding negotiations on the lease, and to the receipt of a satisfactory tender, the project shall go forward as proposed in the old Flower Market in Covent Garden. There will be a careful examination of the best financial basis for the successful running of the Museum. Both the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Theatre Museum Advisory Councils are in favour of admission charges for the Theatre Museum and I note that the Select Committee favours a pattern of plural funding including charges for public admission.

The Museum will not be ready for some years and I shall specifically draw to the attention of the new Trustees of the Victoria and Albert Museum the views of the Committee about admission charges and the need for free days. The cost of constructing the Theatre Museum can be found within the present capital programme for the Arts. The existence of a Theatre Museum will be an extremely exciting development. It is particularly appropriate for it to be housed in Covent Garden in London's theatreland. The present project provides, in my view, the only prospect of achieving a Theatre Museum in this century. We have also to recognise that there are many people who have given valuable and interesting collections for the Museum who would rightly feel affronted should the project be abandoned.

The Committee also turned briefly to the question of the Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood. It is clearly desirable to remove anxiety about this at the earliest possible moment. It is the Government's intention that this Museum, which gives immense pleasure and is one of the few attractions available in this part of London, should also continue. I propose therefore to ask the new Board of Trustees of the Victoria and Albert Museum to look carefully at the recommendations of the Rayner Report to see what can be done about making progress towards covering its running costs.

The Government are still considering the other recommendations in the Report including those regarding the other outstations. I hope to announce decisions on these points in the autumn although of course many of the detailed proposals will be more appropriately considered by the new Board of Trustees.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

FIFTH Report from the

EDUCATION,
SCIENCE AND ARTS
COMMITTEE

Session 1981-82

THE FUTURE OF THE THEATRE MUSEUM

Ordered by The House of Commons to be printed

26 July 1982

To be published as House of Commons Paper 472

The Education, Science and Arts Committee is appointed under S.O. No. 86A to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the Department of Education and Science and associated public bodies and similar matters within the responsibilities of the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

The Committee consists of nine members, of whom the quorum is three. Unless the House otherwise orders, all Members nominated to the Committee continue to be members of it for the remainder of the Parliament.

The Committee has power:

- (a) to send for persons, papers and records, to sit notwithstanding any adjournment of the House, to adjourn from place to place, and to report from time to time;
- (b) to appoint persons with technical knowledge either to supply information which is not readily available or to elucidate matters of complexity within the committee's order of reference.

The following were members of the Committee during the present inquiry:

Mr Christopher Price (Chairman)

Mr Tim Brinton

Mr David Madel

Mr Patrick Cormack

Mr John McWilliam

Mr Martin Flannery

Mr John Osborn

Mr Harry Greenway

Mr Dafydd Thomas

Changes in Committee membership—Session 1981–82:

20 November 1981

Mr Stan Thorne *discharged*, Mr Martin Flannery *added*.

FIFTH REPORT

The Education, Science and Arts Committee have agreed to the following Report:

The Future of the Theatre Museum

1. Your Committee became concerned about the question of the Theatre Museum in view of the recommendation of the Rayner Scrutiny of the Departmental Museums that 'Consideration should be given to abandoning the proposed Theatre Museum at Covent Garden.'¹ We shared the widespread public disquiet at this recommendation and decided to examine it with some urgency. The matter is urgent because building work on the new site for the Museum is about to begin and the Minister for the Arts must soon decide about the Museum's future. He has himself asked for comments on the Rayner report to be in his hands by August 1st.

2. We heard evidence on 14 July from: Mr F G Burrett, author of the Rayner Scrutiny, The Viscount Norwich, Past Chairman of the British Theatre Museum Association, (1966-1971), Sir Roy Strong, Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum, and Mr A Schouvaloff, Curator of the Theatre Museum.

1 see Annex for the passage of the Rayner Scrutiny of the Departmental Museums which deals with the Theatre Museum

3. The Victoria and Albert Museum has been accumulating theatre material for several decades, since the initial gift of the Enthoven collection in 1924. In the early 1970s a number of bodies keen to establish a national theatre museum, including the British Theatre Museum Association and the Friends of the Museum of the Performing Arts, decided to pool their resources and their energies with the V & A theatre collection in order to establish a Theatre Museum under the aegis of the V & A. Subsequent gifts and acquisitions have been made under the assumption that this would develop into a major national museum and archive for the theatre. In 1974 a curator to the Theatre Museum was appointed and in 1975 the Government decided that the Museum should be housed in the former Flower Market at Covent Garden. The design work is now completed and, apart from a number of points about the lease from the Greater London Council (GLC), the project is ready to go out to tender with a view to completion in two years' time.

4. The terms of reference of the Rayner Scrutiny of the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Science Museum were 'to examine the Museums' activities, the contributions they make to the Museums' main objectives; and to make recommendations on staffing and working methods'.¹ The report contains 53 recommendations and a list of nine ways in which savings might be made. The most fundamental proposal is to change the status of the museums from departmental to trustee museums and we commend the Government for its prompt acceptance of this recommendation. Rayner also proposed introducing a general charge for admission to the museums but the government rejected this recommendation arguing that the matter of charges is best left for decision to the trustees of each museum. Here again we find ourselves in agreement with the Minister's response.

5. We recognise that Rayner scrutinies can be a helpful exercise in many areas of Government. Within the scope of our own Committee, we acknowledge that the Rayner investigation of the University Grants Committee was a most useful exercise. We are concerned, however, that the indiscriminate use of Rayner-type inquiries may not be a suitable way in which to examine the effectiveness of all forms of public expenditure.

1 (Rayner Scrutiny p.1) .

6. We accept that it is not always possible to distinguish issues of museums policy from matters of managerial efficiency and do not question the need for attaching due importance to these matters, although we reserve our judgement on the appropriateness of cost-effective analyses with respect to museums. We do, however, question whether it was entirely appropriate for Mr Burrett, who had been asked to carry out this Rayner Scrutiny although he had no particular credentials in this field of work and only a layman's knowledge of the arts,¹ to make judgements about the relative importance of the Theatre Museum project. In his own words:

'I did not think myself qualified or called upon myself to work out museum aims and put them in the Report based on the assumption that they were correct. Nevertheless, I have had with all due diffidence to say things which infer a view of mine about priorities ... it was 'pure Burrett'. It was meant to be an informed layman's judgement'.²

In the light of this explanation and bearing in mind the further evidence that the scrutiny gave no consideration to the place of the Theatre Museum in the national system of museums or to the nature and standing of theatre museums abroad, we find ourselves unable to attach any credence to the view expressed in the report that 'in the broad context of museum policy, prospects and priorities, (the Theatre Museum) is a luxury, albeit a delightful one.'

1 (Qs 1-5)

2 (Qs 21-2)

7. Whilst Mr Burrett had the benefit of a professional adviser on museum matters, after considering the evidence we are left with the suspicion that the team which undertook this scrutiny may not have been in total agreement. We believe that it is not helpful in such circumstances to use the first person plural in drafting the report to imply unanimity. Where full responsibility for the opinions expressed in the report is taken by one person, a singular noun or pronoun would be less misleading.

(Mr Thomas) 'Is the "us" in paragraph 109 "you"?

(Mr Burrett) This was the usual drafting problem of not wanting to say "I" throughout. I take full responsibility for all the opinions expressed in this report and if I say that my two colleagues are not necessarily part of those opinions please do not however take that as meaning they disagreed with any part of it. We agreed between ourselves that for drafting purposes we would use "we" but this report is my report.

(Mr Cormack) They do not necessarily agree with you?

(Mr Burrett) The answer is no they do not, providing you do not go on to draw the conclusion there are hidden disagreements.

(Mr Cormack) Is "we" a self-effacement or total unity?

(Mr Burrett) Self-effacement

(Chairman) You are saying the first person plural has become a Rayner convention to describe first person singular?

(Mr Burrett) No. I would say it sounds better than "I" a thousand times in the report and therefore I used "we".

(Chairman) Like the Queen?

(Mr Burrett) No, not like the Queen. The reason for the royal plural is entirely different.¹

1 (Qs 36-40) -

8. The Theatre Museum is the only substantial capital project within the V & A to which the scrutiny gave consideration. In so far as Mr Burrett interpreted his brief as 'to save public funds',¹ the abandonment of this project was an obvious means of effecting immediate savings in capital and recurrent expenditures. In this context, we were surprised that no effort was made to establish the cost of the design work which had already been carried out on the Flower Market scheme.² We also note Mr Burrett's evidence that if 'the Theatre Museum was abandoned, it would be on museum grounds not purely on public expenditure grounds',³ (Q 70) a remark which indicates a certain confusion either in his mind or in the terms of reference he was given. We attach special significance to this observation since we understand that the capital cost of the project is already included in the relevant departmental Vote.⁴

1 Q.13

2 The Curator of the Theatre Museum supplied the Committee with the following estimates:

DoE, architects and consultants	£380,000
DoE, Supplies Division	£147,000
Theatre Museum at the V & A	
(salaries at 1982/3 prices)	£960,000
	£1,487,000

The current expenditure on the Theatre Museum at the V & A is £203,576; the additional current expenditure required on the new site would be £336,424, not £450,000 as implied by the Rayner study.

3 Q.70

4 See Supply Estimates, Class XIV, 1, programme 10.6, for 1981-82 (p.XIV-15) and 1982-83, (p.71)

9. We have considered carefully the argument in the report that 'the scope for research which is both possible and justified in this field is also less than in others.' We are alarmed that not only is this purportedly academic judgement not substantiated in the report, but also Mr Burrett confirmed that no evidence was taken from any academic authorities or indeed anyone else on the subject.¹ The Director of the V & A, who is himself an authority on Elizabethan and Stuart court masques, flatly contradicted the Rayner judgement;

(Sir Roy Strong) 'During the last 30 years in particular the burgeoning of serious theatre research in universities has been enormous and our scholars are of international repute but they are hampered because the new museum has not started. They cannot get at the resources and the archives.'²

10. We have considered the report's proposal that the Theatre Museum might be made self-financing in terms of recurrent costs by means of an admission charge or might even be suitable for development by private enterprise. Both suggestions, in the opinion of the Committee, underestimate the importance and cost of the scholarly and archival functions of the museum. In the words of Sir Roy

'The comparison with the Motor Museum, a very good museum, is a false one, because the scholarship and learning that the Theatre Museum

1 Qs 44-5

2 Q 81

represents can only be maintained with Government support. I would say that the Motor Museum gives delight and entertainment to the public and it gives information, but it is not a centre of major academic excellence.¹

We are sceptical about the possibility of securing private funding because we know of no example of a privately-funded national museum and theatre archive anywhere in the world; nor did Mr Burrett nor any of our other witnesses.

11. We also find it difficult to accept the view expressed in the report that a Theatre Museum is 'a luxury'. We received evidence that the Museum is likely to be a major tourist attraction and we are mindful of the enormous contribution tourism makes to the economy. We were also told that, whereas the theatre is an art in which this country excels, we are alone among the major European countries in not possessing a national theatre museum and archive.²

12. It was brought to our notice that the Theatre Museum is a relatively long-standing commitment on the part of Government. Reference was made to a letter addressed to the Committee by a gentleman who said that he had donated theatrical memorabilia to the Museum on the understanding that it would open. 'If this does not happen then I would feel that the government would have reneged on its promises and donors will have been misled.'³ We believe that, in making its recommendations

1 Q 95

2 Qs 76, 82

3 Q 74

the Rayner team placed insufficient weight on the commitment implied by successive Administrations to a host of donors to the Museum. Furthermore, we were impressed by the estimated value of the theatre collection at £23M, none of which is on display and most of which is inaccessible to the public.¹ The greater part of this collection has been built up by generous private donations. As Mr Schouvaloff pointed out "The only amount of public money that has been spent on acquisitions has been ... £100,000." ² In view of the value of the collection and the historical commitment to donors, it would be both a false economy and a betrayal of trust to cancel the Theatre Museum as recommended by Rayner.

13. We believe that the choice posed by the Rayner recommendations, either to abandon the Theatre Museum or 'to render it self-financing', is unwarranted and artificial, and we were not impressed by the manner in which the investigation was carried out as revealed by Mr Burrett's answers to questions. We believe that to close the Theatre Museum on the basis of one ill-informed layman's brief investigation is unthinkable, whilst the other option is, in the words of Sir Roy, 'unreasonable and impossible'. (Q 99) It is also out of touch with current tendencies in arts funding which in our opinion are towards a pattern of plural funding, including

1 Q 83

2 Qs 102-3

3 Q 99

proportions of the money coming from sponsorship, trading activity and from the public paying for admission. This point was well taken in evidence from the Director of the V & A who acknowledged that it is 'wrong that museums should regard themselves as in some kind of attractive Arcadia.'¹

14. Whilst we note that the V&A is willing to introduce admission charges for the new museum,² if it wishes to proceed in that regard we recommend that it should arrange for at least two days' 'free admission' each week and for free admission for bona fide scholars and students, and those in receipt of pensions and other long-term benefits.

15. In the light of the evidence from Sir Roy,³ and in view of the scrutiny's relatively favourable treatment of the National Museum of Photography and the outstations of the Science Museum,⁴ the Committee are also concerned at the apparent lack of even-handedness displayed by Mr Burrett in the treatment of the Arts and Sciences.

1 Q 95

2 Qs 95,99

3 Q 89

4 See recommendations 22,25,26,36 (Science Museum) and 27,28,30 (V & A).

16. We therefore recommend that the Minister give an early and emphatic assurance that the Theatre Museum's progress will continue. We suspect that the recommendations of the Rayner Report regarding outstations and the Bethnal Green Museum may well be as ill-considered as those concerning the Theatre Museum. We further recommend that the Minister should look most critically at the proposals regarding the outstations and Bethnal Green.



Victoria and Albert Museum

South Kensington London SW7 2RL

Tel: 01-589 6371

Arts & Am2nta
Prime Minister:

We shall

provide a
draft reply

IF in GR
25/7 23/7

19th July 1982

Dear Prime Minister,

THE RAYNER SCRUTINY OF THE VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM

This is the only occasion within memory that a direct approach has ever been made to a Prime Minister on behalf of the Victoria and Albert Museum. It is a measure of our very great concern that we should now do so.

To be brief, we are deeply indebted so far to the two successive Ministers for the Arts under this Government who have protected the Museum, which is part of the D.E.S., from the type of arbitrary cuts that happened in 1977/78. We have been subject to a Rayner Scrutiny which has now been published and is causing a great furore within the world of the arts. There are over forty recommendations which affect the V. & A. Two of the most important the Minister has already pronounced upon: that the V. & A. is to gain its freedom and be reconstituted as a Trustee Museum, and that the introduction of charges is a matter for individual Trustee Boards.

Both these recommendations we warmly welcome and indeed many other points in the Report that will result in better management structure, efficiency, economy and good housekeeping. We certainly are determined in difficult times to pull our belt in and maximise self help, but there are two recommendations to which we cannot ever reasonably be reconciled: the proposal that the Theatre Museum should be "abandoned" and that "consideration... should be given to closing ... down" the Museum of Childhood in Bethnal Green.

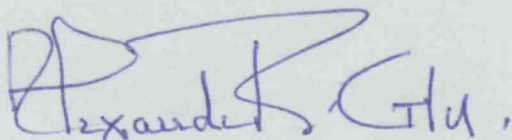
The latter was opened in 1872 built on land given to the poor of the East End to provide a national amenity for a deprived area. Its childhood collections were developed with the encouragement of Queen Mary. In 1981 over 200,000 visitors went there, in the main the young. The Report admits that it is "charming" and it is indeed with its toys, puppets, dolls, dolls' houses and toy theatres. But it is much more than this, both in the social part it plays in a poor area and its great contribution to the study of childhood and the young. We will of course do all we can to be economical in its running, but we cannot introduce a substantial entrance charge. Government has accepted the cost of running this Museum for over a century and we feel strongly that it should continue to do so.

Over/

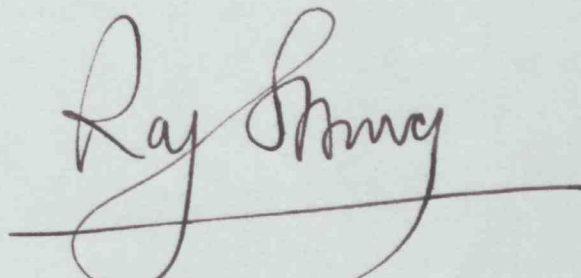
The Theatre Museum has roots back to 1924, but was formally constituted in 1972 under the Aegis of Government when the British Theatre Museum, the Museum of the Performing Arts and the V. & A.'s Enthoven Collection were amalgamated. These collections are worth £23 million and only £100,000 has ever been spent of tax payers' money on acquisitions since 1974. Nearly all the collections were given on the understanding that Government was to provide a Museum in Covent Garden and successive Ministers have repeated that assurance in Parliament. Indeed work on the building was about to begin when this Report appeared. The money was in the D.O.E. 1981/82 Estimates. With the attractive location in Covent Garden and an imaginative lay-out internally we believe in this case that appropriate admission charges should contribute at least £250,000 annually and that annual running costs can be well controlled.

But help is needed for the initial outlay of £4.5 million on the building. If it is abandoned it would be an appalling breach of faith on the part of Government to the donors and leave us as the only civilised country in the world without a theatre museum and this in a country whose theatre from Shakespeare onwards must be one of our greatest contributions to civilisation.

We well understand the many calls on your time, but we are aware too of your interest in the V. & A. and all it epitomises of excellence in our society both in the past and today. We would therefore like to put our case directly to you and this letter is to request a meeting with you to discuss these two recommendations which if implemented could have such important consequences for our heritage.



SIR ALEXANDER GLEN
Chairman
Advisory Council of the
Victoria and Albert Museum



SIR ROY STRONG
Director

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.,
10 Downing Street,
London, S.W.1.



12 JUL 1982

strike.

It is understood that the British Textile Confederation has access to all this information, some of which is provided to its order, although it is not supplied to it direct.

|| The latest month for which the data are available is January 1982.

Mr. Woolmer asked the Minister for Trade what was the percentage change in value and in volume of imports of textiles and clothing from (a) low cost sources, (b) the European Economic Community and (c) other

Imports of Textiles and Clothing from Specified Areas:
Month-on-Month Value Changes
(Increase in value of imports, cif, in month compared with value, cif, in same month of previous year)

Area whence consigned	October 1981	November 1981	December 1981	January 1982
European Community	+46	+51	+38	+36
Low cost sources	+25	+40	+14	+20
Other	+9	+6	0	+3

Source:

Overseas Trade Statistics of the United Kingdom, SITC (R2) Divisions 65 and 84.

Machine Tools

Mr. Cryer asked the Minister for Trade if he will list in the *Official Report* the balance of trade in machine tools for 1979, 1980, 1981 and 1982 to the most recent practicable date.

Mr. Peter Rees [pursuant to his reply, 25 May 1982, c. 261.]: Such information as is available is given in the following table:

	Balance of trade* Machine tools† £ million
1979	-62
1980	+25
1981 (4th quarter)	+7

Notes:

* The balance of trade is measured as exports fob minus imports (cif).

† Machine tools are defined as the principal products of MLH 332 of the SIC(68), metal working machine tools.

Textiles

Mr. Cryer asked the Minister for Trade if he will list in the *Official Report* the balance of trade in textile goods for 1979, 1980, 1981 and 1982 to the most recent practicable date.

Mr. Peter Rees [pursuant to his reply, 25 May 1982, c. 261]: The available information is as follows:

United Kingdom Crude Balance of Trade in Textile Goods, 1979-1982

Year	£ million
1979	655
1980	447
January to February, September to December 1981	517
January 1982	141

Source: Overseas Trade Statistics of the United Kingdom, SITC (R2) Divisions 65 and 84 (less Group 848), Groups 266 and 267 and Sub-group 268.7 (part).

Note: The crude balance of trade is defined as exports valued fob less imports valued cif.

sources in each of the last four months for which data are available, compared with the same months a year previously.

Mr. Peter Rees [pursuant to his reply, 25 May 1982, c. 261.]: The information which can be made available within acceptable cost limits is set out as follows. It should be noted that the definition of textiles and clothing is less precise than that normally used. Figures for volume are not available by geographical or economic area.

Allied Supplies Ltd.

Mr. Alfred Morris asked the Minister for Trade when the Secretary of State for Trade now expects to announce whether he has decided to refer to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission the bid for Allied Supplies Ltd.; and if he will make a statement.

Dr. Vaughan [pursuant to his reply, 26 May 1982, c. 310]: My right hon. and noble Friend will announce his decision as soon as practicable.

EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

Museums (Rayner Report)

Mr. Waller asked the Secretary of State for Education and Science if he will make a statement about the Rayner scrutiny of the Victoria and Albert museum and the Science museum.

Mr. Channon: The report of the Rayner scrutiny of the Victoria and Albert museum and the Science museum was received last week. I have decided to publish it at the earliest opportunity, today, and copies are available to Members of both Houses of Parliament.

I shall be consulting all those concerned, including of course the directors of the two museums, their advisory councils and representatives of the staff concerned, about the contents of the report. It will be helpful if all comments on the report can be received by the Office of Arts and Libraries by the beginning of August.

There are, however, some recommendations in the report involving major issues on which, in order to remove uncertainty, the Government have taken decisions which I would like to announce now.

First, the report makes a strong case for providing the Victoria and Albert museum and the Science museum with a high degree of independence and recommends that both museums should cease to be departmental museums. The Government accept this recommendation, and will seek an early opportunity to introduce legislation to establish separate bodies of trustees to be responsible for the management and control of each museum. This will bring

them into line with the other national museums in England and Wales. Steps will be taken to safeguard the interests of the staff concerned.

Secondly, the report also contains recommendations concerning the introduction of admission charges for the two museums. The Government do not intend to impose charges for general admission to the main collections of the museums, nor to change the well-established practice of charging for entry to some outstations and special exhibitions. But the Government would not, at this stage, wish to prejudge any proposals which the future trustees may in due course put forward as part of their policy for good management of the museums.

I should like to put on record the Government's appreciation of the efforts which those responsible for the scrutiny have made, and to thank them for the very substantial help which they have provided as a basis for the formulation of future policy.

Teacher Training

Mr. Flannery asked the Secretary of State for Education and Science what would be the additional recurrent costs of implementing the James report's proposals on induction and in-service teacher training.

Dr. Boyson: The most recent comprehensive data that we have had on the cost and volume of induction and in-service training derives from the survey of local education authorities' provision conducted in 1979 and relates to the financial and academic year 1978-79. In those years local education authorities in England and Wales spent some £70 million on INIST for teachers in schools and further education, releasing the equivalent of 5,730 school teachers and 1,250 FE teachers. This was about 1.2 per cent. of the number of school teachers and 1.6 per cent. of the number of FE teachers then in regular service compared with the 3 per cent. of the teaching force implied by the James committee recommendations. On this basis, if local authorities were currently providing the same volume of in-service training as in 1978-79, the additional recurrent cost of implementing the James report's proposals might be some £125 million at current prices.

ENERGY

Central Electricity Generating Board

20. **Mr. Rost** asked the Secretary of State for Energy when he expects to announce the appointment of the chairman of the Central Electricity Generating Board.

Mr. Lawson [pursuant to his oral reply, 17 May 1982, c. 11]: I am appointing Dr. Walter Marshall, at present chairman of the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority, as chairman of the CEGB for five years from 1 July 1982.

NATIONAL FINANCE

Travel Costs (Tax Relief)

Mr. Arthur Lewis asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in view of the growing costs of travel to and from work, whether he will now consider some form of tax relief on these costs.

Mr. Bruce Gardyne: I do not think it would be right to give tax relief for this type of personal expenditure.

Foreign Securities

Mr. Skinner asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the amount of foreign securities purchased by pension funds and other City institutions in 1979, 1980 and 1981.

Mr. Bruce-Gardyne: I refer the hon. Member to tables S2 and S4 of "Financial Statistics April 1982", available in the Library.

Building Societies Association

Mr. Weetch asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will place in the Library a copy of his speech to the Building Societies Association on 18 May.

Mr. Bruce-Gardyne: Yes. A copy was placed in the Library on 20 May.

Mr. Squire asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer what representations he has received following his speech to the annual dinner of the Building Societies Association; and whether he will make a statement.

Mr. Bruce-Gardyne: My right hon. and learned Friend has received no formal representations. But the chairman of the Building Societies Association, in responding to the speech, expressed his gratitude for the calm and constructive manner in which the Chancellor conveyed his advice, commented that it bore scant resemblance to some reports anticipating it in the press, and promised that the association would study carefully what he had said.

A copy of the full speech has already been placed in the Library of the House.

Bankruptcies

Mr. Arthur Lewis asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the £13.6 million lost to the Inland Revenue in the year ended October 1980 due to persons and companies declaring bankruptcies, he will give the most recent comparable figures and figures for the previous five years; what was the loss over the same years due to income tax collected by employers from their employees under the Pay-As-You-Earn and not forwarded to the Inland Revenue; and if he will take steps to ensure that tax is paid when due and before such persons or individuals declare bankruptcies.

Mr. Ridley: The amounts written off by the Inland Revenue on grounds of the insolvency of individuals and companies are given in the following table:



Department of Education and Science

Office of Arts and Libraries
From the Minister for the Arts

Elizabeth House York Road
London SE1 7PH

Telegrams Aristides London SE1
Tel: 01-928 9222

24th May 1982

Willie Rickett Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

Arts 2
a Press Office Amendment
1 Mr Patten
2 Prime Minister 2

mb
Dear Willie

WZ
25/5

FUTURE OF THE VICTORIA AND
ALBERT AND SCIENCE MUSEUMS

Thank you for your letter of 21 May.

... I am now enclosing a draft of the proposed
Parliamentary Question and Answer for release
on Thursday after Question Time.

Yours ever

Mary Giles

Miss M G E Giles

Private Secretary

Question: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Science, whether he will now make a statement about the Rayner scrutiny of the Victoria and Albert and the Science Museum.

MR PAUL CHANNON

The report of the Rayner scrutiny of the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Science Museum was received last week. I have decided to publish it at the earliest opportunity, today, and copies are available to members of both Houses of Parliament.

I shall be consulting all those concerned, including of course the Directors of the two Museums, their Advisory Councils and representatives of the staff concerned, about the contents of the report. It will be helpful if all comments on the report can be received by the Office of Arts and Libraries by the beginning of August.

There are, however, some recommendations in the report involving major issues on which, in order to remove uncertainty, the Government have taken decisions which I would like to announce now.

First, the report makes a strong case for providing the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Science Museum with a high degree of independence and recommends that both Museums should cease to be departmental museums. The Government accept this recommendation, and will seek an early opportunity to introduce legislation to establish separate bodies of trustees to be responsible for the management and control of each museum. This will bring them into line with the other national museums in England and Wales. Steps will be taken to safeguard the interests of the staff concerned.

Secondly, the report also contains recommendations concerning the introduction of admission charges for the two museums. The Government do not intend to impose charges for general admission to the main collections of the Museums, nor to change the well-established practice of charging for entry to some outstations and special exhibitions. But the Government would not, at this stage, wish to prejudge any proposals which the future trustees may in due course put forward as part of their policy for good management of the Museums.

I should like to put on record the Government's appreciation of the efforts which those responsible for the scrutiny have made, and to thank them for the very substantial help which they have provided as a basis for the formulation of future policy.



4 MAY 1982



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

21 May 1982

FUTURE OF THE VICTORIA AND ALBERT AND
SCIENCE MUSEUMS

Thank you for your letter of 18 May. The Prime Minister is content for Mr. Channon to publish the Rayner Scrutiny Report on 27 May, after Question time, and to announce that the Government has accepted that the V&A and Science Museums should become independent bodies under Boards of Trustees.

On the question of charges, the Prime Minister agrees that the Government should not itself seek to introduce charges for general admission (as against the well established practice of charges for special exhibitions). She is content for this to be made clear in Mr. Channon's announcement. But she considers that neither his announcement, nor the Bill itself, should preclude the future consideration of charging by the Trustees, as one part of their policy for good management.

It would be helpful if we could have an early sight of your proposed Parliamentary Question and Answer.

I am copying this letter to the recipients of your letter.

W.F.S. BICKETT

Miss Mary Giles,
Department of Education and Science.

CONFIDENTIAL

Mr RICKETT



pm

Wm
21/5

FUTURE OF THE VICTORIA AND ALBERT AND SCIENCE MUSEUMS

I have now seen a copy of Mr Burrett's report, as well as Miss Giles's letter to you of yesterday. I enclose the relevant section of the report and invite your particular attention to the parts I have marked at A/ and B/.

2. The recommendation is rather more subtle than Miss Giles's letter suggests and you might like to deal with the point in your reply as follows:

provision of "On the question of charges, the Prime Minister ^{agrees} ~~is clear~~ that the Government would not ^{on} ~~of its own volition~~ seek to introduce charges for general admission (as against ^{the well est} charges for special exhibitions, a ~~practice which is well~~ established). This ^{should} ~~might~~ be made plain. ^{But} ~~the Prime~~ Minister thinks that ^{neither H.C.'s answer, nor the Bill itself,} ~~the point should not be made in such~~ terms ^{should} ~~as to~~ preclude the future consideration of charging by the trustees (~~should Parliament agree to the proposed~~ ^{change of status}) as one part of their policy for good management."

CP

C PRIESTLEY

19 May 1982

Encs: pp. 28 - 31 of the Burrett report

Recommendation No 10

Restrictions on opening hours should be regarded as a legitimate option, among others, when balancing competing claims on resources. There would however have to be a particularly good case for going beyond the one and a half day a week closure already adopted by the V & A Museum.

Recommendation No 11

The V & A Museum should close on Mondays instead of Fridays for as long as it is considered necessary to close on a weekday.

Admission Charges

58. This aspect of museum management and policy raises issues of broad principle (as well as strong feelings) for all museums, and we therefore approach it with caution. At the same time, if the Museums are to be encouraged by a more independent status and new management practices to survive and flourish in a period of continuing economic difficulty, the area in which their professional and management judgments are exercised must be as large as possible. The best mix of considerations will not be reached if important ones are excluded from the outset. Admission charges, whether for primary or study collections or for special exhibitions, are at one level a possible way of mitigating the effects of the financial stringency which the Museums' present heavy dependence on Exchequer money makes inevitable. At another and equally important level they could help the formulation of sound policy and practical objectives, and foster the sense of realism which any museum needs to balance its innate altruism.

59. Admission charges at national museums were introduced for the first time in January 1974, and abolished in April of the same year. Public attendance at the two departmental Museums over the three month period January to March 1974, compared with the same period in 1973, was as follows:-

Science Museum				V & A Museum			
	1973	1974	%fall		1973	1974	%fall
January	204,047	99,583	51.2		91,884	58,416	36.4
February	239,147	129,054	46.0		107,981	52,278	51.6
March	194,688	147,743	24.1		130,197	66,348	49.0

60. Although these figures reflect other factors as well, it is clear that the effect of introducing admission charges was a sharp fall in attendance. Since the period in question was so short it is difficult to draw firm conclusions about the long term effects of charging except to note in the case of the Science Museum a strong tendency to recover the lost attendance in the last month. In attempting a very rough estimate of the gross receipts which might accrue from the introduction of a charge of £1.50 a head (see paragraph 62ii) at both Museums, it is necessary to make an assumption about the likely effect on attendance. It is likely that in the long run a higher percentage of Science Museum visitors than V & A Museum visitors would be deterred by admission charges. It would not therefore be unreasonable to assume, for illustrative purposes, that after a time attendance would level off at about 60% of the 1981 figure for the Science Museum and 75% for the V & A Museum. On this basis the annual gross income from such charges (ignoring other variables) would be £5.2m at the Science Museum and £1.9m at the V & A Museum. There would be a cost for collecting and processing the charges but, even allowing for this and for the possibility of over-estimation in the 1981 attendance figures, the net addition to the income of the two Museums could be as much as £6m. If the foregoing assumptions are considered over-optimistic, it is of course the case that even a half or a third of that sum would represent a very significant proportion of existing museum costs.

61. To the extent that this issue is regarded as being one of principle, someone (presumably the Government) should enunciate it and accept its implications for museum management and finance. If a museum is to be denied the freedom to charge and the benefits from doing so, there is the greater obligation on government to provide the financial support necessary for the achievement of the museum's aims at a level which is publicly defensible and has

regard to the professional conscience of the museum. We do not however think it necessary or desirable to lay down a uniform and rigid policy. It should however be the assumption that each Museum should seek to maximise its receipts from admission charges subject to whatever broad principles the Government feels it desirable to prescribe. Some areas of museum activity seem particularly to call for admission charges and we shall mention these passim in this report.

62. We suggest that the following considerations should be borne in mind in deciding what should be done:-

- i. where admission charges are introduced it is possible, and it may be desirable, to make exceptions on behalf of particular kinds of visitors. Blanket exceptions eg for the winter months, are worth considering;
- ii. on the other hand, to be worth the cost of collection, charges must bring in a substantial net financial return. They must be fixed at an appropriate level eg £1 to £1.50 at current values. The case for exceptions should be judged as much by the head as by the heart;
- iii. admission tickets valid for any number of visits within, say, a week, would give better value for money and might actually increase the amount of public use;
- iv. charging for admission might open up new possibilities for meeting public demand in a cost-effective manner eg by evening opening at peak periods of the year;
- v. the effect of admission charges on the total "gate" should not be given too much importance in deciding whether charges are justified or the level at which they should be fixed. It does not always follow that even a permanent fall in numbers means a loss of worthwhile public impact;

- vi. the financial advantage from charges cannot in the nature of things be guaranteed wholly or in part to either the Exchequer or to the Museums themselves. Both are entitled to benefit. But the management incentive to the Museums, and therefore much of the value of charges, will be lost unless the Government fixes and administers the annual museum grants in a manner which demonstrably allows the Museums a substantial benefit from their own admission revenue. They, no less than the general public, must be satisfied that the 'quid pro quo' for admission charges is a better museum than would otherwise be possible.

Recommendation No 12

B
Each Museum should be encouraged to introduce admission charges for all or part of its collections or for special exhibitions, subject to any general principles concerning charges which the Government decides to lay down; and on the understanding that the Museum should aim to maximise its receipts from this source and should demonstrably benefit financially from the charges it introduces. There should be the clearest possible understanding with Government about the extent to which the Museum should benefit from this income. Each Museum should formulate a charges policy as soon as possible. If there is no change in their status (recommendations 2 and 3) the aim should be to introduce this policy by the end of the year. If the status of the Museums is devolved the formulation and application of the policy should await the setting up of the new governing bodies (paragraphs 36-41).

20 MAY 1982





Department of Education and Science

Office of Arts and Libraries
From the Minister for the Arts

2 Prime Minister

Elizabeth House York Road
London SE1 7PHTelegrams Aristides London SE1
Tel: 01-928 9222

18 May 1982

Willie Rickett Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

Dear Willie

You are aware of the decision by
H to accept the recommendation that the V&A
and Science museums should become independent bodies
under Boards of Trustees.

On the question of charges for admission, I understand the Chief
Secretary is likely to accept Mr Channon's judgment (at A
below), but he will put down a marker that we must ensure
the Bill is not drafted in such a way as to prevent the Trustees
from putting forward proposals for admission charges.

FUTURE OF
VICTORIA AND ALBERT AND SCIENCE
MUSEUMS

Content for Mr Channon to proceed
as he suggests?

Yes Mr.

WR
19/5

Mr Channon has now received the Rayner Scrutiny Report on the Victoria
and Albert and Science Museums.

As anticipated, the main recommendation is that they should cease to
be departmental museums and should, in line with all other OAL national museums,
become independent bodies under boards of trustees. Some months ago
this change was approved by 'H' Committee. The necessary legislation
is included in the legislative programme for 1982-83, approved by
Cabinet.

To achieve the already tight timetable, for the Bill, it is desirable
that the Report should be published as soon as possible so that
consultations on the best way of arriving at the new status can be
started.

The Opposition have publicly stated that they will support the change
of status provided that the interests of the staff are protected. The
intention is that the staff should cease to be civil servants and should
be treated in the same way as the staff of the other trustee museums.

In addition to this main recommendation there is a proposal that the
two museums should charge for public admission. Although national
museums can, and do, charge for special exhibitions and in some out-
stations, Mr Channon believes that charges for admission to the main
collections of these museums would be highly controversial and could
jeopardize the Bill. In these circumstances, subject to the views of
the Prime Minister, he would like, on behalf of the Government, to
reject this proposal when the Report is published. It would, of course,
always be open to Ministers to reconsider the question in the light of
any proposals from the future trustees.

If the Prime Minister is content Mr Channon would like to publish the
Report on Thursday 27 May accepting the proposed change in status but
rejecting the imposition of charges for the main collections. He would
make it clear that there would be consultations on all the other

... / ...

recommendations in the Report. This would be done by means of a written Parliamentary Question.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to the Home Secretary, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, the Lord President of the Council, the Lord Privy Seal, the Chief Whip, Sir Robert Armstrong and Sir Derek Rayner.

Yours sincerely
Ros Turp

PP Miss M G E Giles
Private Secretary



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RAYNER SCRUTINY
OF
THE DEPARTMENTAL MUSEUMS:
SCIENCE MUSEUM AND VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM

Report by Mr F G Burrett CB

May 1982

Scrutiny of the Science and Victoria and Albert Museums

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Scrutiny of the Science and Victoria and Albert Museums

Report by Mr F G Burrett CB

I. INTRODUCTION

The Purposes and Conduct of the Scrutiny

The terms of reference for this scrutiny were as follows:-

"To examine the Museums' activities, the contributions they make to the Museums' main objectives, and the efficiency and economy with which they are carried out; and to make recommendations on staffing and working methods".

2. I was also asked to consider whether the status of the two Museums, which are part of the Department of Education and Science (DES), should be changed; and to make recommendations accordingly.

3. In carrying out the scrutiny I received invaluable help from Mr T Hume, CBE, FSA, FMA, a former Director of the Museum of London, in the capacity of professional adviser; and from Mr M H Sharpe, a Senior Executive Officer from the DES.

4. Although we were not asked to consider what the broad purposes of the Museums should be it was soon clear that our report would be of limited value unless we were prepared to raise, if not necessarily to answer, some of the fundamental questions about the nature and role of a national museum. In discussing such questions we have borne in mind that they go far wider than the two departmental Museums alone.

5. We have thought it right to talk to as many interested people as possible during the four months of our enquiry. We are grateful for the forbearance and understanding they have shown, and for their generosity in making their knowledge and experience so freely available to us. At the same time a great museum is a highly complex organisation with a very wide range of activities. It was clear from the outset that we should not have time to look at everything which was relevant to our terms of reference; or to consider all the matters we

have in fact raised in the detail they deserve. We have therefore had to be selective. Some of our recommendations are for further study in areas we think will merit it; others are tentative where a firm recommendation would have been presumptuous.

6. The two Museums have in the past been subjected to many inspections by management services teams from DES. This is and must be a continuous process which we have not sought to duplicate. It is also an extremely important one which must be carried forward vigorously in one form or another under whatever institutional arrangements may govern the two Museums in future.

Brief History of the Departmental Museums

7. Both Museums owe their origins to the Museum which was set up in 1851 on the recommendation of the Select Committee on Arts and Manufacturers in 1835-1836. £5000 was voted for the purchase of objects from the Great Exhibition, and a new department of the Board of Trade, the Department of Practical Art, was created for the administration of the Museum. In 1853, following the addition of a science division, the Department of Practical Art became the Department of Science and Art. This was taken over by the Education Department in 1856. In the following year the Museum moved to South Kensington and became part of the South Kensington Museum.

8. Under the Patents Act of 1883 responsibility for the contents of the Patent Museum was transferred to the South Kensington Museum which thereby acquired the standing of a national museum of applied science. In 1899 the name was changed to the Victoria and Albert Museum; and in the same year the Board of Education assumed responsibility for the Education Department, including the former Department of Science and Art. In 1909 the collections were divided, the art collection remaining at the Victoria and Albert Museum, and the science and engineering collections becoming a separate institution known thereafter as the Science Museum.

Form of the Report

9. Their common origin notwithstanding, the two Museums are concerned with very different fields and each naturally conceives its role in its own

terms. These differences affect their approach to many of their activities and problems. Quite properly each has developed its own museum ethos which is valid for itself. Our task on the other hand has been concerned for the most part with issues which are broadly common to both, perhaps to all museums. This report therefore covers the two Museums together and deals with particular points on one or the other as they arise. This does not mean that we have failed to grasp that each has (and should have) its own strong individuality and in some important respects pursues different objectives.

What the Museums cost

10. Both Museums spend considerable sums of public money. In return they give untold pleasure and instruction to millions of people and constitute a priceless national asset. Of its nature this service cannot be measured in financial terms. But any consideration of their work must have clearly in view the broad picture of costs as well as the financial implications of particular activities. In 1981/82 the direct costs, including out-stations, were as follows:-

	Science Museum	V&A Museum
	£000	£000
Salaries and wages	3430	4562
National Insurance	360	482
Overtime	290	508
General expenses (less receipts)	1856	1138
Purchase grant	362	1160
Local Museums Grant-in-Aid	<u>150</u>	<u>1000</u>
TOTAL	6448	8850

11. In addition to this expenditure, there were indirect costs including:-

- i. the Treasury contribution to the notional cost of accruing liability for pension in respect of the Museums' employees:

Science Museum: £651,000

V&A Museum: £866,000

- ii. expenditure by Property Services Agency (PSA) on capital works, supplies and maintenance, and notional rent at the Museums:

Science Museum: £2,036,000

V&A Museum: £2,062,000

- iii. the PSA's own administrative costs in respect of the Museums (forecast):

Science Museum: £195,000

V&A Museum: £425,000

- iv. the Chessington Computer Centre's administrative costs in respect of the Museums (combined figure):

£63,862

- v. rates paid to the local authority on behalf of the Museums by the Rating of Government Property Department:

Science Museum: £158,148

V&A Museum: £180,557

12. In sum the cost to the nation of the Science Museum and the V & A Museum was £9,488,000 and £12,384,000, respectively. Including the figure at (iv) above the total cost of both Museums amounted to £21,936,000.

13. It is also appropriate in this context to keep in mind the value of the museum sites and buildings. A special survey undertaken for us by a PSA Estates Surveyors team gave the following values for the museum buildings at South Kensington and the main outstations. More detailed information on these valuations, and also on valuations of other smaller museum sites and buildings, is given at Annex A.

V & A Museum: the economic rent of the Museum is estimated at £3.62m a year. No market value can be placed on the land and buildings because of the special nature of the site.

Bethnal Green Museum: the rental value of the main building is £300,000 a year. The value of the land and buildings is approximately £0.5m.

Apsley House: this is vested in the DOE by Act of Parliament which provides that the parts of the House not occupied by the Duke of Wellington should be used as a museum.

Ham House and Osterley Park House: these are both held on lease from the National Trust at a peppercorn rent. A rental assessment and valuation is inappropriate.

Science Museum: the economic rent of the Museum is estimated at £2.3m a year. Again, no market value can be placed on the land and buildings because of the specialist nature of the site.

National Railway Museum, York: the estimated total rental value of the various buildings and sites is £134,000 a year: their capital value is estimated at £1,518,000.

Science Museum, Wroughton: the notional rent is £250,000 a year. The capital value of the site and buildings amounts to £2.63m.

Concorde Museum, Yeovilton: this property would revert to the Ministry of Defence if no longer required by the Science Museum. The value of the site and buildings is £355,000 and their rental value is £35,000 a year.

What the Museums Do

14. A broad picture of the day-to-day life of the Museums can be gained by examining the composition of the staff establishment. In 1981/82 the manpower ceiling for the V & A Museum was 615, and for the Science Museum 495. At both Museums the curatorial and warding staff were the two largest groups of staff: at the V & A Museum there were 146 curatorial staff and 187 warders (including those at the outstations); at the Science Museum the corresponding figures were 139 and 95. The daily administration of establishments and personnel matters, and of financial control, accounting, accommodation, supplies, registry and other common services, is in the hands of a small body of staff in AEC grades: 42 at the V & A Museum and 40 at the Science Museum.

15. Both Museums have a large Department of Museum Services responsible for providing specialist support services to curatorial staff, such as the design and installation of exhibitions, the photography of objects, technical construction and finishing work, publications, running the museum shop, and providing a Press and Information facility. Each Museum also has an Education service aimed at promoting the understanding and appreciation of the collections for the visiting public, schoolchildren, and older students.

16. The V & A Museum has a large Conservation Department (47 staff) devoted to the task of arresting decay and preventing deterioration in the Museum's collections, and generally ensuring that the objects have the longest possible life. In addition the Department carries out restoration work on certain objects. The Science Museum has no department providing a comparable service, but some of its technicians carry out valuable restoration work on objects.

17. The smooth operation of the Museums also depends on the support and assistance of various other categories of staff such as Messengers, Typists, Paperkeepers, Packers, Publications Salespersons, and Object Cleaners. Also indispensable to the Museums are the Manual Attendants (36 at the V & A Museum, 39 at the Science Museum) who are responsible for the movement of objects - many of which are extremely large, heavy and fragile - in the Museums and associated stores.

18. The core of the Museums' work is their curatorial activity. Curatorial staff are responsible for the care, display, and development of the collections, and so take decisions over matters such as the selection and acquisition of new objects for the collections; the loan of objects to and from the Museums; the most effective form of public presentation of the collections; the information to include on display labels; and the selection of objects for conservation and restoration treatment. They are also responsible for undertaking scholarly research into the collections (the foundation of the Museums' knowledge about their collections); for publishing the fruits of that research; for answering enquiries about the collections from the public or fellow scholars; and for maintaining detailed records on the collections.

19. To gain a clearer picture of the duties of the curatorial staff, we asked each Museum for details of the average time spent by staff on recognised

curatorial activities over a typical year. From the information provided, we have compiled the following table. It shows the proportion of time spent on each curatorial activity as a percentage of a full year's work. For convenience the seven curatorial grades A (Keeper) to G (Museum Assistant) are divided into three groups: A-B/C-E/F-G.

	A-B		C-E		F-G	
	ScM	V&A	ScM	V&A	ScM	V&A
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Care of collections: inspection, record-keeping, stocktaking, conservation.	8	4	16	12	38	32
Exhibition: display in permanent galleries, temporary exhibitions.	15	17	21	15	15	17
Acquisitions: inspections, travel, preparing cases, authentication, transport, correspondence.	14	16	17	6	10	0
Service to public: answering queries by correspondence or telephone, giving opinions or advice.	8	12	13	18	17	20
Research: academic research, possibly leading to publication.	8	15	12	30	4	3
Administration: (for senior grades) management or (particularly lower grades) loans, travel arrangements, reports.	33	32	9	12	8	17
Other: including service on committees or lecturing, and work of a non-recurring nature.	14	4	12	7	8	11

20. In interpreting this information it is important to recognise that persons in the same grade do not all spend the same proportion of time on each of the functions appropriate to their grade. Nevertheless the table is valid as an illustration of the kind of work, and proportionately how much of it, curatorial staff are engaged in. Aspects of this work are considered in greater detail later in this report.

II. ROLE OF THE MUSEUMS

21. Our first task was to try to understand the nature and purpose of a great national museum. One could define a museum minimally as an organisation for the preservation and public presentation of objects selected to illustrate and explain particular aspects of natural or human history. But this does not help much. The two Museums already possess vast collections of incalculable value. They would continue to educate and delight a large public even if they did no more than preserve what they already have, and with the minimum of presentation made it available to public view from time to time in their existing buildings. To be worthy of the name a great national museum must do much more than that. It must, among many other things, meet its obligations to posterity by recording the present on its way to becoming history in the future. It must create and maintain the knowledge necessary to select appropriate objects for acquisition and to display and explain its collections to the public as eloquently as possible; this is the essence of the curatorial function. Few would dispute that, additionally, it should fulfil a specifically educational role, positively sharing its great knowledge with the public and providing professional services to those with specialist interests in its collections.

22. The performance of these functions depends upon innumerable decisions of both policy and practice taken day by day and year by year. In sum these decisions determine what a museum is and much of what it costs. They derive, more or less consciously, from some particular concept of the broad purposes the museum is intended to serve (its aims) and of the best practical ways of achieving them (its objectives). But although over the years, many wise and inspiring things have been said on the subject, there exists for the Science and the V&A Museums no formal and generally accepted statement of aims for the present day. In practice each Museum pursues aims which derive for the most part from a combination of tradition, good sense, the aspirations of its Director and senior staff, and the disciplines imposed by financial and manpower constraints. The kinds of opportunity which arise by chance or can be created also play a part. This mixture of factors has achieved splendid results. It does not in our view provide however an adequate framework, especially in times of economic difficulty, within which the decisions can be taken which will ensure for each Museum and for the nation the best possible value for money.

23. Agreed aims defining what the Museum is there to do are crucially important for giving maximum value, for determining costs, and for setting priorities. It will no doubt be difficult to express them in terms which will guide but not unduly restrict. We are however sure that the attempt must be made if there are to be sensible answers to the innumerable questions which raise policy issues of one kind or another. By way of example there is the degree of importance to be attached to the role of the V & A Museum in influencing design beyond simply recording its history. What emphasis should the Science Museum place on expounding the history of science and technology for its own sake as against what is necessary for an understanding of the contemporary situation? Where should future expansion of the National Railway Museum (NRM) come in the Science Museum's scale of priorities? Where should conservation come in the scheme of things and how should this be enshrined in museum policies? What obligations, if any, does each Museum have at local or regional level?

Recommendation No 1

Formal statements of aims should be drawn up for the V & A Museum and the Science Museum, respectively.

24. It would not be appropriate for us ourselves to attempt this task which we recognise will require much careful thought and time to complete. But we offer the following broad observations which we hope will be helpful:-

- i. the aims of each Museum should be discussed and agreed between the three main interested parties ie the Museum itself, its Advisory Council (or equivalent) and the Government;
- ii. in approaching this task the Government for its part should accept that endorsement of the aims should normally carry with it the need to provide all reasonable help to each Museum to meet them;
- iii. the Government should take the opportunity of including in the aims any specific requirement it thinks right to lay upon each Museum in order to satisfy the national interest in its activities eg in relation to its hours of opening, admission charges, conservation and warding standards, and any provincial obligations;

- iv. the aims must not be so restrictively or precisely drafted that they will unduly hamper the initiative of the Director or so widely that they will fail to provide useful guide-lines for the setting of objectives and the effective management of resources;
- v. the statement of aims should provide an indication of priorities and thus help to establish common ground for decision-taking when expansion is possible or contraction is necessary;
- vi. while the agreed aims should have regard to historic statements about the purposes of each Museum these should not be regarded as unalterable. What seemed appropriate for the past may not be so for the present or the future. The need is for a deliberate statement of what each Museum should be doing or aiming to do in the 1980's. Such a statement should not stand indefinitely but should be periodically reviewed, perhaps every five years;
- vii. the objectives supporting the agreed aims are not a matter for formal agreement in the same way. They should be prepared by each Museum in consultation with its Council and, as appropriate, with Government, as part of the management processes described in paragraphs 43-54; and they should be reviewed periodically;
- viii. if there is no change in the Museums' departmental status (recommendations 2 and 3) the intention should be to reach agreement on their aims by the end of this year. If the Museums are to be given devolved status the formulation of aims should await the setting up of the proposed new governing bodies (paragraphs 36-41).

25. We think that in defining aims account should be taken of certain "natural" priorities which, without entering fully into the debate about the broad purposes of a museum, we believe to be sufficiently self-evident. The collections of each Museum are a priceless and largely irreplaceable national asset. In attempting the crudest "market" valuation of the V & A Museum's collections alone one begins to lose count after the £1000 million mark. The true value of the potential for public delight and enlightenment is beyond computation. It is therefore of the first importance to safeguard and to

preserve the objects. This means that there must be adequate conservation, protection, inventories and methods of stocktaking. Though these activities are expensive, unglamorous, and make no obvious contribution to the public impact of a museum, they must be given a very high priority.

III. STATUS OF THE MUSEUMS

26. At present each Museum is formally part of the DES, its staff are civil servants, DES Ministers are accountable for what each Museum does, and the Permanent Secretary of the DES is the Accounting Officer for both. Each Museum submits to DES an annual statement of estimates for the approaching financial year and receives an annual grant to cover running costs, including salaries and purchases. They also receive from DES advice on questions of day-to-day detail concerning financial or other management matters. In particular, the Department provides an internal audit service, management services including staff inspection and organisation and methods advice, and staff training facilities. The care of the buildings of both Museums, and the improvement and extension of them, is paid for out of funds provided for PSA by DES. Although most work is carried out without the direct involvement of the Department, capital projects costing more than £100,000 are subject to DES approval.

27. In considering whether any change in these arrangements is desirable, we think that the main aim should be to devise arrangements which will most closely reflect the essential nature of a museum and conduce most effectively to its well-being and efficiency. No doubt goodwill can make imperfect arrangements work well just as the lack of it can frustrate the best arrangements. But institutional arrangements should be such as to encourage good management independently of the personal factor.

28. Running any museum, and particularly such great organisations as the Science and V & A Museums, is an intensely professional activity calling for expert knowledge, flair and vision, combined with the qualities necessary for the management of any large undertaking. Most of the decisions which each Director and his or her senior staff are called upon to take involve largely professional judgments. They must be allowed and encouraged to make these as freely as possible within whatever general framework of agreed aims is in operation at the time and in harmony with the desired role of their Advisory Council (or equivalent). It is unnecessary and undesirable for a government department to "second guess" these professional decisions as distinct from ensuring that the Government's interest in the periodic allocation of museum resources is adequately safeguarded. More than this, a government department, however well-informed and well-intentioned, does not and cannot possess the

knowledge and experience needed to perform such a function effectively. Indeed it puts itself into a difficult, even false, position if it purports to do so. There is therefore a strong case on these grounds for a form of museum status which provides a high degree of formal and practical independence from government ie for devolution from the existing departmental status to something much more like the trustee status enjoyed by other national museums.

29. In practice devolution would have the following additional advantages:-

- i. it would regularise and therefore strengthen the considerable degree of professional independence which each Director already rightly enjoys. This could only enhance the professional excellence of the Museums;
- ii. it would enable the role of the existing Advisory Councils to be developed into a more positive and valuable one, a point to which we return below;
- iii. by distancing government from the management of the Museums it would, we believe, encourage voluntary contributions, sponsorship, and support from private sources, which are the more necessary in times of severe restraint in public expenditure and which we believe are there to be tapped.

30. It has been put to us that devolved status would in itself mean a more generous allocation of resources by government. More particularly, it would end the present separate ceiling on staff numbers (as distinct from cash expenditure as a whole) which is said to have imposed an undesirable rigidity into resource allocation within the two Museums to the detriment of good management; and which does not apply to museums with trustee status. There is some historical basis for asserting that in recent years the trustee museums have been rather more leniently treated in the allocation of resources than the two departmental ones (though this view overlooks the extent to which their needs may have been different). However in the present climate economies or cuts are increasingly likely to apply to all museums and galleries alike whatever their formal differences of status. Thus the argument that greater distance from government means a more generous allocation of resources (which could never properly have

been a decisive one) is likely to lose any practical significance it may once have had. There is on the other hand no doubt in our minds that the separate manpower ceiling within the overall financial limits can be harmful to good management in the Museums. It arises because the Museums are part of the civil service and resource control in the civil service is applied to both money and manpower. Whatever the justification for this practice in the civil service as a whole, it should be abandoned in each Museum in the interests of improving resource management.

31. If that cannot be done without the museum staff's ceasing to be civil servants, then this consideration itself becomes an important argument for devolved status.

32. The arguments against such a change in status are essentially that the interests of the museum staff would thereby be prejudiced and that there would be no benefit to the Museums to offset this disadvantage. As we have said however we think that there would be real and valuable benefits. We understand why a change of status should create anxieties among the staff; but we think that, where these have substance, they can be removed. So far as pay and conditions are concerned we see no reason why firm guarantees should not be given that after devolution these will continue to be related at existing levels to those of the civil service; and in our view this would provide a satisfactory safeguard. It should not be difficult to establish appropriate linkages with civil service grades at comparable levels of pay and responsibility. These already exist for the curatorial and conservation grades.

33. We conclude that in principle the balance of advantage comes down clearly against the continuation of departmental status and in favour of something more akin to trustee status. How does this general conclusion apply to such different bodies as the V & A and Science Museums? There can be no doubt that the considerations described in paragraph 28 apply powerfully to the V & A Museum where curatorial knowledge ranges widely and deeply over many fields, as indeed it does in the Science Museum, but also involves aesthetic perceptions to a marked degree.

Recommendation No 2

The V & A Museum should cease to be a departmental Museum.

34. It might be thought that these arguments apply less strongly to the Science Museum which in addition to its historical role presents modern scientific and industrial subjects important to present-day development. We are clear however that the fundamental issue is not the nature of the fields covered by a museum; it is rather the freedom of any museum with its Council or Trustees to conduct its affairs according to its own best professional judgments within the necessary constraints imposed by its resources and its prescribed aims. In practice issues which involve that professional freedom may arise to a different degree or in different ways museum by museum; but the principle itself is common to all of them. Our conclusion is that the case for devolved status is persuasive for both the Science and the V & A Museums.

Recommendation No 3

The Science Museum should cease to be a departmental Museum.

35. We hesitate to suggest the precise nature of the new status for two reasons. First, the change would involve a great number of detailed decisions which could be of crucial importance for securing the benefits of the change and in convincing all concerned of its value. The process of taking these decisions will require much study and wide consultation. We do not want to pre-empt it. Secondly, the question of status goes far beyond the two departmental Museums. It does not necessarily follow that trustee status, as exemplified for example by the British Museum, is the best arrangement for either or both of them. On the other hand we do not wish to question that status or to propose alternative forms of devolution beyond the limits of our knowledge.

36. It would not be helpful however if we confined ourselves to a bare recommendation in favour of devolved status. We therefore offer the following broad description of the main features and purposes of any new arrangements. There is no reason why these should be identical for both Museums but what follows seems to us to apply to both with equal force:-

- i. subject to what is said below about the future role of the present Advisory Councils, each Director should continue to be responsible within the Museum's agreed aims for the day-to-day policies and management of her or his Museum and should take over from the Permanent Secretary of the DES the role of accounting officer;
- ii. the Advisory Councils would be replaced by governing bodies with the broad function of satisfying themselves that the agreed aims (to which they would be parties as described in paragraph 24) were being pursued to the best possible effect. They would also watch over the long-term national interest in the Museums to the extent that they perceived issues arising which were not covered (or were not clearly enough covered) by the agreed aims. In the last resort they would be answerable publicly for the discharge of both these functions. It follows that in the event of any disagreement between them and the Director they must have the ultimate authority;
- iii. each governing body would not however normally involve itself in day-to-day matters of museum policy and management. It would be the aim to draw up terms of reference indicating in general language where the limits of its role were to be drawn. It would be the assumption that any differences of view between the Director and the governing body would be resolved by discussion and consent without the need to define "powers" too closely. It might not be necessary for it to be formally involved in the preparation of the annual museum budgets but it must be provided with the financial and other information necessary for its members to know what is going on and to be able to judge the full future implications of current museum decisions. It would have no formal responsibility to the Government beyond the satisfactory discharge of the foregoing tasks.

37. It would be a matter essentially for the Director and the Chairman of the new body to establish by goodwill rather than by a rule-book, an harmonious working relationship between it and the Museum. This must be a genuine partnership but both must discharge their responsibilities positively. We see no institutional need for any member of the Museum staff other than the Director to be a member of the new body. On the other hand, other senior museum staff

should not feel themselves unduly remote from the Chairman and members. Each Museum already ensures in a number of ways that this does not occur so far as its present Advisory Council is concerned. We think that there would be advantage in reinforcing such contacts by periodic meetings between the Chairman, the Director and selected senior Keepers; by inviting particular Keepers or members of their departments to attend meetings of the governing body when matters of concern to them were to be discussed; or even by the regular attendance at meetings of some or all of the senior managers who may emerge as the result of recommendation No 4 below.

38. If the governing body is to be equipped to perform its functions effectively, it too must not feel cut off from the day-to-day life of the Museum. It may therefore be desirable to introduce more specific and substantial arrangements than those envisaged in the preceding paragraph. We think that this should be left to the joint wisdom of each Director and his or her Chairman in the light of their particular circumstances.

39. It would be consistent with the proposed role of the governing body and conducive to good staff morale if the Chairman and members were given a positive role in the settlement of disagreements between museum management, the museum staff or unions on staff management matters. Civil service management practice should continue to be followed subject to any modifications which may in the course of time seem to be justified by the special nature of each Museum.

40. We do not consider it necessary that the governing body should have any special role in relation to the spending of purchase grants other than that implied by its general responsibilities. Decisions on particular purchases should be a matter primarily for the curatorial judgment of each Museum unless they raise wider issues with long-term implications.

41. The members of the governing body would be appointed by the Government after consultation with the Director and the Chairman. They would be selected primarily for their ability to fulfil the role described above. They should therefore be persons of eminence and authority with the capacity and will to devote adequate time to the job. Though they will certainly bring particular

experience or knowledge to bear, they should operate on a 'collegiate' and not an individual basis. We think it particularly important to include members with proved management skills.

42. The Director should continue to be appointed by the Government.

IV. MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING

Management Structure

43. The heart of a museum is to be found in its curatorial staff, supported by the various services, some specialist and highly professional in themselves (like conservation), some more "generalist", including administration and warding. The Director at the top of the structure normally has little or no time to become involved in detailed curatorial work. Immediately below him are the Keepers in charge of the curatorial departments. They represent traditionally the peak of the Museum's curatorial capacity and are powerfully motivated to perform that role. But this role is increasingly and unavoidably diluted by the task of managing their departments effectively. How far are they, and should they be, involved also in the management of their Museum as a whole? The Directors of both Museums hold regular Keepers' meetings. But these do not yet seem in either case to amount to a genuinely 'collegiate' system of top management which, while preserving the ultimate authority of the Director, involves the Keepers in forming and sharing responsibility for the policy decisions which set the course for the whole Museum, overriding as necessary the legitimate interests of particular departments.

44. If, as we think, the curatorial function lies at the heart of a museum, it is wrong that those involved in curatorial work at the highest level should not have a full share in the responsibility for policy formulation affecting the whole Museum. We consider that this deficiency should be remedied. This might well dilute still further the curatorial function at Keeper level. But that would be a price worth paying for this new emphasis in museum management which, we cannot too strongly emphasise, is intended to achieve a real sharing of responsibility for positive museum policies and not to lead to management by weak consensus.

45. The existing management structure does not make for an easy remedy in either Museum. It fans out too broadly below the Director to provide an easily delineated top management team. It might be possible to reorganise the existing vertical divisions between departments, reducing their number to a figure which better suited the 'collegiate' approach. Another possibility would be to establish a small body of senior or otherwise specially qualified Keepers to act

as a senior management group with the Director. For example two Keepers could be given specific additional responsibilities for certain museum-wide functions. One might be responsible for the general oversight of acquisitions and loans; and the other for display, exhibitions, research and publications. Such an arrangement might justify, on job-weight grounds, a higher rate of pay. Another solution would be to appoint a deputy director, one of whose functions would be to help ensure that the Director commanded a museum-wide view upon major issues affecting the museum as a whole, which enjoyed the general support and loyalty of the various departments. The senior museum official responsible for staff, finance and administration should be a member of the top management group (see also paragraphs 53-54 below).

Recommendation No 4

The Science Museum and the V & A Museum should each establish formal machinery for the consideration of museum policies by the Director and his senior managers on a 'collegiate basis'; and should aim to have this in operation by the end of 1982 at the latest.

Planning

46. No organisation can be fully efficient unless it sets itself appropriate targets and, subject to periodic review in the light of changing circumstances and priorities, adheres to them. The agreement which we propose on museum aims will at once make this more essential and, if it is a sound agreement, easier to achieve. It will also be facilitated by the changes we have suggested in senior management practice.

Recommendation No 5

Arrangements should be instituted in the V & A Museum and in the Science Museum for the setting of the timed and costed objectives necessary to achieve the agreed aims of each Museum, and for the regular review of these objectives both to monitor progress and to take account of changing circumstances and priorities. Where such objectives involve substantial future expenditure or

have major implications for general policy, the Museum should consult its governing body and in appropriate cases the Office of Arts and Libraries (OAL) of the DES.

Internal Reviews

47. The Science Museum has recently instituted a radical review of the policies and activities of the National Railway Museum in York (NRM). We commend this valuable initiative and urge that it should be repeated in other important areas of activity. This is not to imply that either Museum does not already devote much time and thought to re-appraisals of what they do. The virtue of the "think tank" approach we are here recommending is that it is more likely to cover in time the whole of the museum ground and to dig it deep. It is difficult to over-estimate the value of having such reviews conducted by a group of senior museum staff who are not all directly concerned in the activity under review.

Recommendation No 6

Each Museum should institute a "rolling" programme of internal policy reviews which would analyse, criticise and, where necessary, challenge the purposes, policies and activities of departments, groups of departments and out-stations so as to ensure that they both conform to the agreed aims and merit the resources devoted to them by comparison with other museum activities.

Management Information

48. As described in paragraph 10-13 the two Museums between them spend large sums of public money in a complex variety of ways including the payment of the salaries of staff performing many different activities and the expenditure on essential housekeeping services, acquisitions, exhibitions, building works and general administrative overheads. Most of this expenditure is in the hands of the Museums themselves but a significant proportion is disbursed by the Property Services Agency (PSA) of the Department of the Environment (DOE) under arrangements made by the OAL. Apart from these direct costs, the value of the

museum buildings themselves and the sites they occupy are a factor in calculating the real cost of running the Museums and therefore of determining their cost-effectiveness.

49. We accept that these various cost elements are not all of equal practical importance in calculating the cost of existing and prospective activities. Nevertheless we think it essential that each Museum, like any other organisation, should have all relevant cost information available to it, broken down so far as possible between departments and with the most accurate possible attribution of overhead expenditure and the cost of general services so that the effective cost of particular activities can be established, and appropriate priorities determined. The basis for doing this does not exist at the moment partly because of the way responsibility for expenditure on the museum buildings is divided; and partly because there is no way at present of calculating and attributing the indirect costs of particular activities eg the time of curatorial, design, workshop, and conservation staff. Such a basis should be created as quickly as possible. If the Museums are to enjoy the greater management freedom we envisage it is very much in their own interest to have this information as a necessary aid to ensuring that they use their resources to the best effect.

Recommendation No 7

Each Museum should establish a management information system which would enable it to calculate the true cost of particular policies and activities; and should incorporate the system into its forward planning and internal reviews. We hope that they can each be assisted in doing so by the technical services available for this purpose within the civil service.

Role of the PSA

50. Our impression is that in major matters (new building, major repairs, alterations and refurbishings of a creative kind) the PSA record for both quality and speed is good and getting better; but that, perhaps inevitably, minor work sometimes takes too long to get done. The fact is that within the vast scale of PSA building and maintenance operations as a whole the requirements of the two Museums cannot always be met with the expedition they

would like and in some cases could get if they were free to deal directly with contractors. At the same time there is considerable benefit to the Museums in the experience and expertise which the PSA brings to major museum works. Moreover the PSA have important responsibilities towards the museum buildings as Crown property, and they would have to continue to discharge these whatever arrangements obtained.

51. It would not in fact be inconsistent with the greater independence we propose for the Museums that the existing arrangements should remain essentially unchanged. We realise moreover that there is a wider picture within which any changed arrangements must find their place. Nevertheless, if, as we think, the Museums should so far as possible be responsible for their own affairs, the costs of the work carried out by the PSA should not be entirely excluded from their management purview. We understand that consideration is already being given within government to the possibility of converting the existing PSA services to a repayment basis. To do this would be consistent with, and would indeed support, our own devolution proposals and on that account we favour it.

52. We think that consideration should also be given to allowing the Museums, except for major works, to employ outside contractors direct if they judge that in particular cases this would be more cost-effective. Any new arrangements should include a realistic appraisal of the Museums' needs over a reasonable period of time and the Museums should have the possibility, subject to the agreement of the DES, to use building works "underspends" for other museum purposes and to finance additional building works expenditure from reduced expenditure of other kinds. This facility should not be used in order simply to exploit accidental savings which should more properly accrue to the Exchequer; or to create future commitments of a kind which would otherwise not arise. Its purpose would be to facilitate sensible changes in museum priorities and to broaden the area in which the Museums can exercise choice.

Recommendation No 8

Each Museum should be given greater control over its building works expenditure including conversion to a repayment basis where the PSA carries out the work, the possibility of using private contractors for other than major works and,

subject to OAL approval, of "virement" in and out of the building works expenditure under their own control.

Museum Administration

53. If the Museums are devolved with the changes in their internal management and the delegated powers we propose, there will be two important consequences for their internal administration. It will have to carry a heavier load; and its effectiveness will be even more important than it is now for the general well-being of the Museums. In one way or another senior museum management will need to have constantly before it all possible options, costed and evaluated, for channelling resources to the most effective museum purposes. This must include the scope for greater cost-effectiveness in every museum activity which can be usefully measured in such terms. To this end we think that staff management, finance (including audit), housekeeping, works, museum staff structure, and organisation and work methods should be under one person who would work to the Director and have the experience, the energy and the personality to make a creative contribution to the management of the Museum and to carry his full weight with the professional staff. This person should be part of the senior management team (see recommendation No 4) and he must have competent and experienced support staff. A job description for this post is suggested at Annex B. The grading of this post is best left to the Museums themselves to propose. It will depend partly on the solutions they adopt for a more collegiate style of management. The post should be filled preferably by open competition, or, failing that, by a service trawl.

Recommendation No 9

The administration capacity of each Museum should be strengthened to deal with the increased responsibilities resulting from devolution and new management arrangements. The senior person responsible for administration should be a member of the Director's top management team.

54. We realise that these recommendations concerning senior management structure and practice (Nos 4-9) will add to the work of senior museum staff or, as in the case of recommendation No 9, will necessitate a small number of new posts. In the context of our report as a whole we think it should be possible

to absorb this requirement without specific additional provision. We are in no doubt however that no other single factor is more important for the Museums than quality of management and that improving it must have a very high, perhaps the highest priority. It has struck us forcibly throughout that in order to meet the challenges and problems of the present day the Museums need to match their curatorial excellence with an equal excellence of general management; and to combine the two so that they reinforce and complement each other.

Opening Hours

55. The whole concept underlying a great national museum requires that it should aim to make itself and its objects available to the public as fully as possible. Such an aim admits of no absolute satisfaction. Moreover, as in other areas, a balance has to be struck. That balance no doubt indicates clearly enough that in principle a museum should open its doors during periods of maximum public demand eg on Saturdays, Sundays and major holidays; and should maximise its opening hours at other times. But at some point the cost of opening according to a particular weekly pattern has, for the greater good of the museum (and therefore of the public) to be balanced against other powerful priorities.

56. The decision to close the V & A Museum on Fridays is an example of a particular choice which was made on an assessment of competing priorities. Without commenting on the merits of that decision, we nevertheless believe that in principle the restriction of opening hours is a valid policy option when money is short provided that it is evaluated carefully within a comprehensive view of what the museum is there for; and provided of course that it achieves its purpose of saving resources. The profit and loss has to be weighed across the museum as a whole. It should not be assumed that shorter opening hours always mean less public impact of a worthwhile kind.

57. We see no basis of principle therefore for recommending a return to full weekday opening at the V & A Museum, however popular such a recommendation might be. We have however been much impressed by evidence from diverse quarters that the choice of Friday was unfortunate because it seems impossible to dispel the public's assumption that the Museum will be open on that day. We know of no sufficient justification for choosing Friday rather than another day. Indeed we believe that this choice, rather than the more obvious Monday, is inconsistent with the broad aim of serving the public to the greatest extent possible.

Recommendation No 10

Restrictions on opening hours should be regarded as a legitimate option, among others, when balancing competing claims on resources. There would however have to be a particularly good case for going beyond the one and a half day a week closure already adopted by the V & A Museum.

Recommendation No 11

The V & A Museum should close on Mondays instead of Fridays for as long as it is considered necessary to close on a weekday.

Admission Charges

58. This aspect of museum management and policy raises issues of broad principle (as well as strong feelings) for all museums, and we therefore approach it with caution. At the same time, if the Museums are to be encouraged by a more independent status and new management practices to survive and flourish in a period of continuing economic difficulty, the area in which their professional and management judgments are exercised must be as large as possible. The best mix of considerations will not be reached if important ones are excluded from the outset. Admission charges, whether for primary or study collections or for special exhibitions, are at one level a possible way of mitigating the effects of the financial stringency which the Museums' present heavy dependence on Exchequer money makes inevitable. At another and equally important level they could help the formulation of sound policy and practical objectives, and foster the sense of realism which any museum needs to balance its innate altruism.

59. Admission charges at national museums were introduced for the first time in January 1974, and abolished in April of the same year. Public attendance at the two departmental Museums over the three month period January to March 1974, compared with the same period in 1973, was as follows:-

Science Museum				V & A Museum			
	1973	1974	%fall		1973	1974	%fall
January	204,047	99,583	51.2		91,884	58,416	36.4
February	239,147	129,054	46.0		107,981	52,278	51.6
March	194,688	147,743	24.1		130,197	66,348	49.0

60. Although these figures reflect other factors as well, it is clear that the effect of introducing admission charges was a sharp fall in attendance. Since the period in question was so short it is difficult to draw firm conclusions about the long term effects of charging except to note in the case of the Science Museum a strong tendency to recover the lost attendance in the last month. In attempting a very rough estimate of the gross receipts which might accrue from the introduction of a charge of £1.50 a head (see paragraph 62ii) at both Museums, it is necessary to make an assumption about the likely effect on attendance. It is likely that in the long run a higher percentage of Science Museum visitors than V & A Museum visitors would be deterred by admission charges. It would not therefore be unreasonable to assume, for illustrative purposes, that after a time attendance would level off at about 60% of the 1981 figure for the Science Museum and 75% for the V & A Museum. On this basis the annual gross income from such charges (ignoring other variables) would be £5.2m at the Science Museum and £1.9m at the V & A Museum. There would be a cost for collecting and processing the charges but, even allowing for this and for the possibility of over-estimation in the 1981 attendance figures, the net addition to the income of the two Museums could be as much as £6m. If the foregoing assumptions are considered over-optimistic, it is of course the case that even a half or a third of that sum would represent a very significant proportion of existing museum costs.

61. To the extent that this issue is regarded as being one of principle, someone (presumably the Government) should enunciate it and accept its implications for museum management and finance. If a museum is to be denied the freedom to charge and the benefits from doing so, there is the greater obligation on government to provide the financial support necessary for the achievement of the museum's aims at a level which is publicly defensible and has

regard to the professional conscience of the museum. We do not however think it necessary or desirable to lay down a uniform and rigid policy. It should however be the assumption that each Museum should seek to maximise its receipts from admission charges subject to whatever broad principles the Government feels it desirable to prescribe. Some areas of museum activity seem particularly to call for admission charges and we shall mention these passim in this report.

62. We suggest that the following considerations should be borne in mind in deciding what should be done:-

- i. where admission charges are introduced it is possible, and it may be desirable, to make exceptions on behalf of particular kinds of visitors. Blanket exceptions eg for the winter months, are worth considering;
- ii. on the other hand, to be worth the cost of collection, charges must bring in a substantial net financial return. They must be fixed at an appropriate level eg £1 to £1.50 at current values. The case for exceptions should be judged as much by the head as by the heart;
- iii. admission tickets valid for any number of visits within, say, a week, would give better value for money and might actually increase the amount of public use;
- iv. charging for admission might open up new possibilities for meeting public demand in a cost-effective manner eg by evening opening at peak periods of the year;
- v. the effect of admission charges on the total "gate" should not be given too much importance in deciding whether charges are justified or the level at which they should be fixed. It does not always follow that even a permanent fall in numbers means a loss of worthwhile public impact;

- vi. the financial advantage from charges cannot in the nature of things be guaranteed wholly or in part to either the Exchequer or to the Museums themselves. Both are entitled to benefit. But the management incentive to the Museums, and therefore much of the value of charges, will be lost unless the Government fixes and administers the annual museum grants in a manner which demonstrably allows the Museums a substantial benefit from their own admission revenue. They, no less than the general public, must be satisfied that the 'quid pro quo' for admission charges is a better museum than would otherwise be possible.

Recommendation No 12

Each Museum should be encouraged to introduce admission charges for all or part of its collections or for special exhibitions, subject to any general principles concerning charges which the Government decides to lay down; and on the understanding that the Museum should aim to maximise its receipts from this source and should demonstrably benefit financially from the charges it introduces. There should be the clearest possible understanding with Government about the extent to which the Museum should benefit from this income. Each Museum should formulate a charges policy as soon as possible. If there is no change in their status (recommendations 2 and 3) the aim should be to introduce this policy by the end of the year. If the status of the Museums is devolved the formulation and application of the policy should await the setting up of the new governing bodies (paragraphs 36-41).

VI THE CURATORIAL FUNCTION

Acquisition and Disposal

63. What and what not to acquire, either by purchase or gift, is at the heart of a museum's life and ultimately is a prime determinant of a museum's costs. The question presents itself in three main ways. First, what class of object is to be collected at all? Secondly, by what criteria of "representativeness" should historical objects be acquired at all in order to record the past or to signpost the way to the present. Thirdly, by what criteria should the moving present be recorded for the enlightenment of posterity and the contemporary visitor?

64. The answer to the first question is partly a matter of history. Collections already exist and no doubt most should continue to do so. That is not the end of the story however. There is great variation in the resources devoted to the display of existing collections. Although this may also be due partly to fortuitous circumstances eg the comparatively unfavourable treatment of the Indian Collection at the V & A Museum, some concept of relative importance may be thought to underlie the difference of treatment. And in times of severe economic difficulties this implied judgment could be important in deciding priorities and should therefore to be brought more into the open.

65. Perhaps an even more important aspect of what to collect is the acquiring or setting up of new collections or even new museums. There is an important sense in which virtually any category of objects is collectable in the pursuit and presentation of knowledge. When choices have to be made it may be inevitable therefore that the decisive factors should be as much practical as professional. The curatorial urge, here as in other areas, is non-finite even if in practice it cannot be infinite. Important examples of new or greatly expanded collections in recent years have been the National Railway Museum at York, the Concorde Museum at Yeovilton, the proposed Museum of Photography at Bradford, the proposed Theatre Museum in Covent Garden; before that and, in a rather different sense, the acquisition by the V & A Museum of Ham House, Apsley House and Osterley Park.

66. Most of these ventures have been, are, or will be costly. For example the York Railway Museum now costs (with PSA expenditure included) £1.0 million a year to run - 11.8% of the total annual expenditure on the Science Museum. Between them Ham, Osterley and Apsley Houses cost £876,000 - 8% of the overall annual expenditure on the V & A Museum. Building and other setting up costs of the proposed Museums at Bradford and Covent Garden will amount to, respectively, £2.8m (of which £1.9m is being found by the local authority) and £4.3m.

67. These are all in their different ways admirable enterprises. But it is doubtful whether they would all have been approved had the present economic situation been foreseen; or if it had been realised what proportion of available museum resources they would consume or which activities of higher priority they would threaten to displace.

68. Improving the representativeness of existing collections is also a task of elastic proportions. How far to go must no doubt remain essentially a matter of curatorial judgment within whatever limits of general policy or of financial constraint prevail. There is however considerable scope for legitimate variation in such judgment. Some collections can be more or less world-wide in scope; the assessment of what is a gap and, still more important, whether it should be filled, will differ appreciably according to taste, mood or fashion; and collecting for its own sake may occur simply as a by-product of curatorial virtue.

69. Finally, keeping up with the present (even anticipating the future) is essential in principle if a museum is to discharge its duty to posterity and fulfil even a minimal educational role in the present. The choice of category and object here is even more difficult; the field is vastly greater (if only because time has not set its own limits upon it); and the scope for display is usually more restricted.

70. Acquisition policy is further complicated by the need to take account of the cost of conserving, storing, displaying and guarding the object.

71. In this situation we do not think it possible to try to prescribe firm rules or principles which, imposed as they would be upon day-to-day curatorial judgments, might result in less acquisition but at the expense of unacceptable

harm to professional independence. Acquisition in some form and at some rate must self-evidently continue if a museum is to prosper and discharge its proper functions. It has therefore to be accepted that museums have a built-in tendency to expand their collections and that over the years that can only mean growth in their total size. But unless this tendency is rigorously controlled, any museum will eventually be threatened by collapse from its own weight. More likely, it will find itself for resource reasons denied the ability to undertake activities to which with hindsight it would attach greater importance than to some of the fruits of its past acquisition policies.

72. We think there is a special need to exercise restraint in the acquisition of very large objects which, apart from their initial purchase and storage costs, sooner or later create a demand for expensive display space. This applies particularly to the Science Museum in relation, for example, to aircraft, some railway and other transport objects and agricultural machinery. We accept that a museum must collect 'real' objects. There comes a point however at which purely practical considerations make this difficult or impossible. This is of course accepted in the extreme case of a maritime museum which does not normally expect to acquire large vessels yet need not fail in its essential purposes on that account. We realise that each of the two Museums already has regard to the implications of size when contemplating the acquisition of objects. We think that in addition it should be firm museum policy to set a more modest standard of 'representativeness' where large objects are concerned and to fill any resulting gaps in their collections by other means, such as the use of scale-models.

Disposal

73. There are important limits, practical, legal and psychological on the extent to which growth by acquisition can be offset by disposing of objects to other museums, to private buyers or to the dustbin. So far as the quality of a collection is concerned a misguided disposal has the same effect as a misguided failure to acquire (if that is how hindsight makes them each appear). But it does not feel that way to those responsible who will be far more concerned about the former error. Even so the inflow and outflow of objects must somehow be brought into greater equilibrium as part of any attempt to help the Museums through a period of financial stringency or, for that matter, to ensure a

healthy longevity whatever the circumstances. Although care must continue to be exercised in disposing of objects, each Museum must be prepared to take some risks. They must be ready to live more dangerously in order to live better.

74. While it must be left to each Museum to make specific modifications in its approach to acquisition and disposal, we make the following general recommendations:-

Recommendation No 13

New projects involving the setting up of new or expanded collections should be rigorously costed before they are approved. Each Museum should be satisfied, against the background of its aims and of realistic resource assumptions, that the cost, both capital and recurrent, is likely to be met without unacceptable harm to the Museum as a whole. In considering the claims of such projects against available resources and other compelling claims on them, the best possible judgment should be made of the relative as well as the intrinsic importance of the project.

Recommendation No 14

There should be a conscious effort by each Museum to foster more restrictive acquisition and bolder disposal, recognising and accepting that both will involve risks. Particular restraint should be exercised in the acquisition of large objects.

Recommendation No 15

Curatorial departments in each Museum should be required to draw up plans for both acquisition and disposal in their fields for as far ahead as practicable. These plans should be discussed by senior management with a view to producing a museum policy for both operations which would be based on the curatorial requirements of each department but would also embody a view of the best policy for the Museum as a whole.

Recommendation No 16

The same stringent acquisition criteria should be applied to gifts as to purchases. Every effort should be made to ensure, when accepting multi-object gifts, that the Museum is left free to dispose, either immediately or as time goes on, of any objects which it considers it is no longer cost-effective to keep.

Recommendation No 17

It should be regarded as natural for the purchase grants of particular departments or of the Museum as a whole to be underspent from time to time. "Underspends" should be available, subject to the consent of the OAL, for all other approved museum purposes; and they should continue as at present to be available for use in the following financial year. It should also be open to each Museum, with DES approval, to augment purchase grants from "underspends" in other heads of museum expenditure.

Duplication between Museums

75. This is a wide-ranging question which cannot be effectively tackled in the course of a scrutiny covering only two museums. Moreover it raises difficult issues of what is meant by duplication and how far, where it occurs, it matters. There are undoubtedly areas of overlap between, for example, the V & A Museum and the British Museum. One cannot help being struck by the large number of museums around the country which collect military aircraft. There is overlap between museum libraries. The Science Museum, the V & A Museum and the National Maritime Museum all have horological collections. The Prints and Drawings Department of the V & A Museum has some common territory with, for example, the Tate Gallery.

76. Many of these duplicated areas of curatorial endeavour are more apparent than real. Two museums can legitimately be interested in the same kind of object for different reasons. An electrical appliance may be important to the V & A Museum from the design standpoint. The same object may equally interest the Science Museum for the sake of its scientific or technological significance. Even when there is real duplication it may be justified in principle by simple

geography. If, for example, all railway objects were concentrated in the NRM at York, many people in other parts of the country would be effectively prevented from seeing at least some of them. In our view duplication is a matter of concern if it brings museums into serious competition with one other eg if they seek to acquire the same objects or to cater for the same public; or if the splitting of the available objects in a particular field makes it impossible for any single museum to do justice to it. So far as we can judge duplication is not a serious problem in the two Museums we have studied. In general we found that the curatorial staff were well aware of the potential dangers and in most cases there seemed to be satisfactory informal liaison with colleagues in those other museums where the possibility of duplication might arise. In one or two cases there were informal concordats dividing the shared field (although these were subject to occasional strain).

77. The problem of duplication is linked with the vital issue of museum aims. The clearer these are the less the likelihood that "poaching" issues will arise. To ensure they did not would require a national look at the aims and habits of all the major museums; and that would be a formidable undertaking. In the meantime much can be done by friendly liaison at Keeper level, with if necessary adjudication by the Directors concerned. It is important to make this as effective as possible. Proper definition of spheres of interest may save expenditure on the acquisition of objects, on storage, display and curatorial effort.

Recommendation No 18

Each Museum should review those areas of acquisition which might duplicate those of other museums, and strengthen the existing arrangements for informal consultations with them in order to establish the clearest possible lines of demarcation; and to provide machinery for the settlement of disagreements.

Purchase Grants

78. During the post-war period the Museums have received the following Purchase Grants in Aid, in actual and real terms.

YEAR	VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM		SCIENCE MUSEUM	
	Actual Grant	Grant in real terms (1946 base)	Actual Grant	Grant in real terms (1946 base)
	£	£	£	£
1946/47	10,000	10,000	3,000	3,000
1950/51	13,274	11,633	2,000	1,753
1955/56	28,520	19,128	2,000	1,341
1960/61	43,199	25,486	8,000	4,720
1965/66	74,176	36,703	8,000	3,958
1970/71	149,405	59,123	8,000	3,166
1975/76	300,540	64,480	25,800	5,535
1978/79	698,136	102,456	135,000	19,182
1981/82	1,160,000	113,748	362,000	35,497

In real terms, therefore, the value of the purchase grant increased by 1083% for the Science Museum and by 1037% for the V & A Museum between 1946-47 and 1981-82.

79. There is no absolute measure of the adequacy of a purchase grant. The opportunities for useful acquisition by purchase are rarely finite. Much also depends on the number and quality of gifts and bequests, on the adequacy of existing collections, on the requirements of new ones, on the availability of storage space and display facilities. As can be seen from the table in the preceding paragraph, both Museums have enjoyed a very considerable increase in the real value of the purchase grant in the past 25 years, and our general impression, for what it is worth, is that neither Museum at present sees itself as being unduly frustrated by the level of its purchase grants. We have suggested elsewhere (Recommendation No 17) that with greater caution in

acquisition generally and with higher priority for other essential activities, it should be expected that purchase grants will sometimes be underspent. We make no recommendation about the actual level of purchase grants. But we think it important that this item of expenditure should be treated in the same way as any other; and in particular that museum management should not allow itself to be unduly influenced by the glamour which understandably surrounds this particular activity. It should be accepted that in some years a proper assessment of museum priorities may point to a reduction in expenditure on the purchase of objects in order to finance, say, the refurbishing of a main gallery; or some other activity of less obvious appeal but higher real priority.

Research

80. The curatorial knowledge which is necessary for sound acquisition policies and for the intelligible presentation of objects to the public has to be acquired and sustained. There is no clear dividing line between the effort needed to achieve these purposes and the "pure" research objective of finding out all that can be known about an object, its origin and its context. The more that is known about an object or a collection, the more effectively can the museum acquire, display and explain. But this process also has the important result of establishing the museum as a centre of knowledge and excellence which is recognised in the case of the V & A and Science Museums throughout the world. There is a real sense in which a museum rightly becomes a supreme repository of knowledge for its own sake; and that would remain so even if its doors were never opened to the public.

81. There is no way of measuring the value of these two aspects of research, if indeed they can sensibly be regarded as distinct. In practice however the value attributed to, and the effort expended upon each of them, does of course vary within a museum or in a particular department. The scope for genuine advances of knowledge will differ according to the type of collection. A new museum such as the NRM at York will have a degree of choice between a "popular" approach which concentrates on the attractive presentation of its collections; or a more scholarly one with greater emphasis on its becoming a centre of all knowledge on railway technology or the history of the industry. The emphasis may change over a period.

82. We are in no doubt that a substantial research effort is needed to sustain the essential purposes of any great museum. And we are satisfied that in each departmental Museum much the greater part of this effort is directly related to necessary activities such as the setting up of galleries, the production of catalogues and the preparation of exhibitions. We consider also that it is a legitimate objective for a national museum to seek to establish itself as a leading authority in the fields it covers. The curatorial capacity available for these purposes has expanded significantly in the post-war period. Thus the grade of Research Assistant has increased in numbers from 8 to 19 in the V & A Museum and from 12 to 23 in the Science Museum. This is a larger rate of growth than for any other curatorial grade.

83. We do not think there is any case as such for reducing an activity which we regard as being in principle of high priority. Moreover as we have said this is not an activity which can be readily measured by degree of utility. By the same token we see no reason why there should not be some reduction in the curatorial time expended on research if that was considered desirable in order to finance other activities of even higher priority. We feel however that this is a judgment which the Museums must themselves make. For us to make it would be inconsistent with the case we have made for devolving the Museums to a more independent status.

Services to the Public

84. The Museums understandably attach importance to answering written and verbal enquiries from the public about the matter of their collections, including the identification of objects brought in by the curious and the optimistic. This is more than just a courtesy. It feeds curatorial knowledge and experience; and it makes a contribution to the educational and cultural role of the Museums.

85. Providing a service of this kind is however costly of curatorial time. Perhaps because of this some museums, particularly abroad, do not regard themselves as sources of particular information for the general public. In this matter, as in others, the question is where the line should be drawn.

86. We have looked at many actual examples of correspondence with the public. Some were models of succinctness, helpful but economical. Others must have involved hours of work to little purpose except the gratification of the recipient and perhaps that of the writer. Our conclusion is that too much time is devoted to answering written enquiries. We are also in no doubt that where possible the telephone, properly used, is a cheaper (and sometimes safer) way of dealing with them. The sessions devoted to the identification of objects brought in by the public, though useful training for junior curatorial staff, are not in our view cost-effective in their present form, except sometimes for the client.

Recommendation No 19

Each Museum should review the nature and level of its response to enquiries from members of the public and reduce by at least a third the time spent upon them by all the staff concerned (including secretarial).

87. These reviews should consider the following economies:-

- i. the time devoted to giving opinions on objects brought in by members of the public to be limited to one afternoon a week instead of the present two days a week at the V & A Museum and the absence of any restriction at the Science Museum;
- ii. a charge to be made for identifications, partly to offset the cost of the staff time involved and partly to discourage the less serious enquiries. It should be set at a level likely to achieve significant results for both purposes;
- iii. replies to written enquiries from the public should be polite but terse and should be confined wherever possible to references to (or occasionally extracts from) existing material. Replies should not encourage further claims on the time of museum staff and should not normally involve a search for material or facts which would not otherwise be undertaken;

- iv. staff at all levels should be reminded periodically of the need for maximum economy in answering enquiries, using the telephone wherever possible. Keepers should arrange to oversee their departments' correspondence and to satisfy themselves that due economy is being observed.

88. Bearing in mind the proportions of curatorial staff time devoted to the various aspects of public service, as set out in the table in paragraph 19, we estimate that a reduction of a third in the time spent on such work would represent a saving of up to £100,000 annually in staff costs at the V & A Museum, and up to £75,000 at the Science Museum (measured by the value of staff time available for redeployment on other work).

Exhibitions Policy

89. Exhibitions play an important part in public education and entertainment; they can increase knowledge; and they can enhance the standing of the museum. On the other hand they often cost a lot and they can disturb other museum activities, such as conservation and curatorial effort, to an extent which may be inconsistent with a museum's true priorities.

90. There are many different kinds of exhibition and there is no simple classification suitable for the purposes of this scrutiny. Some involve a major effort by the Museum, whether or not they enjoy significant outside assistance (financial or other), and may be of limited duration. A recent example was the "Splendours of the Gonzaga" at the V & A Museum. Some are on a much smaller scale and may be financed and mounted largely by outside interests. Others again may be major exhibitions which become semi-permanent features like the Science Museum's "Challenge of the Chip". There is clearly a valuable place for all these and other types of exhibition.

91. The importance of a successful exhibition both for public edification and for the inspiration of museum staff must not be under-rated. On the other hand it is perhaps tempting to equate a museum's record of successful exhibitions with its success as a museum. That would we think be an error. There is in fact a powerful case in current circumstances for adopting an exhibitions policy

which in one way or another makes a much lower net demand on museum expenditure and allows more to be done in support of less obviously alluring, but even more important, activities than would otherwise be possible.

92. A policy of reducing the net cost of exhibitions can be approached in several ways. There can be fewer of them. Charges can be introduced or increased, depending upon the likely popular appeal of a particular exhibition. Costs can be reduced. The prime purpose of an exhibition must be to bring valuable or interesting objects into a relationship in order to illustrate a theme. The cost of doing so can lie as much in the setting as in the presenting of the objects themselves. There is perhaps room for some self-denial here without sacrificing excellence or detracting unduly from the impact of the whole.

93. Finally, costs to the museum can be reduced by outside help or through actual sponsorship by professional, artistic or commercial interests. There is evidence even in current circumstances of a growing willingness of these last to sponsor artistic enterprises of various kinds. Their purposes could be equally, perhaps better, served through the Museums and the large public they attract. There should be scope for mounting special exhibitions which would be attractive to commercial sponsors without compromising the professional integrity of the Museum; and this possibility should increase if the Museums are devolved from government as we recommend.

94. These considerations will apply differently to each of the two Museums. The policy of the V & A Museum has been to concentrate on major exhibitions, usually 2 or 3 a year, of comparatively limited duration. Many of these have enjoyed great popular success. But though some have attracted a degree of outside sponsorship and it has been the normal practice to charge for admission, the net cost to the Museum has been heavy. Thus, the rough profit and loss account over the last three years was 6 major exhibitions at a total profit of £19,000 and 10 at a net cost to the Museum of £244,000 (see Annexe C).

95. In no sense do we suggest that this money was not well-spent in the circumstances of the time. But it represents a claim on museum resources which should if possible now be greatly reduced. We understand that it is already the Museum's intention to hold fewer major exhibitions in the future and we think

that wise and necessary. So far as the level of admission charges is concerned, a typical scale adopted by the Museum is £1.50 for an adult; 50p for a student, child, pensioner or unemployed person. It is no doubt right to have a differential scale of charges. But for a costly major exhibition of the high standard of excellence typical of the V & A Museum, we think that these charges are too low. In particular we can see no reason why the concessionary charges should be less than half the standard charge.

96. The Science Museum, on the other hand, has tended to concentrate on a much larger number of small exhibitions. In the three year period 1979-1981 the Museum mounted no fewer than 60 of these. Detailed cost figures are not available though we understand that the Museum's direct costs were in the region of £300,000. There has in fact been considerable variation. Many have been put on with the help of outside interests at little or no financial cost to the Museum (though even in such cases there have often been hidden costs from the expenditure of curatorial, design and workshop time). It has not been the Museum's custom to charge for admission to these exhibitions and it must be recognised that in general the field covered by the Science Museum provides fewer subjects of wide "market" appeal than that of the V & A Museum.

Recommendation No 20

The V & A Museum should pursue an exhibitions policy which is so far as possible self-financing or profit-making by:-

- i. having fewer exhibitions;
- ii. concentrating on themes which are likely to arouse strong public interest;
- iii. fixing admission charges which, having regard to ii above, will at least cover net museum costs, including curatorial and other staff time;
- iv. avoiding unduly costly forms of presentation;
- v. actively promoting private and commercial sponsorship.

Recommendation No 21

The Science Museum should pursue an exhibitions policy which will reduce, and so far as possible eliminate, the net cost to the Museum of its exhibitions, by:-

- i. concentrating on those exhibitions which cost little in money or staff time;
- ii. reducing the number of exhibitions in order to release curatorial and other staff capacity for work of higher priority, such as, for example, scholarly research and work on permanent galleries.

Outstations

The National Railway Museum, York (NRM)

97. At the time of our study the Science Museum was already conducting a radical review of all aspects of this conspicuously successful enterprise after its first five years of operation. This review was being tackled, as we saw it, very much on the right lines and we have no wish to duplicate work which others are doing far more expertly than we could hope to do. We therefore confine ourselves in this report to a few broad recommendations on matters which from the outside struck us as particularly important and which we arrived at quite independently of the Museum's domestic review.

98. The NRM's activities represent a very important part of total Science Museum expenditure. In 1981/82 the NRM took up £788,000 (12%) of the Science Museum's budget, and PSA spent a further £232,000 on capital works, maintenance, fuel and supplies. During 1981 the Museum was visited by no fewer than 1,414,589 people.

99. In considering the merits of this allocation of resources it should be borne in mind that the NRM is different in some important respects from the rest of the Science Museum. First, it has a particularly powerful, ready-made popular appeal which is peculiar to railways and their history and is felt across a wide section of the community. Secondly, the NRM has unique opportunities for free acquisition afforded by its agreement with the British

Railways Board. Thirdly, for very understandable reasons, the NRM has assumed the unusual function for a museum of operating, and helping others to operate, some of the mechanical objects in its collection precisely in the manner of their operation before they passed into history. It is to a significant extent an operator of steam locomotives and rolling stock.

100. The depth and breadth of appeal exerted by the NRM raises inevitably the question whether the public should be charged for admission within the flexible policy for charges recommended in paragraph 62. We think that the great majority of visitors would be prepared to pay for the pleasure and instruction they receive, indeed, find it surprising that they are not already called upon to do so. Payment would, if anything, enhance the appreciation felt by visitors and increase what they get out of their visits. We doubt whether charges at the levels we suggest below would deter most visitors.

Recommendation No 22

Admission charges for the NRM should be introduced at a level which would produce a substantial income from visitors. The exact level must be worked out by the Museum on an expert estimate of the most cost-effective tariff. But we suggest that £1 - £1.50 a head would be a reasonable "full fare" and might well yield gross receipts of £1m - £1.5m a year.

101. In the circumstances of the NRM it would have required superhuman judgment to have pursued an "ideal" acquisition policy over the last five years which would look right to the wisdom of hindsight. We are however in no doubt that there is now an urgent need to devise and stick to a long-term acquisition policy based upon a coolly considered view of what the NRM's role should be over the next decade; and that it should embody much stricter criteria than have been adopted in practice in the past. In particular the greatest caution should be used in the further acquisition of large objects, including such bulky material as track and signalling equipment, where the essential curatorial purpose can be as well or better served by scale-models or drawings.

Recommendation No 23

An acquisition policy and concrete plans to pursue it should be devised for the NRM. It should aim at a much lower rate of acquisition than in the past, particularly where large objects are concerned.

102. We fully understand (and personally share) the enthusiasm shown by the NRM management in the operational side of the Museum's activities. This has been responsibly handled and has made a valuable contribution to the success of the NRM and the support it attracts. It must however be recognised that this activity is not central to the normally accepted functions of a museum and that, when priorities have to be rigorously assessed and painful choices made, its claim to preference is not a strong one. In an average year as much as 10% of the time of the Museum's curatorial staff is devoted to work associated with the live operation of exhibits; and this figure sometimes rises to 15-20%. We do not suggest that this activity should be abandoned as something which the Museum should not be doing at all in the present hard economic climate. But we are clear that the staff and other resources devoted to it should be reduced.

Recommendation No 24

The time spent by the NRM's curatorial and other staff on work associated with the operation of exhibits both within and outside the Museum should be reviewed with the aim of reducing it by at least half.

103. Apart from the building and area at present open to the public, the Museum owns the 3½ acre site containing the Peter Allen Building which is used for storage and restoration. It is in process of buying two further adjoining sites totalling some 2¾ acres at a cost of £310,000. There are other sites in the general area which the Museum would like to acquire as and when British Railways makes them available.

104. The purpose of this envisaged expansion is to increase display and storage space for which a general need is foreseen and, more specifically, to provide scope for improving the existing display methods and exhibiting more of the existing collections. It is of course right to plan ahead in order to accommodate foreseen and necessary expansion. Opportunities for site

acquisition to that end often have to be taken as soon as they occur. However the capital cost of new sites, the associated expenditure on development and the continuing recurrent costs in staff and overheads, together represent a substantial commitment. The more modest acquisition policy we have recommended may reduce the need for expansion. We regard it as essential however that, in the context of our recommendations as a whole, a considered plan should be prepared which would regulate the future development of the NRM with due regard to the competing priorities of the Science Museum and to realistic assumptions about the resources likely to be available to meet them. In general there must in present circumstances be a strong presumption that NRM development should be spread over a substantial period, that it should be modest in scope and that the acquisition of new sites should be postponed for as long as possible.

Recommendation No 25

The potential for expansion of the NRM should be reviewed with the aim of producing a firm development plan which will reflect the need for economy in expenditure, both capital and recurrent, and will embody a considered view of total Science Museum priorities. It should in particular envisage the phasing of the purchase of new sites and their subsequent development over as long a period as possible. The plan should be endorsed by government and there should be the clearest possible understanding about the extent to which any approved expansion should involve the provision of additional money to finance it.

105. The NRM collections record essentially the history of an industry and, partly because railways originated in this country, the emphasis is almost exclusively on UK objects. There is however an obvious curatorial argument for going "worldwide". We think that any such tendency should be resisted at least to the exclusion of objects which, singly or cumulatively, present a significant call on the conservation, display, warding or storage capacity of the Museum.

The proposed Museum of Photography in Bradford

106. A decision, as in this case, to create a major new museum covering essentially new ground pre-supposes a judgment, which in the nature of things is very difficult to make, about relative priorities as they appear when the judgment is made, and also about future priorities and future resources. The

Bradford project is unusual in that the local authority is providing a converted building at a peppercorn rent so that the Museum is spared a major capital cost. Even so, it is expected that £890,000 will be spent by PSA on supplies services and new works at the new Museum during the next year or so. The ongoing expenditure on staff and housekeeping will amount to £290,000 annually, and maintenance costs will be about £100,000 a year.

107. The Bradford project was a bold stroke and as an opportunity for expansion on tempting terms very difficult to resist. At the same time the proposed Museum, however valuable in itself, does not in our view constitute a core activity for the parent Museum. In the event the substantial recurrent costs may have to be found by the Science Museum partly, perhaps entirely, at the expense of other activities which may well be of higher priority in the Museum's scheme of things. If that turned out to be the case it would be most regrettable. Thus we find that the Bradford project, viewed simply as an additional call on Science Museum resources during a time when these are only too likely to come under severe and increasing strain, is difficult to justify, though we emphasise that this is not to decry the value of the project itself. Substantial weight must however be given to the local authority's heavy investment of finance and effort. Moreover we understand that the project has value for the Government's regional policy. If that consideration was a factor in the Government's approval of it, it seems to us that this in itself is a reason why the Science Museum should not be expected to finance all the recurrent costs of the Bradford Museum at the expense of activities of equal or greater importance to it. In any event every effort should be made to ensure that the Bradford Museum becomes substantially self-supporting by means of appropriate admission charges and local support of various kinds.

Recommendation No 26

It should be the aim to make the Bradford Museum substantially self-supporting by appropriate admission charges, by sound management, and by encouraging local support, including financial contributions and voluntary help; and a plan to achieve this aim should be prepared by the end of the year. To the extent that this project cannot be made self-supporting financially the Government should have regard to its value to regional policy when considering the annual allocation of resources to the Science Museum.

The Theatre Museum, Covent Garden

108. The capital cost of this attractive project is expected to be £4.3m. When the Museum is established the annual recurrent expenditure will amount to approximately £450,000, and the costs of maintenance will be of the order of £80,000 - £90,000 a year.

109. Again, it is no criticism of this project as such or of the value of the theatre collection in its own terms to say that the field it is concerned with is less central to the essential role of the V & A Museum than that of most of the Museum's other departments. It seems to us that the scope for research which is both possible and justified in this field is also less than in others. In many ways this is a project which seems more suitable for a private initiative.

110. The new Museum, as planned, should however be sufficiently attractive, both in itself and in its proposed site at Covent Garden, for it to be made self-supporting financially at least so far as its recurrent costs are concerned. We are in no doubt that this must be the firm intention and our minimum recommendation. On the other hand the capital costs are so large, both absolutely and in relation to other museum expenditure, that the prior question must be whether the project should be abandoned. Our view is that in the broad context of museum policy, prospects and priorities, it is a luxury, albeit a delightful one. If it goes ahead as planned, we think that the Museum's other, more urgent needs will be put into a false perspective and perhaps fail to secure the support they deserve. We realise that if it is abandoned there will be some consequent dislocation of the Museum's plans for the disposition of its galleries. To the extent that this might involve additional costs regard should be had to the savings achieved by not proceeding with the Covent Garden scheme.

Recommendation No 27

Consideration should be given urgently to abandoning the proposed Theatre Museum at Covent Garden. It should proceed, if at all, on the basis that a sufficient charge be made for admission to render it self-financing. Consideration should also be given to the possibility of devolving the Museum from the V & A Museum and making it entirely independent of the government.

The Museum of Childhood, Bethnal Green

111. This charming collection concentrates under one roof museum objects pertaining to childhood which could be (and in many cases have been) part of the main collections at South Kensington. The cost of salaries and general expenses for the Museum in 1981/82 amounted to £239,000; expenditure on the building was £64,000.

112. Once again it is necessary to subordinate one's instinctive pleasure in a particular collection to the realities of resource constraint and comparative priorities. As with the Theatre Museum in its different way, we do not think that a special museum devoted in this case to the culture of childhood should be very high on the list of the parent Museum's priorities; or that, curatorially speaking, its field has the widely-recognised importance of those covered by most of the departments at South Kensington. If the Bethnal Green collections were to be re-absorbed by those departments the loss would be more to public pleasure than to essential knowledge and scholarship. We do not under-estimate the importance of the former and we note that attendance figures have risen significantly in recent years. That is certainly a tribute to the devoted work of the curatorial and other staff at Bethnal Green. We nevertheless conclude that if the public demand is not great enough to bear admission charges which would cover the Museum's true running costs, consideration should be given to closing it down. It would be wrong for us to pre-judge the result of that consideration. It must turn on the view taken of the V & A Museum's prospects and priorities as a whole.

Recommendation No 28

Admission charges should be introduced at the Museum of Childhood, Bethnal Green, with a view to securing a net income which would cover the Museum's true recurrent costs. If that proves impossible consideration should be given to closing it down.

Osterley Park, Ham House and Apsley House

113. We were much impressed by what has been done in these houses by the devoted application of curatorial and conservation expertise. This, it seems to

us, is in the best traditions of curatorial excellence and the nation should be grateful. At the same time the cost of the Museum's care of these houses is comparatively heavy. In 1981/82 the salaries of the 42½ warding and other staff based at the houses cost £338,000, and the cost of maintenance and minor capital works, which are borne by DOE because these houses are treated as historic buildings, were estimated at £538,500: a combined cost of £876,500. Entrance charges of 50p a head at Ham and Osterley recouped, respectively, £8000 and £5000 of these costs. These figures take no account of the indirect costs of the houses in terms of the proportion of curatorial staff-time devoted to them ie the work of two members of the Furniture and Woodwork Department which is concerned exclusively with the houses, and that of the three most senior members of the Department who each spend a significant amount of time either visiting the houses or undertaking other work (correspondence, management, research, forward planning) associated with the houses.

114. This is a considerable price to pay for an activity which, though splendid in itself, is not a usual museum function. We doubt certainly whether it is justified on any reasonable assessment of priorities against a background of a continuing severe squeeze on resources. It seems very unlikely that it would be possible to cover these costs (even if substantially reduced) by admission charges. If it is not possible, by increasing income or reducing costs, to make this activity self-financing, we think it should be given up entirely at Osterley Park and Ham House. While the same general considerations apply also to Apsley House the arrangements which determine the Museum's responsibilities there may be more difficult to change. But the Apsley House commitment is a particularly heavy one involving no fewer than 22½ staff and every effort should be made to reduce it.

Recommendation No 29

It must be the aim to make Osterley Park, Ham House and Apsley House self-supporting financially by means of a suitably balanced policy of admission charges, opening hours, voluntary help, and a reduced call on curatorial and other staff services.

If Osterley Park and Ham House cannot be made self-supporting financially, the Museum should as soon as possible disengage itself from all responsibility for them other than the provision of curatorial advice to the National Trust.

Provincial Responsibilities

115. Both Museums are active outside London in a number of ways. They provide valuable professional advice; they lend objects to local museums; they administer the funds provided by government for helping local museums with special purchases; the Science Museum (and until recently the V & A Museum also) provides "circulating" exhibitions. The outstations of the Science Museum themselves constitute in varying degrees an important local presence and play a significant part in making museum facilities available more evenly throughout the country.

116. As we understand it, this provincial role is nowhere specifically laid upon the Museums. As a general principle no one would question its desirability. But what degree of priority should it be given? The V & A Museum took the very difficult decision in 1977 to disband its Regional Services Department according to its own judgment of museum priorities when it was faced with the need to cut somewhere. We do not comment on the merits of that particular decision. It seems clear however that in general the first priority must attach to the "core" activities of the Museums at their centres and that when resources are insufficient to finance all current activities, the provincial ones must be called into question at an early stage. The judgments then required would be easier to make if the Museums' local responsibilities, if any, were specifically laid down. This is a matter which, if it arose, could be covered in the statement of agreed aims (paragraphs 23-25).

117. The role of the Museums and Galleries Commission in providing advice, guidance, and help to local museums is also relevant to this aspect of the Museums' functions. For example, it is proposed, as part of a wider plan for building up the provincial role of the Commission, to transfer to it the V & A and Science Museums' responsibility for administering the government funds for helping local museums with special purchases. In general we think that local

museums can only benefit substantially from a strengthening of the Commission's role and that this proposal should make a valuable contribution to that end. It is clearly important that the selection of these purchases should continue to be an essentially curatorial function (which we understand is the intention) and, of course, that it should continue to be performed at its present high standard of excellence. We understand the Museums' reluctance to disturb the existing arrangements and to give up such a rewarding activity. But, so far as we can judge, we think that the balance of museum advantage in its widest sense favours this change, which will incidentally afford a small but useful staff saving to the two Museums.

Libraries

118. The two museum Libraries are great institutions covering so wide a range of activity that we could have devoted all our time to them without doing full justice to either. In the general scheme of things they do not conspicuously form part of the public face of the Museums. They are more the hidden core, the centres of knowledge providing the skeleton to support the curatorial body; and of course they provide a very valuable service to scholars and researchers from the world at large. They are important both to the Museums and to the nation. They are also important in the management sense insofar as they consume a substantial part of the public funds available to the Museums. In 1981/82 the cost of the Science Museum Library was £792,000 and of the V & A Library £711,000, some 12% and 8%, respectively, of the total budgets of the two Museums. In addition to these direct costs, the two Libraries pose a particularly acute conservation problem because of the nature of their objects.

119. We have not had time, even had we been competent, to suggest specific ways in which savings in library expenditure might be achieved by the pursuit of more austere acquisition policies. As with the Museums generally, perhaps even more so, there is an inherent difficulty in the case of a library in any attempt to suggest conceptual as opposed to practical limits to the scope of acquisition. What to acquire, within the available resources, must be largely a matter of curatorial judgment exercised within a museum-wide policy. It must be said however that any library worth its salt and mindful of its obligations to document the present will tend to err; if at all, on the side of acquiring more books, papers and periodicals of possible ephemeral interest than the passage of

time will prove to have been necessary. For this reason we think that both Libraries should now take a radical look at the disposal of existing bibliographic material which has turned out to be of only passing or minor interest and does not justify the cost of its continued storage, handling and conservation. There is risk at both ends of this process of reappraisal. As we have observed elsewhere however, this scrutiny has convinced us that, unless the Museums live dangerously to some degree, they may cease to live at all in the way they themselves would consider worthwhile.

120. In 1981/82 the Science Museum Library spent over £196,000 (a quarter of its overall budget) on the purchase of "serials" (periodicals); some £90,000 went on binding serials, and a substantial proportion of the expenditure of £222,000 on the staff engaged in the collection of printed books and serials must be attributable to the latter. The Library already has this expenditure under review and has done some useful weeding out. We believe, however, that there must be considerable scope for further savings in this area. We consider that the weeding out process should be stepped up, with the aim of reducing the cost of buying serials, and the staff time devoted to it, by at least £75,000 a year.

121. We have considered the question of overlap with other libraries, though our consideration has of necessity been superficial. As we understand it, the significant areas of possible duplication are between the Science Museum Library, which is principally concerned with industrial science, and the Science Reference Library of the British Museum which collects all printed scientific material; and between the V & A Library which collects material on the fine and decorative arts published throughout the world (some 70% of its objects are foreign), and the British Library art collections which consist mainly of objects produced in this country. There is undoubtedly scope for making savings by a degree of amalgamation or by drawing firm lines of demarcation. The disadvantages would lie mainly in less convenient access to the works which students require. That should not be overrated. However, serious consideration of the possibilities would require an investigation of much wider scope than ours. In the meantime there appears to be doubt about the purposes which the Science Museum Library in particular is intended to serve. We understand that a good deal of thought has been given to this but without any final result.

122. Although the Science Museum Library serves both the general public purposes of the Museum and its own curatorial needs, it also exists explicitly for the benefit of the Imperial College of Science (and indeed acquired its existing premises within the College on that basis). In return for this benefit the College pays for much of the recurrent expenditure on the Library Building, including rates, heating and lighting, and maintenance (at a cost of approximately £38,000 in 1981/82), as well as providing free computer time, valued at about £5000 a year, for some of the Museum's working exhibits. The Library Building itself is provided rent free by the College. We understand that only a very small proportion of the Library staff's time is spent in directly servicing users from Imperial College, and that most 'user enquiries' come from the general public rather than the College's students. In these circumstances the balance of mutual advantage between the two establishments would appear to be fairly even though we think this requires further study. It would not be unreasonable, however, to expect the College to reimburse the Science Museum the latter's direct costs in handling loan requests from students ie for maintaining a record of each loan, cancelling the record when the item is returned, and returning the item to the shelf. A similar system of charging operated by the British Library Lending Division suggests that a charge of about 30p per issue would be appropriate. With loans to students from Imperial College running at approximately 11,000 issues annually, a re-imbursement scheme on these lines would produce an annual income to the Library of about £3300.

Recommendation No 31

The disposal policies of both Libraries should be reviewed with the aim of hastening the disposal of dubiously useful items in order to ease the problem of adequate storage and conservation.

Recommendation No 32

The acquisition policy of the Science Museum Library should be reviewed with the aim of reducing the intake of serials at a saving of at least £75,000 a year.

Recommendation No 33

The Science Museum should review fundamentally the benefits which flow to the Imperial College of Science from the Science Museum Library with a view to ensuring that the costs are proportionately shared. In particular the Science Museum should seek reimbursement from the Imperial College of Science of the Museum's costs in handling loan requests from College students.

Education

123. A museum educates in some degree the moment it opens its doors. It is very much the requirement of the age that it should do much more than that. The two Museums have responded to this requirement for a positive educational role with proper enthusiasm and, so far as it is possible to judge in the absence of reliable measures, effectively. Specifically educational activities do not however account for a very large part of their total expenditure. Even so, to get the best value for money, an educational policy is needed which identifies the age and kind of person aimed at and the specific purpose, if any, to be served. If possible we think that some indication of purpose and priorities should appear in the agreed aims of the Museums (paragraphs 23-25). In the meantime we can only repeat that in difficult times it may be necessary to restrict some desirable activities, among them educational projects, even though they make a significant impact, in favour of others which, though more behind the scenes, serve the Museums better in the long run.

124. In this general context we think it right to mention the plan for the collaboration of the V & A Museum and the Royal College of Arts in a degree course in the history of design. This will involve the curatorial staff of the Museum in lecturing and tutorial work as part of an enterprise which is radically new (though it will be consistent with its traditional aim of influencing as well as recording the history of design). It will also take up most, if not all, of the time of 3 members of the Education Department's own staff.

125. We do not venture to question the value of such a project in itself. It is however doubtful whether in the total circumstances of the Museum it represents now, or is likely to do so in the foreseeable future, the best use of

the available curatorial capacity. Crucial to that judgment is the amount of curatorial time it will take; and that is likely to remain uncertain until the project is in being. The very professional conscientiousness of the curatorial staff will encourage them not to stint their contribution. We do not suggest that because of these doubts the scheme should be postponed until better times because we cannot ourselves make a close enough assessment of where the balance of advantage lies. Clearly, once it is started, it must be done well. We do however think it essential that it should not be allowed to develop on lines which make significant demands on curatorial time at the expense either of more central curatorial work or of a reasonable work-load for those concerned. If there is doubt whether that situation can be avoided then we think a postponement should be made. We are in any event doubtful whether the cost of the full-time staff involved reflects the true priorities of the Museum.

126. Finally we think it necessary to make the point that somewhere along the line the educational role of a museum begins to overlap with the role of those bodies which have the prime responsibility for education ie the local authorities and the DES. There should be a limit to how far a museum pursues educational objectives by its own lights and at its own cost. This should mean at least two things. As already suggested the broad purposes of a museum's education activities should so far as possible be prescribed in its agreed aims and there should be consultation with the various education authorities about the best means of achieving them. Secondly, a museum should look to local authorities and, as appropriate, to government for financial and other assistance towards the cost of its more specific educational activities. The readiness of these authorities to help should be regarded as a measure of the value of the Museum's activities in this field.

Voluntary Help

127. In their different ways both Museums attract a small but important number of people who want to give practical expression to their interest in the collections and in the institutions themselves. This finds expression partly through the "Friends" organisations. Some people also want, in however modest a way, to be part of the Museum and to serve it for little or no remuneration. Finding a useful role for such enthusiasts is in one sense part of the Museum's

educational function and it is of a particularly valuable and productive kind. It is also common sense to do so when times are hard and money short. Greater use of voluntary help would go naturally with devolved status.

128. There are however severe practical limits on the use of this potential source of strength. Voluntary helpers often require a degree of training, and certainly of oversight, which makes their employment uneconomic. The scope for voluntary help will in any case be small. Volunteers, however willing, must observe some degree of orderliness in their work and that may be difficult to enforce. There is also a limit beyond which it does not make management sense, or make for good staff morale, to employ volunteers or casual labour on work which is barely distinguishable from that of the permanent staff. The unions are understandably sensitive on this last point.

129. The answers must be worked out as cases arise and we cannot sensibly propose a rule book to provide them. Clearly however it must be possible in each case to demonstrate a significant advantage to the museum. We think that the proposed help should be of limited duration and should normally contribute to a task which has a set beginning and end. The task itself should be such that it demonstrably would not be undertaken without voluntary help. It will be difficult, perhaps impossible, to define precise criteria. The important need is for both sides to bring goodwill to each case in the belief that what benefits the Museum also benefits them.

Recommendation No 34

In consultation with the unions, the management of each Museum should examine the scope for voluntary help and produce a code of practice which would identify the likely areas where voluntary help would significantly benefit the Museum and list the agreed criteria which would govern decisions whether or not to employ such help.

Storage

130. Adequate storage for objects not yet on public display is vitally important to a museum in two main ways. It must provide conditions which prevent or at least minimise the deterioration of objects. Secondly, it must be

sufficient in volume to match the acquisition policies and opportunities of each department. In practice this match is effected, usually imperfectly, by adjustments on both sides of the equation. A museum will operate a more liberal acquisition policy if it is lucky enough to have reserves of storage space in hand or in view. The size of the object is obviously an important factor although even small ones can cumulatively fall foul of limitations of storage capacity. It is no slur upon curatorial judgment to say that there is a natural tendency for acquisitions to expand into the available storage space.

V & A Museum

131. The Museum has large storage areas in its basement, and other smaller areas off certain galleries. It also has facilities outside the Museum, principally at Battersea. These storage areas are far from ideal; in particular only limited measures to control and regulate the environmental conditions have been possible. For many objects this has resulted in a faster rate of natural deterioration than would otherwise have occurred. Before long, however, the Museum will be able to take out of use much of its current storage space following the acquisition of extensive storage of good quality in a disused converted Post Office building at Blythe Road in Shepherd's Bush. We believe that this development should be welcomed as an opportunity to improve the environmental conditions in which objects are stored. We comment further, in paragraph 150, on the need for such an approach as a means of alleviating the conservation problem.

Science Museum

132. The Science Museum has particular problems. Many of the objects it wants to acquire are large. Its obligation to record current technological and scientific developments compels it to cast an acquisitive eye over a large and constantly increasing number of such objects. Its present storage capacity at Hayes in Middlesex is of enviably high quality and generous dimensions though it too threatens to run out. With admirable foresight the Museum has also acquired from the Ministry of Defence six former aircraft hangars (measuring 270,000 sq ft) at Wroughton in Wiltshire especially for the storage of large objects such as aircraft or agricultural machinery. Some or all of the remaining hangars (measuring in all a further 360,000 sq ft) may in due course become available

and the Museum will certainly be considering whether it should bid for them. Like the V & A Museum, the Science Museum looks forward to acquiring good quality storage facilities at Blythe Road in the near future.

133. The space available at Wroughton and Blythe Road is, or will, be considerable. It raises the question how far it is right to go on acquiring even the most valuable and important objects unless there is a realistic prospect of being able to display them adequately or at least to make them available for inspection on demand. The transition from storage to full display according to South Kensington standards is extremely expensive involving as it does the provision and furnishing of galleries and the recruitment of staff to guard the objects. The Wroughton objects are already available to the public on one "open day" a year. A charge is made for admission which, so far at least, covers the cost of the small number of permanent staff needed throughout the year to administer and guard the hangars (though not the cost of heating, lighting and works). It is not difficult to foresee the time when the Wroughton objects, acquired at a time when their custody involved comparatively minor cost, and increased in number by further acquisitions, will be regarded by the Museum as strong candidates for proper display to the public. Similarly, objects stored by the two Museums at Blythe Road could be held to justify either display space in the main Museums or, more likely, the conversion of the Blythe Road premises into something more like a full-blooded museum outstation.

134. There is a danger here of what might be called, without disrespect, expansion by inadvertence. And it could lead, if there is inadequate forward planning, to a confusion of priorities and to a muddle of "stop-go" decisions which would be harmful to the well-being of the Museums. So far as Wroughton is concerned, the first essential is to work out and to operate an acquisition policy which reflects the overall priorities of the Science Museum within its existing and likely future budget constraints rather than the ease with which large objects can at present be stored. This policy should amongst other things take careful account of the arguments for and against acquiring significant numbers of large objects, especially when, in addition to their on-going cost to the Museum, they have to be purchased for sizeable amounts of public money. Secondly, there should be a clear plan, in consultation with government, laying down the general lines of development of the Wroughton site and buildings and reflecting an agreed view of the financial implications.

135. At one extreme, no one would seriously aim to turn Wroughton into a South Kensington in Wiltshire. At the other it might be possible to develop Wroughton as a self-financing enterprise which, with the minimum of display and warding costs and with the help of voluntary labour, would be open to the public at certain times of the year on the payment of an economic admission fee. We do not think that it would be prudent to continue the present relatively ambitious acquisition policy, still less to broaden it, unless there was a reasonable assurance that Wroughton could, as it developed, continue to cover its costs and remain viable as a self-contained outstation. The same general principles apply to Blythe Road. Development there must take account of existing realities and reflect a sober estimate of the future. We doubt whether anything like a fully-fledged museum outstation is compatible with this. If it ever became feasible in the future, this should be as a free option to be exercised when the time came. It would be wrong to allow a virtual imperative to develop gradually over the years without a clear view of an eventual destination.

Recommendation No 35

There should be a review of the storage plans of each Museum which should take account of acquisition policies and the availability of display space, including the possibility of adapting existing and prospective storage space for display purposes. These plans, which should be discussed with the government, should be firmly based on a realistic appraisal of the resource costs involved and the likelihood of their being met without unacceptable effects upon other museum activities.

Recommendation No 36

The development plan for the Science Museum's outstation at Wroughton should be based on the objective of making it self-financing in all respects.

VII. MUSEUM SERVICES

Photography

136. Photographs of objects are an important element in museum life both for necessary curatorial and record purposes, and as part of a museum's direct services to the public. By far the greater part of the requirement for photographs comes from the museum itself. We have not considered the general question whether a museum should have a photograph of every object it possesses. If that were to be accepted there would be a photographic backlog in the two Museums which could not be eradicated without substantial additional resources spread over a long period. On the face of it there will be many objects which must be photographed because of their value, rarity, uniqueness or high intrinsic interest. Others will have a much weaker claim or perhaps none at all. Others again must be photographed for particular purposes such as catalogues, other publications or loans. As with conservation (paragraph 147) and for the same reason, the present practice in the Museums is to respond as well as limited resources allow to the day-to-day needs of curators. While that may be inevitable to some extent we think that consideration should be given to the possibility of identifying areas of priority in each department so that the limited resources likely to be available can be deployed to the best effect.

137. Photographic services to the public are of three main kinds. There are the sale of prints and the hiring out of colour transparencies to the general public in cases where the object in question has already been photographed. Where no photograph already exists the curatorial staff decide whether the museum interest is strong enough to justify one being taken by the photographic staff of the museum; or whether, if it is not, the enquirer should be invited to hire a commercial photographer to visit the Museum for this purpose. Lastly, sales are made to commercial users at a higher rate of charges.

138. We doubt whether it would be more economical to contract out the photographic requirements of the Museums especially when account is taken of the resulting increased need for invigilation and risk of damage to objects.

139. The charges currently made for photographs or facilities provided for the public, both for private and commercial use, are low either in relation to true

costs, including overheads, or to market considerations. For example the price currently charged by both Museums for black and white prints measuring 10" x 8", required for private use, is £1.15; the British Library and British Museum, on the other hand, charge double that price for photographs of objects where a negative already exists, and the British Museum charges £6.50 a print where no negative exists. At the top end of the scale the Natural History Museum charges £30 for a black and white print required for private use. Most commercial photographic studios charge in the region of £4 for developing single prints of negatives supplied to them.

140. It has traditionally been argued that the provision of photographs to the public, and even to commercial users, at less than full cost is part of the general educational function of a museum rather like free admission to the collections. Many customers are students who, it is said, would find it difficult to pay a market price for photographs. But as with admission charges as such, the real question is whether charging a more economic price would not help the Museums in their totality to provide a better service to the nation than the present degree of dependence on Exchequer financing allows them to. Our view is that the photographic services of the Museums should continue to be operated from within but on a much more commercial basis. Charges for services to outside buyers should enable the true costs to be covered, including a reasonable share of overheads, and should have regard also to market values ie to the prices charged commercially for comparable services. Any concessionary rates should be confined to students with a bona fide academic purpose and should not be less than half the standard charge.

Recommendation No 37

Charges for photographic services at each Museum should be fixed at rates which cover full costs and reflect market prices.

Bookshops

141. These are an important part of a museum's attractiveness and usefulness to the public. The aim should be to make them a source of maximum net income without recourse to sales techniques which compromise the professional integrity of the Museums. There is room for "promotion" of a more commercial character

before the borderline of seemliness is crossed. On the other hand it is unlikely that the potentialities will be fully exploited if shop management is in the hands of officials, however competent, with no experience of the market; or if the shops are subjected unnecessarily to non-commercial constraints such as rigid staff ceilings. The most promising path to profitability is to contract out the operation of the museum shops to private enterprise.

142. In 1979-80 the shop at the V & A Museum had a turnover of £530,525, of which 18% was gross profit. Direct overheads and rent amounted to £115,185 and £73,999, respectively, and the shop made an overall loss of £93,019. The shops at the Science Museum and National Railway Museum had a combined turnover of £396,900 in 1980/81, of which 39% was gross profit. Direct overheads and rent amounted to £160,866 and £53,598, producing an overall loss of £58,433. Part at least of these "losses" may be due to the effect on turnover of staff restrictions which create queues of customers and deter the casual buyer.

143. In negotiating the terms for a shop concession the rent factor must be realistically handled. The best must not be the enemy of the good. The Museums must aim to get the highest net return they can persuade the concessionaire to guarantee. But it is better to improve the existing profitability substantially than to aim for a fully economic return and end up by getting no improvement at all because the terms demanded are unacceptable or cannot sustain a profitable operation. Notional rents related to the putative value of an unmarketable x square feet of space in South Kensington are not the likeliest basis for securing a reasonable return to the Museums on shop operations. A mutually advantageous arrangement should be possible on the basis of charging rent as a percentage of turnover and of sharing profits after the deduction of overheads.

Recommendation No 38

The bookshops in each Museum should be contracted out to private enterprise.

Publications

144. Consistently with the recommended change in museum status, there is a strong case for terminating the present arrangement by which HMSO must be given first refusal of all projected museum publications.

145. The Museums are free to approach other publishers only if HMSO declines to publish. It has been represented to us that this arrangement works as a powerful disincentive to publishing because of the time it can take HMSO to come to a decision in each case, and the dampening effect of an eventual refusal upon the enthusiasm of other publishers. Greater management responsibility for the Museums should carry with it freedom to seek publication where they like. They should also be free to set up their own publishing organisation based, as elsewhere, on their own bookshop operations.

Recommendation No 39

Each Museum should be free to seek publication of its work wherever it finds it advantageous and not be obliged as at present to offer it first to HMSO.

VIII. CONSERVATION

146. We think it self-evident that conservation, in the broad sense of preventing museum objects from unacceptably deteriorating, must be a prime responsibility of their custodians, and enjoy in the last resort priority over virtually all other museum activities. To put it bluntly, a museum ought not to acquire (and should dispose of) what it cannot adequately conserve. It is however very difficult, and in many cases impossible, to lay down firm standards defining what it meant by "unacceptable deterioration". It is easy enough to say, for example, that no object should be allowed to deteriorate beyond the point at which its eventual loss as a worthwhile museum object becomes inevitable. Short of this however there is room for very considerable variation of judgment in the standard of conservation to be aimed at and therefore of the resources necessary to achieve it. What is at least certain is that however the ideal standard was defined the conservation effort required to treat hundreds of thousands of objects would be very large, and beyond the capacity of either Museum to provide for a very long time without far-reaching effects upon their other activities. It is inevitable therefore that conservation should continue to be a compromise involving a realistic rather than a purist estimate of the conservation requirement; but equally it must rest on a view of other museum activities which reflects the great importance of conservation in the museum scheme of things.

147. We are in no doubt that at present the right balance has not been struck. The Science Museum has no conservation department at all and is only now appointing a conservation specialist to consider the Museum's requirements, including the massive conservation problem unfortunately presented by the Wellcome collection. The V & A Museum has a thriving Conservation Department but no one claims that it has the problem under control. In both Museums conservation is at best a matter of first-aid for what are too haphazardly regarded as the most urgent cases. In some departments the need so far outweighs capacity that curators have resigned themselves to a losing battle. The selection of objects for treatment is determined more by day-to-day pressures, such as the requirements of exhibitions and loans, than by a system of planned priorities based on the state of the collections as a whole. Thus the best use is not always made of the limited resources which do exist. Few, if any, departments have a conservation programme worthy of the name. This is a

matter for sympathy not criticism. Many departments do not have the resources to prepare such a programme which in some cases would take years to produce on any sensible assumption of the staff time likely to be made available for this work in present circumstances.

148. We think that the Museums should give conservation a much higher priority in their overall aims and also rationalise their pursuit of it. A prime consideration is the way in which conservation decisions are taken. There is an inherent possibility of conflict between the conservation and the curatorial interests. No doubt neither should have absolute priority and compromise will often be necessary. But if, as we think, there must be a point at which a conservation requirement should be overriding, it follows that the Museum's agreed conservation policies and plans must carry the necessary degree of authority in practice; and so must its conservation officers.

149. Another requirement is that each Museum should draw up department by department and for the Museum as a whole a conservation programme which reflects as closely as possible the priorities for conservation among all the objects owned, and uses these priorities as the basis for apportioning and increasing the resources available for conservation. This cannot be a blue-print. The pressure of events will make departures from the programme inevitable and sometimes desirable. But unless programmes exist which represent the best possible estimate of conservation priorities and are adhered to so far as possible as a matter of high priority in total museum policy, it will not be possible for the Museum to discharge properly its heavy responsibility for preserving its objects, and to make the best use of its limited resources.

150. We have been impressed by the importance we have heard attached to preventive as opposed to remedial action in solving the conservation problem. The most important kind of preventive action is the provision of the right environmental conditions (temperature, relative humidity, lighting and protection) for objects in both galleries and stores. Objects differ in their environmental requirements, depending on what they are made of, but we found that the provision of suitable display and storage conditions was very often accorded too low a priority. Storage areas were particularly inadequate from the conservation point of view. No doubt ideal environmental conditions will always be difficult to achieve because of other important considerations such as

immediate cost, display and design factors and limitations of space. Nevertheless the higher priority and authority we recommend should be given to conservation requirements should extend beyond remedial conservation to include a much greater regard for environmental factors in the planning or refurbishment of galleries and stores. There may also be scope for reducing the amount of handling of objects or at least for more training for those who have to do so.

151. We have considered the possibility of making more use of outside conservators, irrespective of any increase in total expenditure on conservation, as a means of achieving greater cost-effectiveness. We have no reason to believe however that as a general proposition there is much scope for getting better value for money from outside conservation work. And we also recognise that in certain fields of conservation (furniture, metalwork, stone sculpture) there are few, if any, private conservators with the same high standards of proficiency as the Museums' own staff. On the other hand there are considerable practical advantages in maintaining and building up the Museums' own conservation capacity. We would however expect the Museums, particularly if they are given the more independent status and greater management freedom we are recommending, to have every incentive to make economical use of outside conservators wherever this proves possible.

152. It is tempting to suggest that the two Museums, and possibly others in South Kensington, should combine to establish a joint conservation agency in order to secure economies of scale or at least avoid duplication of effort. We doubt whether, given the nature of the conservation task, such savings would be substantial. On the other hand we are clear that the task of apportioning the services of such an agency between the Museums according to their true relative needs would be considerable, far greater indeed than the similar problem which already exists within a single Museum. It would however be important that the conservation staff of each Museum should keep in close touch in order to exchange knowledge and where appropriate share work.

153. The increased effort we recommend will require more staff to be employed on conservation work. In its own context a forthcoming staff inspection report on the V & A Museum by a management services team from DES makes detailed recommendations for increases in this area. Whilst we see no reason to disagree

with the general tenor of this report, we ourselves cannot be specific. Much will depend on the Museums' own assessment of their conservation requirements and on their assessment of priorities; and on the extent to which it proves possible to devise an acceptable conservation programme to satisfy them. Obviously a policy which reflects a much higher priority for conservation than it enjoys at present implies a switch of resources within the Museum. At the same time the conservation backlog is so large by any criteria that it would be reasonable for the Government to accept the claims of conservation as in some degree constituting a special case to which regard should be had in the determination of museum resources. In the Science Museum part at least of the cost of setting up a Conservation Department can be met by switching resources from the existing workshops.

Recommendation No 40

Conservation needs should be given a very high priority among the aims of each Museum which should operate on the broad principle that it should not acquire or keep objects which it cannot conserve to an acceptable standard.

Recommendation No 41

Each Museum should draw up, and follow as closely as possible, a conservation programme which establishes priorities between and within departments. The aim should be a plan of action representing the best possible compromise, acceptable to the Museum, its advisory or governing body, the Government, and public opinion, between the conservation requirements and the resources to be made available to meet them, having regard to the Museum's other activities and resources.

Recommendation No 42

Each Museum should accord a high priority to reducing the conservation need bearing in mind the following:-

- i. a substantial conservation requirement, actual or potential, should argue strongly against the acquisition of a particular object or collection of objects;

- ii. greater regard should be had to environmental considerations in the storage, custody and display of objects. This means in practice that conservation factors may sometimes have to override others such as short-term cost, aesthetic or curatorial considerations; and conservation factors should be more influential in the apportionment of display and storage space.

Recommendation No 43

Each Museum should take steps to ensure that the conservation interest is effectively represented in all relevant decisions affecting museum policy and practice.

Recommendation No 44

A Conservation Department should be established in the Science Museum as soon as possible and should work in close co-operation with the existing Conservation Department in the V & A Museum.

Recommendation No 45

The Conservation Department in the V & A Museum should mount a controlled experiment to establish whether there is scope in selected areas for making economical use of outside conservators, beginning, for example, with paper conservation.

Recommendation No 46

The Museums should not normally undertake conservation work for other bodies, however deserving. When exceptionally such work is undertaken eg when there is a clear benefit of some kind to the Museum, it should be charged for at its true cost.

Recommendation No 47

In allocating resources to the Museums the Government should recognise the particular problem of the conservation backlog and help the Museums to meet it in accordance with an agreed programme.

IX. INVENTORY CONTROL AND STOCKTAKING

154. One of the fundamental curatorial functions is the registering and placing on inventory of all objects acquired for the collections. Each object's description, its provenance, date of acquisition, and location within the Museum are noted, and a unique inventory number assigned to it. This operation facilitates a further essential safeguard to the security of the collections: the process of regular stocktaking which is carried out at both Museums.

155. The V & A and Science Museums both have a well-established inventory procedure based on a manual system of card indexing. In view of the many thousands of objects on inventory it is not surprising that both Museums have considered the possible advantages of a mechanical or computerised system of inventory; indeed the Science Museum has recently acquired a computer for use in documenting the Wellcome Collection of the History of Medicine. Other national museums in the UK have also either acquired or have considered acquiring computers to assist with the task of inventory control.

156. We are in no doubt about the importance of inventory control and stocktaking both as a means of ensuring that the Museums' collections are properly documented, easily located and carefully safeguarded; and as a prerequisite for scholarly research on the collections. The Public Accounts Committee has also recognised the desirability of regular stocktaking and an efficient inventory system, and has examined these aspects of the Museums' work twice in recent years (1974 and 1981).

157. In considering how we could most usefully approach our review of current inventory and stocktaking practices at the two Museums we were mindful of several factors: the essentially routine and repetitive nature of much of the work involved in the registration and checking process; the fact that in order to gain a thorough appreciation of the way the work was organised it would be necessary to spend some time in studying the Museums' own registers and card indexes, in talking to staff of several curatorial departments, and in consulting a number of other interested parties (including the Museum Documentation Association); and lastly of the desirability of looking at this area of work with an 'O and M' eye, particularly regarding the possibility of introducing a more mechanised system of inventory control.

158. We concluded that the best approach would be to call on the services of those with experience of examining organisational and working methods in this area, and with expertise also in the field of computerisation. We therefore asked for help from the Management and Personnel Office of the Cabinet Office, and were pleased to receive the assistance of Mr V Quaglieni, a Principal from that Office with specialist experience in the field of stocktaking and inventory procedures.

159. In the time available Mr Quaglieni was unable to review the inventory and stocktaking practices of both Museums, and chose instead to focus mainly on the V & A Museum. His subsequent report is reproduced in full at Annex D.

160. We have discussed the report with Mr Quaglieni and we find his conclusions and proposals persuasive. We therefore recommend the adoption of the changes in procedure which are proposed in his report. So far as the computerisation of records is concerned we make no judgment about its value in promoting curatorial objectives, though we think it unlikely that the cost would be justified on that account. We therefore fully endorse the report's recommendations on this point. Although Mr Quaglieni had time to examine in detail only the V & A Museum, his recommendations are likely to be valid for the Science Museum and we commend them accordingly.

Recommendation No 48

The V & A Museum should not change the present manual system of record keeping to a computerised system for custodial purposes.

Recommendation No 49

Computerisation of the V & A Museum's records for curatorial purposes should be considered, if at all, only if a thorough cost benefit analysis shows the change to be justified.

Recommendation No 50

The quinquennial stocktaking programme at the V & A Museum should be abandoned. It should be replaced by a system of annual checks on:--

- a. the most valuable and attractive objects in each collection; and
- b. objects which have been moved for any reason during the preceding year.

No stock check should be made on the remaining objects in the collections.

Recommendation No 51

The Science Museum should in principle also adopt, mutatis mutandis, the approach recommended in Recommendations 48-50. In particular it should not use its computer to document areas of the collection other than the Wellcome Collection unless a thorough cost benefit analysis shows this to be justified.

X. WARDING AND SECURITY

161. Museum objects must be protected from theft and from wilful or inadvertent damage by the public. We take this to be a first priority, taking precedence even over the need for adequate conservation. It is easier to state this principle than to apply it. In practice security has to be a matter of degree: it can never be absolute unless the public's access to the collections is to be unacceptably restricted or surveillance carried to impossible lengths. Museum security is also therefore a matter of judgment involving an element of calculated risk. That judgment must include a realistic reconciliation of the security requirements (taking account of advice from the National Museums Security Adviser) with other important and sometimes conflicting considerations, such as cost, the effective presentation of the objects, and physical factors.

162. A degree of compromise is therefore both inevitable and necessary. Our conclusion however is that at present the wrong balance has been struck at both Museums. Their security relies too heavily, in our view, on the vigilance of a large number of warders and too little on other measures. The bias towards concentrated warder patrols has meant that every new expansion of the Museums, by the opening of new galleries or the establishment of outstations, has demanded substantial warding reinforcements. With such heavy reliance on traditional warding methods and with so little investment in alternative physical and mechanical methods of security, it is not surprising that DES staff inspections of the warding systems at both Museums in recent years have resulted in recommendations for still more warders.

163. The Museum's expansion plans have now outstripped their ability to provide the necessary additional surveillance unless substantial further resources are either provided by Government for this purpose, or are found at the expense of other museum activities. The V & A Museum in particular finds itself in difficulties over security for the Henry Cole Building which opens towards the end of 1982. The 15 warders estimated by the Museum to be needed to patrol the new building can be allocated only, it appears, by reducing warder coverage and closing galleries in other parts of the Museum.

164. If approved expansion in display area is not to be frustrated the resources necessary to protect it must be found without prejudice to a satisfactory general standard of security in the Museum as a whole. In one way or another that means creating a greater security capacity. However it is not easy to do this at a time when pressure on resources is such that there is little foreseeable prospect of any large-scale increase in the warding complement at either Museum. In these circumstances we thought it essential to make a thorough analysis of the security requirements 'on the ground' in an attempt to understand the nature of the problems facing the Museums and to identify the most cost-effective ways of meeting them. We decided to commission separate reports on the two major aspects of museum security: the warding system and physical security. On our behalf Mr M Pendleton of the Manpower and Personnel Office undertook a detailed review of the warding system at the V & A Museum, and Inspector A J Drake from Scotland Yard Crime Prevention Service reviewed physical security at the Museum. In the time available it was not possible for them to carry out a similar exercise at the Science Museum. Both Mr Pendleton and Inspector Drake were new to the unique world of the Museums but we are satisfied that they overcame that disadvantage by applying their considerable related experience with thoroughness and understanding.

165. Since these two reviews were studying different aspects of the same problem the subsequent findings are to some extent inter-dependent in that Mr Pendleton's proposals on warding rightly take into account Inspector Drake's recommendations for increased physical security. Both reports are being separately produced concurrently with this one. Their comprehensive and detailed nature makes it difficult to summarize them adequately here. Briefly however their main recommendations are as follows.

Physical Security: Inspector Drake's report

166. The report confirms that the warding system should remain the basic method of protecting the Museum's collections, but recommends an increased standard of physical and electronic protection. Some specific recommendations are listed below.

- a. All warders should be equipped with a personal radio operating on a network effective throughout the Museum.

- b. Objects on display should be given a security priority rating, graded from A to D, and should be given a degree of physical protection commensurate with their priority rating.
- c. Some display cases should be specially strengthened with laminated anti-bandit glass and fitted with inertia alarms.
- d. Light switches in basement galleries should not be accessible to the public.
- e. Action should be taken over the inadequate screws which affix several exhibits currently on open display.
- f. All paintings on display should be protected by glass sheet. Exposed tapestries should be similarly protected.
- g. Security mirrors should be installed in a number of galleries.
- h. Displays of furniture should be protected by a 4ft high glass screen.
- i. Visitors should deposit holdalls and other hand luggage (except handbags) near the entrance.
- j. Action should be taken to remedy weaknesses in perimeter security.
- k. Security in the Henry Cole Building should be tightened.
- l. Permanent Museum staff, authorised visitors, and workmen should wear identification cards or badges outside their clothing.

The Warding System : Mr Pendleton's report

167. The report proposes a reduction from 43 to 28 in the number of gallery beats in the main V & A building, and a reduction from 15 to 8 in the beats proposed for the Henry Cole Building when it opens. The revised pattern of

beats is specified in detail. As indicated earlier, the proposals depend in part on an increase in the level of physical security on the lines recommended in the Scotland Yard report.

168. The report also proposes a reduction in the hours during which perimeter gates and doors are open and manned; the installation of an automatic card entry system at the Secretariat Door; and a reduction in night patrols.

169. A number of other changes are also recommended including an increase in the warders' relaxation allowance; an increase in the amount of supervision given to warders; and an examination of the Museum's telephone system, with a view to its replacement by an automatic system.

170. With regard to the warding complement for the main Museum building (including the new requirement of the Henry Cole Building) the report estimates that if the Museum continues to open for 5½ days per week, ten warder posts could be saved, giving an estimated saving on basic staff costs of £65,000.

Future Action

171. We strongly commend these two reports for their thorough analysis of the V & A Museum's security requirements. In our view the reports provide a sound basis for achieving a more cost-effective means of safeguarding the Museum's collections. We do not suppose that each and every recommendation in these reports can be applied precisely as it stands; and we recognise that some of the proposals for greater physical security will slightly reduce the degree of public access to some objects. But we return to the point made earlier about the difficult judgment that has to be made between the requirements of security, the resources available to provide them, and the value to be placed on the very close access to objects now allowed to the public. Although we do not attempt to make that judgment ourselves we are confident that these two reports provide the Museum with the opportunity of improving their overall standard of security without additional resources. We consider that management should give them serious and constructive consideration. We also believe that security at the Science Museum should be the subject of a similar scrutiny.

Recommendation No 52

The V & A Museum should accept the reports on security and warding as providing a firm basis for positive action, and should aim to reach firm decisions on implementing the recommendations in the reports by the end of 1982.

Recommendation No 53

Early arrangements should be made for a similar review of security and warding at the Science Museum.

XI. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROPOSED SAVINGS

A. Recommendations

In the following summary of the recommendations in Parts I-X of this report, some of the recommendations have been abbreviated to save space.

1. Formal statements of aims should be drawn up for the V & A Museum and the Science Museum, respectively.
2. The V & A Museum should cease to be a Departmental Museum.
3. The Science Museum should cease to be a Departmental Museum.
4. The Science Museum and the V & A Museum should each establish formal machinery for the consideration of museum policies by the Director and his senior managers on a 'collegiate basis'; and should aim to have this in operation by the end of 1982 at the latest.
5. Arrangements should be instituted at both Museums for the setting of the timed and costed objectives necessary to achieve the agreed aims of the Museums and for the regular review of these objectives both to monitor progress and to take account of changing circumstances and priorities.
6. Each Museum should institute a 'rolling' programme of internal policy reviews which would analyse, criticise and, where necessary challenge the services, policies and activities of departments, groups of departments and outstations so as to ensure that they both conform to the agreed aims and merit the resources devoted to them.
7. Each Museum should establish a management information system which would enable it to calculate the true cost of particular policies and activities; and should incorporate the system into its forward planning and internal reviews.
8. Each Museum should be given greater control over its building works expenditure including conversion to a repayment basis where the PSA carries out the work, the possibility of using private contractors for other than major

works and, subject to DES approval, of "virement" in and out of the building works expenditure under their own control.

9. The administration capacity of each Museum should be strengthened to deal with the increased responsibilities resulting from devolution and new management arrangements. The senior person responsible for administration should be a member of the Director's top management team.
10. Restrictions on opening hours should be regarded as a legitimate option among others, when balancing competing claims on resources.
11. The V & A Museum should close on Mondays instead of Fridays for as long as it is considered necessary to close on a weekday.
12. Each Museum should be encouraged to introduce admission charges for all or part of its collections or for special exhibitions, subject to any general principles concerning charges which the Government decides to lay down.
13. New projects involving the setting up of new or expanded collections should be rigorously costed before they are approved.
14. There should be a conscious effort by each Museum to foster more restrictive acquisition and bolder disposal. Particular restraint should be exercised in the acquisition of large objects.
15. Curatorial departments in each Museum should be required, so far as it is possible, to draw up plans for both acquisition and disposal in their fields for as far ahead as practicable.
16. The same stringent acquisition criteria should be applied to gifts as to purchases.
17. It should be regarded as natural for the purchase grants to be underspent from time to time. Underspends should be available for all other approved museum purposes, subject to the consent of DES.

18. Each Museum should review those areas of acquisition which might duplicate those of other museums, and strengthen the existing arrangements for consultations with them.
19. Each Museum should review the nature and level of its response to enquiries from members of the public and reduce by at least one-third the time spent upon them by all the staff concerned.
20. The V & A Museum should pursue an exhibitions policy which is so far as possible self-financing or profit-making.
21. The Science Museum should pursue an exhibitions policy which will reduce, and so far as possible, eliminate, the net cost to the Museum of its exhibitions.
22. Admission charges should be introduced at the National Railway Museum (NRM), York.
23. An acquisitions policy and concrete plans to pursue it should be devised for the NRM. It should aim at a much lower rate of acquisition than in the past, particularly where large objects are concerned.
24. The time spent by the NRM's curatorial and other staff on work associated with the operation of exhibits should be reviewed with the aim of reducing it by at least half.
25. The potential for expansion of the NRM should be reviewed with the aim of producing a firm development plan which will reflect the need for economy in expenditure, and will embody a considered view of total Science Museum priorities.
26. It should be the aim to make the proposed Bradford Museum of Photography substantially self-supporting by appropriate admission charges and other measures.

27. Consideration should be given urgently to abandoning the proposed Theatre Museum at Covent Garden. It should proceed, if at all, on the basis of a sufficient charge being made for admission to render it self-financing. Consideration should also be given to devolving the Museum.
28. Admission charges should be introduced at the Museum of Childhood, Bethnal Green, with a view to securing a net income which would cover the Museum's true recurrent costs. If that proves impossible, consideration should be given to closing it down.
29. It must be the aim to make Osterley Park, Ham House and Apsley House self-supporting financially.
30. If Osterley Park and Ham House cannot be made self-supporting financially, the Museum should as soon as possible disengage itself from all responsibility for them other than the provision of curatorial advice to the National Trust.
31. The disposal policies of both Libraries should be reviewed.
32. The Science Museum Library should reduce the number of serials it acquires.
33. The Science Museum should review fundamentally the benefits which flow to the Imperial College of Science from the Science Museum Library with a view to ensuring that the costs are proportionately shared. In particular the Science Museum should seek reimbursement from the Imperial College of the Museum's costs in handling loan requests from College students.
34. In consultation with the unions, the management of each Museum should examine the scope for voluntary help and produce an agreed code of practice.
35. There should be a review of the storage plans of each Museum which should take account of acquisition policies and availability of display space.
36. The development plan for the Science Museum's outstation at Wroughton should be based on the objective of making it self-financing in all respects.

37. Charges for photographic services at each Museum should be fixed at rates which cover full costs and reflect market prices.
38. The bookshops in each Museum should be contracted out to private enterprise.
39. The two Museums should be free to seek publication of their work wherever they find it advantageous and not be obliged as at present to offer it first to HMSO.
40. Conservation needs should be given a very high priority among the aims of each Museum which should operate on the broad principle that it should not acquire or keep objects which it cannot conserve to an acceptable standard.
41. Each Museum should draw up, and follow as closely as possible, a conservation programme which establishes priorities between and within departments.
42. Each Museum should accord a high priority to reducing the conservation needs, in particular by paying greater regard to environmental considerations in the storage, custody and display of objects.
43. Each Museum should take steps to ensure that the conservation interest is effectively represented in all relevant decisions affecting museum policy and practice.
44. A Conservation Department should be established in the Science Museum, as soon as possible.
45. The Conservation Department in the V & A Museum should mount a controlled experiment to establish whether there is scope in selected areas for making economical use of outside conservators.
46. The Museums should not normally undertake conservation work for other bodies.

47. In allocating resources to the Museums the Government should recognise the particular problem of the conservation backlog and help the Museums to meet it in accordance with an agreed programme.
48. The V & A Museum should not change the present manual system of record keeping to a computerised system for custodial purposes.
49. Computerisation of the V & A Museum's records for curatorial purposes should be considered, if at all, only if a thorough cost benefit analysis shows the change to be justified.
50. The quinquennial stocktaking programme at the V & A Museum should be abandoned. It should be replaced by a system of annual checks on a. the most valuable and attractive objects in each collection; and b. objects which have been moved for any reason during the preceding year.
51. The Science Museum should in principle also adopt, *mutatis mutandis*, the approach recommended in Recommendations 48-50. In particular it should not use its computer to document areas of the collection other than the Wellcome Collection unless a thorough cost benefit analysis shows this to be justified.
52. The V & A Museum should accept the specially commissioned reports on warding and security as providing a firm basis for positive action, and should aim to reach firm decisions on implementing the recommendations in the reports by the end of 1982.
53. Early arrangements should be made for a similar review of warding and security at the Science Museum.

B. PROPOSED SAVINGS

1. Admission Charges (Recommendation 12)

Each Museum should be encouraged to introduce admission charges. A charge of £1.50 per visitor would result in a gross addition to the annual income of the two Museums of approximately £7m (£1.9m at the V & A Museum: £5.1m at the Science Museum).

2. Services to the Public (Recommendation 19)

Each Museum should reduce by a third the time spent on responding to enquiries from members of the public. The annual saving in staff costs would be up to £175,000 (£100,000 at the V & A Museum: £75,000 at the Science Museum).

3. National Railway Museum (Recommendations 22-24)

Admission charges should be introduced. A charge of £1.50 a head could yield a gross taking of £1.5m a year.

4. Bradford Museum of Photography (Recommendation 26)

The Bradford Museum should be made substantially self-supporting by appropriate admission charges and other measures. Saving of approximately £390,000 a year.

5. The Theatre Museum, Covent Garden (Recommendation 27)

Consideration should be given urgently to abandoning the proposed Theatre Museum; saving of £4.3m. It should proceed, if at all, on the basis that a sufficient charge be made for admission to render it self-financing; saving of approximately £530,000 a year.

6. Bethnal Green Museum (Recommendation 28)

Admission charges should be introduced at the Museum of Childhood, Bethnal Green, with a view to securing a net income which would cover the Museum's true recurrent costs. Saving of £300,000 a year.

7. Apsley, Ham and Osterley Park Houses (Recommendations 29-30)

These Houses should be made self supporting. Saving of £876,000 a year.

8. Science Museum Library (Recommendation 32)

The annual cost of buying serials should be reduced by £75,000 a year. Imperial College should reimburse the Science Museum the cost of handling students' loan requests. Saving of £3,300 a year.

9. Bookshops (Recommendation 38)

The Bookshops in each Museum should be contracted out to private enterprise. Saving of approximately £150,000 a year.

ANNEX A

VALUE OF BUILDINGS AND SITES, AND NOTIONAL RENTS, FOR PREMISES OCCUPIED BY THE
V & A AND SCIENCE MUSEUMS

I. VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM

1. At the present time neither DOE/PSA nor DES hold a legal interest in the property. An Act of Parliament passed in 1858 entitled the Government to occupy the site but the Act was repealed in 1978 by the Statute Repeals Act. Although repeal has confused the issue it is considered that the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851, who currently hold title to the property, have given implied consent to continue occupation. However, the Commissioners have recently indicated a willingness to transfer their freehold interest to the Secretary of State for the Environment, subject to certain conditions, and this is now under consideration.

2. On the assumption that the Secretary of State holds a legal title, the economic rental of the Museum, as part of a going concern, is estimated at £3.62m per annum. This rental assessment is NOT an open market value and has been based on approximate areas and costs. It is inappropriate to place a market value on the land and buildings because of the special nature of the site.

BETHNAL GREEN MUSEUM (MAIN BUILDING)

3. The economic rental of the Bethnal Green Museum as a going concern (not open market value) is £300,000 per annum, based on approximate areas and costs.

4. In making a market valuation of the main building it is necessary to consider the position in the event that a decision were taken for the V & A Museum to cease operations there. The Department would then have to establish whether there was a demand for the premises for other museum use or for any other 'Government' use. In the latter respect strong opposition to a change of use to say storage would have to be assumed.

5. Disposal of the Department's interest in this Grade II Listed Building which is within a Conservation area would be likely to prove extremely difficult. The museum was opened in 1872 and formed part of the original temporary structure erected at Kensington to house exhibits from the Great Exhibition. Any proposal to demolish the premises which are considered to be part of a group with St John's Church (to the South) would be vigorously opposed and in any event would be unlikely to be supported by the Secretary of State. The local planning authority, in considering alternative uses would have particular regard to their efforts to enhance the Conservation Area and would resist schemes which detract from the appearance or setting of the building.

6. Adaptation of the premises to a 'Market Hall' use or similar could also be expected to meet resistance and, in any event, major adaptation/alterations to the building would be costly and reduce the amount a purchaser would be prepared to offer.

7. A 'Market' valuation in the light of the known restrictions as outlined above is unrealistic without further detailed discussions and investigations with the local planning authority. However if we were to assume planning clearance for a form of storage use it can be expected that the land and buildings might attract an offer in the region of £0.5 million.

NO 2 THE TERRACE, OLD FORD ROAD

8. A Grade II Listed Building, forming part of a group in very poor state of repair. A renovation and modernisation scheme is in planning and occupation by the Museum's Head Warder is intended. Disposal of the premises in their existing condition might attract offers in the region of say £10,000.

3/4 THE TERRACE, OLD FORD ROAD

9. A Grade II Listed Building forming part of a group in very poor state of repair. A renovation and modernisation scheme is in planning. Unless associated with museum use the local planning authority is likely to insist on residential use. Disposal of the premises in their existing condition might attract offers in the region of say £20,000.

NETTLESWELL HOUSE, 5 THE TERRACE, OLD FORD FORD

10. A Grade II Listed Building forming part of a group which has been the subject of improvement. The premises are partly used for museum related purposes and the upper part comprises a maisonette occupied on a service tenancy. Disposal of the premises, subject to the residential tenancy but with vacant possession of the lower part might attract offers in the region of £30,000.

BLYTHE ROAD KENSINGTON

11. Crown freehold - currently being adapted for museum use - approximately 34% is proposed to be allocated to the V & A Museum. In the event of withdrawal the vacated premises could not be disposed of other than by re-allocation, and consequently no assessment has been made for the value of the land and buildings. Notional rent applicable to the V & A Museum area say £240,000 per annum.

88 KIRTLING STREET, SW8

12. Premises held on lease for a term of 40 years from 15 February 1972. A rent of £120,500 per annum is currently payable but this is due to be renewed with effect from 15 February 1982. Estimated renewed rent £200,000 per annum. Joint occupation. The V & A Museum occupies 78%. Notional rent attributable to the Museum occupation say £156,000 per annum effective from February 1982.

NEIL HOUSE, WHITECHAPEL ROAD, E1

13. Premises held on lease for a term of 21 years from 25 December 1969 - Current rent £62,500 subject to review 25 December 1983. Ground floor shops leased back at £20,000 per annum. The V & A Museum occupies 38% of department's occupied area. In the event of withdrawal by the Museum, the vacated premises would be available for re-allocation. Current rent applicable to the museum occupation say £20,000 per annum.

ANNEX A
(continued)

LAFONE HOUSE, 11/13 LEATHERMARKET STREET, SE1

14. Premises held on lease for a term of 5 years from 29 September 1980 at £26,000 per annum. The V & A Museum occupies 20.6% of total floorspace. In the event of withdrawal by the Museum the vacated area could only be used for re-allocation. Current rent applicable to Museum occupation say £2,950 per annum.

29/55 GEE STREET, EC1

15. Premises held on lease for a term of 42 years from 29 September 1947 at a fixed rent of £9,500 per annum. The V & A Museum occupies 49.5%. In the event of withdrawal by the Museum the vacated area could only be used for re-allocation. The current rent applicable to the Museum occupation say £40,500 per annum.

APSLEY HOUSE, HAM HOUSE AND OSTERLEY PARK HOUSE

16. The Wellington Museum Act 1947 vested the Apsley House property absolutely in the Minister of Works (now Secretary of State for the Environment) but gave to the Duke of Wellington and his successors an inalienable right to occupy parts of the property. The Act provided that the parts of Apsley House not in the occupation of the Duke of Wellington should be used as a museum for the display of chattels associated with the first Duke of Wellington which the Act vested in the Minister of Education (now Education and Science). The museum is administered by the V & A Museum. Ham House is held on lease by the Secretary of State for the Environment from the National Trust for a term of 99 years from 24 June 1948 at a peppercorn rent. Osterley Park House is held on lease by the Secretary of State for the Environment from the National Trust for a term of 99 years from 24 November 1949 at a peppercorn rent.

17. The Department's interest in these Houses is such that should the V & A Museum cease operations there, the Secretary of State would still have an obligation to maintain the premises for museum purposes. A rental assessment and valuation is, therefore, inappropriate.

FLOWER MARKET, COVENT GARDEN (THEATRE MUSEUM)

18. This is a proposed new hiring consisting of a basement and part ground floor occupation. The hiring would be for a term of 42 years from completion of occupational works (which would take about 2 years from the date the lease was signed). The rent would be as follows:

First 5 years	-	peppercorn
Years 6-10	-	$\frac{1}{4}$ of agreed open market rent
Years 11-42	-	$\frac{1}{2}$ of agreed open market rent

(subject to
review at 5
year intervals)

19. Once the Agreement is signed the Department's interest cannot be transferred until the works are complete and the lease term has commenced. In the event of the V & A Museum then deciding to withdraw, the Department would be in an embarrassing financial position being unable to assign without the landlord obtaining all the benefit of the Department's expenditure on refurbishment/adaptation works.

II. SCIENCE MUSEUM

1. An economic rental for the museum, as part of a going concern, is estimated at £2.4M per annum. This rental assessment is NOT an open market valuation and has been based on approximate areas and costs. It is inappropriate to attempt to place a market value on the land and buildings because of the specialist nature of the site.

CLAYTON ROAD, HAYES

2. The premises are held on lease for a term of 21 years from 25 December 1969 at a current rent of £111,550 per annum. The rent is due to be reviewed 25 December 1983. In the event of withdrawal by the Science Museum, the vacated premises would be available for re-allocation or alternatively, in the event of

ANNEX A
(continued)

no demand, the Department's interest offered for sale. In view of the imminent rent review only a nominal premium is likely to be achieved on transfer. The estimated current market rental value of the premises is £156,000 per annum.

BLYTHE ROAD, KENSINGTON

3. Crown freehold - currently being adapted for museum use - approximately 38% is proposed to be allocated to the Science Museum.

Because the property is only partly occupied by the Science Museum if the space were vacated it would not be saleable and could only be used for re-allocation. Estimated current rent applicable to Science Museum area say £261,500 per annum.

RUSKIN AVENUE, KEW (ROOM 64)

4. Crown freehold in joint occupation. 10,202 square feet occupied by the Science Museum, the vacated premises could only be used for re-allocation. Estimated current rent applicable to Science Museum area say £20,400 per annum.

SCIENCE MUSEUM LIBRARY

5. The building in which the Science Museum library is accommodated belongs to Imperial College. The latter erected it at their own cost on land held by them on a long lease.

6. The library occupation is a quid pro quo arrangement whereby the Science Museum occupy on a 'Rent Free' basis in return for Imperial College making full use of the library facilities provided. Accordingly, there is no formal lease or tenancy and the occupation is clearly more in the nature of a revocable licence between ICST and the Science Museum. The Department undertakes interior repairs and decoration. No capital value can be attributed to this occupation.

ANNEX A
(continued)

BRADFORD MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY

7. The Museum of Photography is to be located in premises (a former theatre) leased to PSA by Bradford Council. This will be a full repairing lease for a peppercorn rent over a period of 120 years.. Bradford Council will pay for the necessary structural alterations and for putting the building into good repair and PSA will pay for the fitting out.

8. The site value amounts to £150,000; the building value is £6.3m; and the notional rent is £250,000 per annum.

NATIONAL RAILWAY MUSEUM, YORK

9. The land is held on a freehold basis and the valuations for the various buildings and sites are as follows:

PREMISES	CAPITAL VALUE	RENTAL PER ANNUM
Main building	£950,000	£79,000
Annex	£275,000	£23,000
Diesel Depot	£225,000	£25,000
Extension	£68,000	£7,500
Possible future acquisition of British Rail Canteen Block	£50,000	Not known

CONCORDE MUSEUM, YEOVILTON

10. This property is held on a conditional transfer from the Ministry of Defence (and would revert back to MOD if no longer required by the Science Museum). The capital value of the site and building is £355,000, and the rental value (per annum) is £35,000.

JOB DESCRIPTION OF SENIOR ADMINISTRATION POST

The following is an indicative description of the matters for which, in consultation as appropriate with heads of departments, the incumbent of this post should be responsible to the Director:-

- i. the central management of the museum staff, including the allocation of individuals to posts; discipline; promotion procedures; the staff reporting system; the organisation and structure of museum manpower, including senior management; the museum establishment and general economy of complementing; recruitment; retirements.
- ii. all Whitley matters and relationships with the Staff Side.
- iii. the supervision of all the Museum's financial operations, including the preparation of annual estimates; the authorisation, monitoring and audit of expenditure; the setting up, maintenance and operation of an effective management information system to provide museum staff at all levels with the best possible estimates of the cost of their activities, including shared costs and overheads.
- iv. the setting up and operation of arrangements for considering questions arising from the agreed aims of the Museum, and for the formulation of appropriate objectives to achieve them.
- v. the setting up and operation of arrangements for the forward planning and periodic review of museums policy; and for the identification of costed and timed policy options.
- vi. advice on the areas of museum activity to be selected for periodic policy review; the arrangements for the conduct of such reviews, including the taking of decisions on them, and the monitoring of the action taken on such decisions.

ANNEX B
(continued)

- vii. the servicing of the Museum's top management group; liaison with, and the provision of a secretariat to, the Museum's Council or governing body.
- viii. museum security.
- ix. all building and building maintenance questions, including relationships with the PSA and with private contractors.
- x. the development of appropriate relationships with the OAL after devolution.
- xi. advice on policy governing admission charges and exhibitions.
- xii. museum accommodation, including office space, galleries, and storage.
- xiii. questions affecting museum restaurants and bookshops.
- xiv. miscellaneous questions including special functions, facilities to the public, Friends, voluntary help, stocktaking and inventory, office services and transport.

EXHIBITIONS AT THE V & A MUSEUM 1978-1980

Profit and Loss Account

The Dream King : October - December 1978

Number of visitors 25,192. Admission charge £1:50p

Profit £8917

Gaimbologna : October - November 1978

Number of visitors - Admission 80p : 40p

Deficit £15,000

Eileen Gray : January - April 1979

Number of visitors 12,766. Admission 80p : 40p : 20p

Profit £725

The Doulton Story : May - August 1979

Number of visitors 16,585. Admission £1 : 50p : 25p

Profit £602

Vienna in the Age of Schubert : January - April 1979

Number of visitors 17,051. Admission £1.25 : 60p : 30p

Deficit £44,158

The Garden : May - August 1979

Number of visitors 84,359. Admission £1.25 : 60p : 50p

Deficit £63,021

Open and Closed Book : September - November 1979

Number of visitors 3,375. Admission 80p : 40p : 20p

Deficit £11,734

The Art of Hollywood : October 1979 - January 1980

Number of visitors 78,956. Admission charges £1.25 : 50p

Deficit £3,525

Ingres Drawings : December 1979 - February 1980

Number of visitors 6,060. Admission 80p : 40p

Deficit £14,830

Japan style : March - July 1980

Number of visitors 65,188. Admission £1.35 : 60p : 50p

Deficit £19,484

Svenskform : July - September 1980

Number of visitors 12,927. Admission charge 50p : 30p : 25p

Deficit £2032

Donald Maccullin : October 1980 - January 1981

Number of visitors 40,047. Admission 50p : 30p : 25p

Profit £241

Princely Magnificence : October 1980 - February 1981

Number of visitors 78,270. Admission £1.50 : 50p : 25p

Deficit £23,865

ANNEX C
(continued)

Hille : March - May 1981

Number of visitors 10,914. Admission 50p : 30p : 25p

Profit £1,431

Spotlight : April - August 1981

Number of visitors 53,988. Admission £1.50 : 50p

Deficit £46,802

New Glass : July - October 1981

Number of visitors 12,478. Admission £1 : 50p

Profit £6,812

INVENTORY CONTROL AND STOCKTAKING AT THE VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM

Report by V Quaglieni

I. INVENTORY CONTROL

1. I was asked by the Scrutiny Team to examine the manual system of inventory control at the Museum and to consider whether a change to a computerised system would lead to greater efficiency and an increase in cost effectiveness. In order to see and examine the inventory records currently in use I visited six of the Museum's curatorial departments and spoke to staff at Assistant Keeper and Senior Museum Assistant levels: these departments were the the Ceramics, Prints and Drawings, Far Eastern, Textiles and Dress, and Sculpture Departments, and the Bethnal Green Museum. I also held discussions with representatives of the Museum's Computer Committee, DES Management Services, the Museum Documentation Association, the Science Museum, and the National Maritime Museum. This report first describes the manual system currently in use; then discusses the case for computerisation; and finally sets out some conclusions and recommendations.

Present System

2. Until 1909 all items acquired by the Museum were numbered in a single series common to all departments. Since then each department has had a unique serial reference number. The common origin of the system has, however, resulted in a marked similarity of approach among departments, and most collections are now organised in the following cross-referenced categories either in registers or on cards:

- a. an inventory register, giving a full description of each object, and other details such as the object's provenance, its date of acquisition and inventory number;
- b. a register of inventory numbers, with a brief description of the corresponding items and a note of their location;
- c. a locations register known as the findings list;

- d. a subject register;
- e. a loan register; and
- f. a record of items at particular locations.

In addition to this information some departments have other records, reflecting the nature and requirements of their collections. These include donors lists, artists lists, indexes of manufacturer, date, and country of origin, and records of publications.

3. The data are so arranged that the more common enquiries about objects can be answered quickly by one route or another, even on the basis of minimal information. Although some records are used more frequently than others, all are used from time to time, and there is little unnecessary duplication. On the whole the staff are reasonably confident in the accuracy of the records; accuracy is said to have improved in recent years, although in some departments problems are still caused by staff (including senior staff) changing the location of objects and neglecting to make the necessary amendment to the records.

4. A manual record system which has developed over many years is unlikely to be perfect. If the system were redesigned from scratch it would be possible to make certain improvements to it, and perhaps to reduce the amount of 'clerical' effort now expended on maintaining the records. But these improvements would be unlikely to justify the effort and disruption involved. The question therefore arises whether a computerised inventory system would be a better alternative.

The Case for Computerised Records

5. From my discussions with the parties mentioned in paragraph 1 it is apparent that the case for computerisation rests on the prospect of (a) an improvement in the Museum's record keeping and stocktaking capacity, and a reduction in clerical effort; and (b) the provision of a comprehensive museum-wide curatorial database for use in researching the collections. For convenience I shall refer to (a) and (b) above as, respectively, the CUSTODIAL

and CURATORIAL objectives. It is important to distinguish between these two objectives since they produce quite dissimilar demands on a computer system.

6. For understandable reasons the curatorial staff tend to attach more importance to the second objective. They see the manipulation of data for the purposes of scholarly study and for answering enquiries as a prime objective of a computerised system, bearing in mind particularly the high proportion of enquiries which relate to a particular subject rather than to individual museum objects. They believe that computerisation of records would result in quicker information-retrieval, and better co-ordination of information between departments by, for example, making possible the compilation of inter-departmental indexes, classified according to maker, date, country of origin, and donor etc.

7. These general objectives could be fully satisfied only if all information presently recorded in registers were transferred to computer file. A facility of this type covering the whole Museum would be very costly and it would take a great deal of time to install and also to maintain. A conservative estimate is that installation would require eight full-time system staff and would consume about 20% of overall curatorial effort for some 25 years. Allowing for system and hardware changes and also for staff changes during the development of such a system, even this estimate might be over-optimistic. The initial cost of installing the necessary computer equipment in suitable premises might cost (depending on the precise curatorial objectives of the exercise) anything up to £7m; this figure takes no account of the subsequent high cost of training staff to use the equipment, and of inputting the curatorial data. It is questionable whether such investment of money and resources could be justified by an improved capacity for research: at the very least the matter requires a thorough cost benefit analysis. In making such an analysis it would be desirable, perhaps essential, for the views of an independent impartial expert in this field to be sought.

8. Computerisation for custodial reasons presents a more manageable task. It would not be necessary to transfer all the information on each object from the manual registers. If data input were confined to a simple record of inventory number, location, and brief description, it would be possible to store

information on a micro or mini computer. Such a simple system is known to offer advantages where no manual records exist (as for example in the case of the Wellcome Collection at the Science Museum).

9. On the other hand it is difficult to see what advantages mini-computerisation would offer to well established collections with corresponding manual records. The many registers of curatorial data would still need to be maintained as a separate task. And any small savings in clerical work would be offset by the physical task of data input and retrieval by card or terminal. On-line systems with terminals are relatively expensive, and printouts for stocktaking would not only increase the system costs but would be unlikely to improve stocktaking. There would appear to be no offsetting savings to justify the expensive and time consuming process of conversion. The alternative microfiche are always to some extent out of date, so a system which relied on their use would tend to be less effective than a system of manual records which is immediately available and usually up-to-date.

10. In its report on Inventory Control and Stocktaking in the Museums* the Public Accounts Committee referred to the view expressed to the Committee that computerisation of museum records was likely to be the only feasible way of maintaining up to date location records. It is difficult, however, to support this view. If current records are incorrect or inaccurate it is because location changes have not been recorded when objects were moved. Yet a computerised storage system would be equally vulnerable to such omissions since it would require the same degree of amendment as a manually maintained system.

11. For records to be accurate at the time of conversion it would be necessary to carry out a complete pre-entry stock check. This might however be an unrealistic expectation, bearing in mind that some departments are now finding it impossible to achieve a comprehensive stock take over a 5 year period. The question of the accuracy of the records should in any case be considered separately from the question of computerisation. If accuracy is a

*Tenth report 1980/81, paragraph 28

cause for concern there may be a case for a new initiative by central management to make departments aware of the need for the strictest possible approach to maintaining the standards of documentation in the Museum.

Conclusions

1. In considering the possibility of computerising the Museum's records it is essential to distinguish between custodial and curatorial objectives.
2. There is nothing to be gained from mechanising an adequate and well established manual system of registers and record cards for custodial purposes. Computerisation is costly in clerical effort, and does not of itself result in more accurate records.
3. A mini-computer could be considered in the event of a large, new and undocumented collection being acquired.
4. Computerisation of the Museum's records for curatorial purposes would be an expensive, time-consuming and staff-intensive process. Before embarking on such a scheme the Museum should undertake an analysis of the cost benefits to be derived.
5. Steps should be taken to ensure that museum staff at all levels observe the greatest care in maintaining accurate location records.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The V & A Museum should not change the present manual system of record keeping to a computerised system for custodial purposes.
2. Computerisation of the V & A Museum's records for curatorial purposes should be considered, if at all, only if a thorough cost benefit analysis shows the change to be justified.

II STOCKTAKING

12. In its report on Inventory Control and Stocktaking in the Museums (paragraph 32) the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) urged that within the limits of available resources a programme of stocktaking checks should be carried out which would be clearly defined and adequately recorded. The PAC recognised that museums might conclude that systematic checking of large numbers of small value items was not cost-effective but it thought museums should determine what types of check were practicable and cost-effective in relation to the varying potential risks of loss.

13. I was asked by the Scrutiny Team to examine the stocktaking procedures at the V & A Museum; to ascertain what progress had been made in defining, carrying out and recording a programme of stock checks as suggested by the PAC; and to consider whether any modification in existing procedures was desirable in the interests of greater efficiency. The curatorial departments whose stocktaking procedures I examined, and the parties with whom I discussed this question, are those mentioned in paragraph 1 of this report.

Why Stocktaking?

14. Under the accounting rules for inventories prescribed in the Manual of Government Accounting, there is a general requirement that "valuable and attractive" items belonging to public institutions should be held in the charge of an inventory holder and checked at least annually. The Manual allows for stocktaking to be carried out on a selective basis by statistical sampling, and a variety of practices exist in Government establishments.

15. Stocktaking in industry is carried out primarily to place a capital value on work in progress and stock in hand. In the public service the rationale for stocktaking is not so clear, although it is often assumed that the process of stocktaking deters misappropriation of public assets and also helps to ensure that these assets can be located. Underlying these practical considerations there is of course the general principle of accountability, and the need to satisfy government auditors that adequate controls exist. In museums

stocktaking also enables location records to be brought up to date, and it can on occasions provide an early warning of deterioration in the condition of certain objects.

16. Checking stock is costly of staff time. It also carries a slight risk of damage to or misplacement of stock; but this risk is generally assumed to be outweighed by the benefits gained from the exercise in terms of the improvement of records, the discouragement and detection of losses, and the discovery of certain items not on register. To establish whether these benefits are sufficient to justify the high staff costs involved it is necessary to weigh the benefits against the costs, taking into account the actual risk of loss in the context of the Museum's own security arrangements. Determining the cost benefits of stocktaking in this way is not a straightforward matter, but so far as I could see the Museum has not yet attempted to do it; nor has it yet considered how to meet the PAC's point (paragraph 12) about defining a future stock checking programme.

Present Practice

17. In theory a 5 year programme of stocktaking (the 'quinquennial' programme) applies to all curatorial departments. Under this programme approximately 20% of the Museum's stock is meant to be checked each year. The task is, however, formidable. Estimates of total stock vary from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to as many as 4 million objects, and measurement of the actual work involved in checking individual items shows that an average of 2 minutes is required to locate and check each object. Allowing for notation of records and certain other factors an average of $3\frac{1}{2}$ minutes would be needed. On this basis the task of checking a minimum of 500,000 objects each year would require 23 full-time Museum Assistants at a cost of some £280,000 per annum. (No allowance is made here for prolonged searches or stocktaking discrepancies). This is plainly impracticable in current circumstances. Nevertheless these figures help to illustrate the sheer scale of the task as at present defined, and to explain why despite their best efforts, some departments at present come nowhere near to satisfying the requirements of the quinquennial programme.

18. The stocktaking task is generally regarded by staff as too vast and monotonous to be accomplished by a single annual exercise involving the same staff. Most departments therefore carry out stocktaking spasmodically as time permits, often at the same time as a more pressing function such as the reorganisation of a gallery, or when a new curator assumes responsibility for a particular collection. Shortage of staff, combined with the size of the task, means that some departments are unable to check 20% of their stock. In some cases checking is completed over a period closer to 10 years than to the 5 years required by the programme.

19. It should be mentioned here that one of the more fundamental and commonly accepted requirements of stocktaking - that to reduce the risk of possible abuse it should be conducted by an independent person from outside the department concerned - cannot be applied in a museum context. It is unlikely that anyone from outside the curatorial department would possess the degree of specialist knowledge needed to identify the objects. Whilst this problem cannot be avoided, it does serve to defeat one of the basic purposes of stocktaking.

Results

20. The results of inventory checking are summarised centrally in the Museum. In 1979-80 16 items were discovered to be missing, and 20 items which had not previously been recorded were found. Balancing the estimated value of 'items lost' against 'items found' produced a net value surplus of £1000. In 1980/81 the same process produced a loss of 29 items against a gain of 42 items and a net value surplus of £15,000. Although these results may give a somewhat incomplete picture (since the figures are based on a check of less than 20% of stock in some departments) they nevertheless show that even if the Museum had the capacity to conduct the quinquennial survey with the maximum degree of staff commitment (23 full-time staff) referred to in paragraph 17 it is unlikely that there would be any substantial savings to offset an annual expenditure in the region of £280,000. Indeed museum objects would need to be at considerable risk of systematic misappropriation to justify expenditure on such a scale, or anything like it. The evidence points, on the contrary, to very little

misappropriation of objects. The question therefore arises whether the present level of stocktaking activity in the Museum (which is impossible to quantify in financial terms) is justified in relation to the scale of risk.

Conclusions

21. Stocktaking cannot prevent theft. At best it can provide a means of detection of theft on a large scale (although none of the officials interviewed could recall an example of this) and of updating and rectifying location records. As mentioned already, there is very little misappropriation of objects. There are probably several reasons for this, among them the efficiency of the warding and security system, and the reliability, dedication and honesty of the museum staff. However the results of the stocktaking programme indicate that the quinquennial system is based on an assumption about the POTENTIAL risk of loss or misappropriation of the collections which significantly exceeds the ACTUAL risk. The aims of the stock checking programme and the effort devoted to meeting those aims should be brought more closely into balance with the degree of actual risk of loss or misplacement.
22. A programme of stock checking designed to locate and check upwards of 2½ million items every 5 years, and which consumes a significant amount of valuable MA and SMA time, is not in my view justified. A more economical and rational solution would be to carry out an annual check only on the most attractive and valuable objects (worth, say, over £500) in each collection, and on objects which are known to have been moved during the preceding 12 months. The curator responsible for a collection would decide which items in that collection fell within the category of 'most attractive and valuable', and he or a deputy would ensure that sufficient checks were made on these objects and that the corresponding records were accurate. The results would be recorded and reported in the usual way.
23. This arrangement as well as being more economical and more in line with the actual risk of loss, would place the stocktaking task on a more manageable basis in relation to the size of the collections. It would also satisfy the

ANNEX D
(continued)

criteria on stock sampling set out in the Government's Accounting Manual and it would meet the concern and satisfy the requirements of the Public Accounts Committee.

24. Although a reduction in the time spent on stocktaking, particularly by MA and SMA staff, should follow from such changes, it is impossible financially to quantify the savings involved.

RECOMMENDATION

The quinquennial stocktaking programme at the V & A Museum should be abandoned. It should be replaced by a system of annual checks on:-

- a. the most valuable and attractive objects in each collection; and
- b. objects which have been moved for any reason during the preceding year.

No stock check should be made on the remaining objects in the collections.

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No stock check should be made on the remaining objects in the collections.

ANNEX E

THE COST OF THIS SCRUTINY

The total cost of this scrutiny was £28,648, made up as follows.

	Staff Costs	Travel and Subsistence Costs	Total
	£	£	£
Scrutineer	6,929	519	7,448
Professional Adviser	1,000	248	1,248
SEO	19,935 *	17	19,952
	-----	-----	-----
Totals	27,864	784	28,648
	-----	-----	-----

* including accommodation and common services

✓ Mr Rickett

Mr BEESLEYWV
18/5SCRUTINY OF THE DES MUSEUMS

1. I had a call towards the end of last week from Mr Mark Hodges, who has recently succeeded Mr Brandes as US in the OAL.
2. Mr H said that he was expecting Mr Burrett to submit his report on the Science and V&A Museums to Mr Channon this week, with copies to Sir D Rayner and Sir J Hamilton. He expected that Mr Channon would be in touch with the Prime Minister, probably at private secretary level, in the near future to say that he would like to make the report available for comment before the Whitsuntide Recess (ie publication on Thursday 27 May).
3. He would like to be able to say that the Government has decided in principle to accept Mr Burrett's main recommendation, namely that the status of the museums should be changed from that of parts of the DES to "trustee" institutions. This apparently was agreed by H Committee in principle in February and provision has been made in the legislative programme for next session.
4. Mr H said that everything else in the report would be regarded as a matter for consultation but that the Government would be at pains to draw specific attention to such matters as the proposal that charges should be made for entry. We discussed this last point at some length. I told Mr H that my instinctive view was that the Government would be asking for a lot of trouble if they did not give some indication of their own view on the question of charges. The Prime Minister would very well recall her own experience as SS/E&S in the early 70s when the Heath Administration (under the influence of the then business team) imposed charges in certain national museums. These had been

deeply and widely resented; had brought in very little revenue; and had saddled the then Government with a reputation for meanness. In the present case, the issue was somewhat different. It would presumably be for the museum trustees to decide whether they wanted to levy charges or not, rather than the Government, but as far as I knew no trustee museum charged for normal admission, although charges for special exhibitions were now standard.

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5. I told Mr H that^{it} was for Mr Channon's judgment whether he wished to put this point to the PM and his colleagues in a completely open way, but that in my view^{it} would be highly desirable to make it clear either that the Government itself was far from sold on the idea of charging or that the decision would - after the proposed change of status - no longer be for the Government, but for the trustees. Mr H said that he would take counsel with Mr Channon on the treatment of this point.

SP

C PRIESTLEY

17 May 1982

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H(82) 6th Meeting

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CABINET

HOME AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

—
MINUTES of a Meeting held in the Large
Ministerial Conference Room, House of Commons
on MONDAY 8 MARCH 1982 at 4.00 pm
—

PRESENT

The Rt Hon Sir Keith Joseph MP
Secretary of State for Education
and Science (In the Chair)

The Rt Hon Nicholas Edwards MP
Secretary of State for Wales

The Rt Hon David Howell MP
Secretary of State for Transport

The Rt Hon Leon Brittan QC MP
Chief Secretary, Treasury

The Rt Hon Baroness Young
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster

The Rt Hon Michael Jopling MP
Parliamentary Secretary, Treasury

The Rt Hon Lord Denham
Captain of the Gentlemen-at-Arms

THE FOLLOWING WERE ALSO PRESENT

The Rt Hon Paul Channon MP
Minister of State, Department of
Education and Science
(Minister for the Arts)

Mr John Patten MP
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of
State, Northern Ireland Office

Mr Neil MacFarlane MP
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of
State, Department of the Environment

Mr Alexander Fletcher MP
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of
State, Scottish Office

Mr Geoffrey Finsberg MP
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of
State, Department of Health and
Social Security

Mr David Waddington MP
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of
State, Department of Employment

SECRETARIAT

Mr D H J Hilary
Mr L J Harris

SUBJECT

FUTURE OF THE VICTORIA AND ALBERT AND SCIENCE MUSEUMS

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FUTURE OF THE VICTORIA AND ALBERT AND SCIENCE MUSEUMS

The Committee considered a Memorandum by the Minister for the Arts (H(82) 10) about the future of the Victoria and Albert and Science Museums.

THE MINISTER FOR THE ARTS said that unlike the other national museums and galleries, which were independent bodies managed by trustees, the Victoria and Albert and Science Museums were part of central Government. This arrangement had led to various anomalies over the years, and in 1978 the previous Administration had issued a consultative document inviting comments on the status of the two museums. More recently, they had been the subject of a detailed Rayner Scrutiny which was due to be completed around the end of March. Although the report was not yet available, he understood that it would conclude that a change to trustee status would be in the interests of the museums. He believed that such a change was justified on its merits, but it would also have the advantage of moving 1100 staff out of the Civil Service. The staff of the museums were thought to be mildly opposed to the proposed change, but it was supported in principle by the Opposition, and although its presentation would need careful handling he did not expect it to be unduly controversial. He hoped that time for the necessary legislation could be found in the 1982-83 Session of Parliament. He invited the Committee to agree that once the Rayner Scrutiny report had been published, he should announce that the Government accepted the major recommendation on trustee status and would consult widely about its implementation and about any other recommendations in the report.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SCIENCE, summing up the discussion, said that the Committee agreed that the management of the Victoria and Albert and Science Museums should be transferred to a board of trustees at an early opportunity. When the report of the Rayner Scrutiny had been received, the Minister for the Arts should initiate consultations about the best method of achieving this change. He should remain in close touch with the Chancellor of the Duchy

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of Lancaster about the staffing arrangements. The timing of the legislation, and the possibility of combining it with similar proposals on the Tower Armouries, the Royal Botanic Gardens, the Royal Scottish Museum and ancient monuments and historic buildings would be matters for The Queen's Speeches and Future Legislation Committee to consider in the context of the proposed legislative programme for 1982-83.

The Committee -

Approved the proposals on the future of the Victoria and Albert and Science Museums set out in H(82) 10.

Cabinet Office

9 March 1982

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ACTION

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Mr Rickett
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Americas

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H (82) 10
1 March 1982

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Prime Minister 2

CABINET

HOME AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

*Mr Channon seeks
authority to prepare
legislation to give the
V&A & Science museums
trustee status.*

THE FUTURE OF THE VICTORIA AND ALBERT AND

THE SCIENCE MUSEUMS

Memorandum by the Minister for the Arts, Department of Education
and Science

1. I ask my colleagues to agree to the preparation of legislation to make a change in the arrangements for running the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Science Museum. They were set up after the 1851 Exhibition as instruments of national education policy. Their staff, who number about 1100, are civil servants. They alone of the major national museums and galleries for which I am responsible are part of Central Government. All the others such as the British Museum are independent bodies managed by Trustees.

2. There has been a continuing debate about whether this unusual arrangement was wise. The last Government issued a consultative document in 1978 inviting comments on the appropriate status of the museums. Unfortunately no clear consensus emerged, as the whole issue got muddled up with arguments about details of delegated powers and was then overtaken by the 1979 election.

3. Recently these two museums were the subject of a detailed Rayner Scrutiny. The study is not yet complete, but in confidence I have been given good reasons for believing that it will recommend that trustee status provides a much more efficient regime for these museums and their long term future.

4. I am certain this is right. A board of trustees will be able to provide better leadership and guidance than a Government department. In principle too, I believe that trustee status fits in with our general philosophy of trying to reduce the scope and size of Central Government. There is a further important advantage that it will move 1100 individuals outside the civil service. But even if it produced no manpower savings then I think the change should be made on its merits.

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5. The Rayner exercise will be completed by about the end of March. I think it will show that the matter is urgent. With Sir Derek Rayner's agreement I would propose to publish the report's findings. If my colleagues agree, I would accept the major recommendation on trustee status but consult widely about how this would best be achieved. I would of course also consult about the other findings.

6. There is bound to be a lot of public debate about this. But I do not think the change will be unduly controversial. The Opposition have expressed themselves in favour in principle, though subject to the views of the staff! I suspect that the majority of the staff will be opposed - but not too violently. The two Directors accept the need for a change. But the Civil Service unions may be opposed and will need careful handling. There are no cost implications. I have already described the manpower advantages.

7. I ask my colleagues to give me the authority to prepare the necessary legislation.

Department of Education and Science
1 March 1982

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