

Hansard

Legislative Assembly Budget Estimates Committee B

2 June 2010

Dr M.D. NAHAN: At the bottom of page 577 under "Details of Controlled Grants and Subsidies" is an allocation in 2010-11 of \$7.912 million for the West Australian Symphony Orchestra relocation. Can the minister explain what that is for, and whether it includes a replacement of the funds that the previous government secretly took from the —

Mr P.T. MILES: Stole!

Dr M.D. NAHAN: — stole from the symphony orchestra right before the last election?

Ms M.M. QUIRK: You call it "re-cashflowing", I believe!

Mr J.H.D. DAY: I thank the member for the question. It is the case, as I mentioned earlier, that \$4.4 million was reallocated by the previous government. It might have intended that it be on a short-term basis, but the reality is that when we came to government, the problem had to be fixed and the funds that were "borrowed"—or whatever the case may be—from the WASO relocation fund to put into boosting the library materials acquisition fund had to be replaced.

Those funds have been replaced by a decision of this government, and an allocation of funds is in this budget. Effectively, it is this government that has funded additional library materials purchases that the previous government and Labor opposition has been taking credit for in 2008 and 2009. Not all of that was apparent, and until fairly recently it was not publicly known.

The Labor Party was out there doing a lot of grandstanding, I think it is fair to say, on a supposed 40 per cent reduction in library materials funding. The reality is it was on basis of funds taken out of the WASO relocation fund. I think that the opposition and the Labor Party need to be comprehensive when they present this information to the public.

The \$7.9 million is the total amount of the original \$8 million that has not been expended so far on the WASO relocation project. WASO needs new offices and a rehearsal studio and so on, and the site it is currently looking at is the plaza area on the northern side of the Concert Hall between St Georges Terrace and the Concert Hall itself, which will need major modifications to accommodate the facilities they need.

Obviously WASO has taken responsibility for that. It is its project. There is \$7.9 million available from the state. There are also some funds available from the City of Perth, and presumably WASO will need to raise additional amounts, and I expect it will achieve some of that from the federal government. I look forward to WASO coming back with more details of its proposal in due course.