

however, that this assistance is not regarded by the ASEAN countries as addressing the essential problems in the relationship.¹²

The Committee received no evidence which seriously questioned the need to provide development assistance to the ASEAN countries. The development assistance program does not solve the problems within the overall relationship, but given the slow progress in trading relations development assistance is one form of effective economic co-operation.

Opinions varied among witnesses on the relevance and effectiveness of Australian development assistance to ASEAN members and the Committee sought a response on these matters from ADAB. In ADAB's view:

The volume of Australian aid for the countries of ASEAN is not commensurate with our expressed interest in the region The quality of Australia's aid programs is, however, highly regarded by the countries of ASEAN. Australia's practices have on a number of occasions been brought to the attention of other donors by recipient countries as examples of preferred approaches to development assistance activities.¹³

The regard for Australia's program has also been expressed to Committee members by ASEAN leaders and officials. It should be noted that work under the development assistance program is initiated in accordance with the priorities of recipient countries and dependent upon the availability of relevant expertise in Australia.

The Committee has been assured by ADAB that trends and future requirements are monitored to establish new forms of co-operation. For example emphasis is now being given to technical assistance in the fields of science and technology. In this area the Bureau consults the Consultative Committee on Research for Development which advises on the scientific and technological resources available in Australia and on priorities for research co-operation with developing countries. The new initiatives of open-ended funds commitment, development import grants and joint venture funding are examples of the changing nature of the program, but the Bureau is aware that if Australian assistance is to continue being relevant to shifting priorities in the ASEAN States, it must develop its flexibility to adapt operations to meet changing needs.

The Committee concludes that the Australian development assistance program for the ASEAN countries is important to relations, while it is not offered and should not be seen as a panacea for the differences that exist in the relationship. As noted in its previous reports (on the South Pacific, Department of Foreign Affairs and the New International Economic Order) the Committee feels the program is operating effectively given that financial and staff restraints limit its activities. Changing needs in assistance delivery require new initiatives and these domestic limitations should not be an obstacle if Australia is to be able to respond through its development assistance program.

The Committee recommends that the Government should continually review the relevance and significance of development assistance in Australia's relations with ASEAN and with the individual member countries. The Committee also recommends that the Government ensure the necessary resources be made available for the effective operation of the development assistance program and allow for adaptability to the changing needs of recipient countries.

Defence

Historically Australia's defence and security ties with South East Asia date from active involvement during World War II and in some countries for periods after the war. Australia's defence contacts with ASEAN are on a bilateral basis with each of its

¹² See transcript of evidence, *Official Hansard Report*, p. 1355.

¹³ See transcript of evidence, *Official Hansard Report*, p. 467.

members, as the Association itself does not have a military role. Military co-operation between members of the Association is limited and on a bilateral basis. In summary Australia's defence co-operation program in the five member countries includes:

Indonesia

Australia is providing 8 Nomad aircraft for surveillance, over the period 1980-82 and 250 motor vehicles for the Indonesian army. Senior Australian and Indonesian defence personnel conduct exchange visits and 58 Indonesian trainees were enrolled for courses at Australian Service training establishments during 1979-80. During this period expenditure on defence co-operation with Indonesia amounted to over \$9.6 million.

Malaysia

Australia maintains two fighter squadrons and a maintenance squadron at the Malaysian Air Force Base at Butterworth and deploys an infantry company there. Joint military exercises are conducted regularly. Defence co-operation includes the provision of equipment, training and advisory assistance. Over the last 18 years 3514 Malaysian service personnel have trained in Australia including 236 during 1979-80. Expenditure amounted to \$2.8 million in 1979-80.

The Philippines

Australian service personnel and units participate in exchange visits and exercises with the Philippines' and the United States' forces based in the country. During 1979-80 there were thirty-one Philippines military personnel attending training courses in Australia. In 1979-80 expenditure amounted to \$804 000 under the co-operation program.

Singapore

There are six Australian fighter aircraft detached from Butterworth to the Singapore base at Tengah, including support personnel. Australian naval units call at Singapore for leave and maintenance purposes and participate in joint exercises. In 1979-80 expenditure on defence co-operation totalled approximately \$700 000. It was used for continuing advisory assistance and the provision of forty places on Australian Defence Force training courses.

Thailand

Under the defence co-operation program equipment and training are provided for vehicle maintenance and military technical training. Twenty Thai military personnel attended training courses in Australia during 1979-80. Expenditure allocation for that year amounted to \$107 000.

The South East Asian region has for many years experienced periods of tension and uncertainty with its security and stability. The current situation is aggravated and influenced predominantly by the roles of the Soviet Union, Vietnam and China in Indo-China. Other potentially unsettling factors in the regional environment are the Paracel and Spratley islands, sea boundaries in the Gulf of Tonkin and the Gulf of Thailand. These areas are the subject of conflicting claims and involve China, Vietnam, Taiwan, Kampuchea, the Philippines and Thailand. Other possible causes of instability are the forces provoking internal tensions within a number of the ASEAN countries. The mixtures of local rivalries and major powers' involvement have the potential for continuing friction. The importance of a peaceful South East Asia is obvious and is vital to Australia's political and economic future. Successive Australian governments have acknowledged this and have given support to attempts to achieve this purpose, particularly to recent ASEAN endeavours.

During the inquiry the Committee received evidence indicating that the ASEAN countries welcome defence co-operation with Australia and that this assistance makes a contribution to the greater understanding of the political and strategic problems of its neighbours. It is recognised that this assistance is provided in a form commensurate with Australia's ability namely, light equipment, training and technical advice. The Committee received no evidence which advocated a future major military role for Australia in the region or participation by Australian forces in the event of open hostilities. The Committee acknowledges the Government's concern over events in the region and is aware that Australian defence co-operation with ASEAN countries has been re-appraised. In the 1980-81 budget estimates for defence co-operation with the ASEAN countries have been increased as follows:

Table 3 Australian ASEAN Defence Co-operation
(\$ millions)

<i>Country</i>	<i>1979-80</i>	<i>1980-81</i>	<i>Increase</i>
Malaysia	2.877	4.700	1.823
Indonesia	9.589	11.940	2.351
Singapore	0.699	1.000	.301
Thailand	0.107	1.100	.993
Philippines	0.804	0.980	.176
	14.076	19.720	5.644

Source: Department of Defence.

In particular the economic impact of refugees and the changed strategic circumstances of Thailand have led to a reappraisal of the program for Thailand. The emphasis on defence co-operation activities varies between countries and the nature of the program is determined in response to priority requests from the recipient governments. A feature of defence co-operation which is common to all ASEAN countries will be the new training policy. It will allow consideration of ASEAN countries training requirements before Australian programs are set and will provide increased places, study visits and in-country courses. The new training initiatives have been fully supported by the ASEAN governments.

The Committee concludes that the defence co-operation program, in keeping with Australia's capacity to provide this form of assistance, is important in supporting diplomatic relations with the ASEAN nations. In the present circumstances there have been no requests for, nor does the Committee see a requirement for a major Australian military role in the South East Asian region. It considers that Australia's contribution towards regional stability should continue to concentrate on assisting efforts to find peaceful solutions to security problems.

Immigration from ASEAN countries

Settlers and visitors

In the past Australia's immigration policy attracted criticism and was described as racially discriminatory. This stigma harmed Australia's image and was the cause of friction with other countries. The policy now emphasises its non-discriminatory character and is applied uniformly to applicants from any country. Nine principles form the basis of the policy and these are described in Appendix 3.

On the evidence received and the discussions Committee members have had with ASEAN officials, Australia's immigration policy since 1978 appears to be understood and has not drawn adverse reactions from ASEAN sources. In 1970 settler arrivals

from ASEAN countries formed 1.1% of Australia's migrant intake, this ratio has increased annually and by 1979 it was 21.3% of the total intake. The growth of migration from the ASEAN countries has been largely due to Indo-Chinese refugees being resettled in Australia from camps in Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia, their countries of first asylum. The other settlers are mainly in the family reunion and general eligibility categories, particularly professional people and migration in this category is expected to increase. Statistical details of settler intakes from ASEAN countries are provided in Appendix 4.

Migrant settlers from the ASEAN countries, excluding Indo-Chinese refugees, tend to settle in cities in Australia's eastern states and appear to experience few difficulties. Settlers from Malaysia and Singapore are predominantly ethnic Chinese, Indians and mixed races. Largely English speaking, they have studied in the English medium and many have studied in Australia. Many have professional qualifications that are recognised in Australia, are financially secure and make little use of unemployment or welfare services. Filipino settlers are adjusting well, most speak English and have qualifications that are recognised in Australia. Unemployment is not a problem among these settlers although there are some cultural conflicts due to intermarriage. There are twice as many female Filipino settlers as males. There have been some problems with the advertising of 'suitable wives' available in the Philippines for marriage to Australians. There are few settlers from Indonesia or Thailand and although there are some language related problems they have settled successfully in Australia.

Apart from overseas student entry there exists a number of other entry categories for short and longer term visitors to Australia. These facilities cater for business visitors, tourists, technical and professional people, cultural and sporting groups. In some cases temporary entry status is changed to resident status. This change of status was predominant among Malaysians studying in Australia and was causing concern in Malaysia. In August 1979 the policy was altered and overseas students can no longer change their status to permanent residence. Overall permanent settlers and visitors from the ASEAN countries to Australia are increasing annually and multiplying the links between Australia and the region. Illegal immigration is not a major problem with arrivals from ASEAN sources and the great majority of prohibited immigrants are temporary entrants who have overstayed.

Refugee resettlement

Since 1975 Australia has accepted 37 693 Indo-Chinese refugees including 14 955 during the 1979-80 program year. During 1980-81 Australia proposes to receive a further 14 000 Indo-Chinese with an overall program of 21 500 determined by the Government for refugee and special humanitarian programs. The exodus of refugees from Indo-China fell mainly on the ASEAN countries in varying degrees, Thailand receiving more than the other four members together.

Australia shares ASEAN's concern over the refugee crisis and its effects on the region. As a result it has responded to ASEAN's requests for assistance with a problem they are unable to solve, taking on a per capita basis the highest number of refugees for resettlement. The ASEAN countries are not signatories to the United Nations Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees but have continued to grant first asylum to refugees with relief aid from international sources. They are, however, united against a role for themselves as countries of resettlement. The outflow of refugees is constantly monitored and concern is felt over a renewed exodus. ASEAN countries are also concerned about the decline in resettlement rates as many countries made once-only commitments.

To assist the ASEAN countries on Indo-Chinese refugee matters Australia has:

- assured them of a continued commitment to help resolve the problems caused for the region by the outflow of Indo-Chinese refugees;
- supported ASEAN efforts to draw international attention to the problem, e.g. Australia's Foreign Minister chaired the United Nations meeting on Humanitarian Relief and Assistance to the Kampuchean People;
- instituted a special program to assist Kampucheans interested in family reunion in Australia;
- guaranteed resettlement for all refugees rescued at sea by Australian flag carriers and offered 250 resettlement places for those rescued at sea by ship from countries unable to resettle refugees; and
- taken a decision to participate in the Orderly Departure Scheme of people wanting to leave Vietnam.

Australia agreed to assist family reunions for refugees from East Timor after hostilities in 1975. Agreement was reached in 1978 with the Indonesian Government on some 600 persons to come to Australia; to date 298 have arrived, leaving the other half awaiting exit permits from Indonesian authorities. The delay has created adverse reaction in sections of the Australian community but repeated approaches to the Indonesian authorities have not resolved the issue.

ASEAN leaders have confirmed to Committee members their appreciation of Australia's continuing contributions to finding solutions for the Indo-Chinese refugee situation. The Committee commends Australia's on-going humanitarian approach despite domestic economic problems and mixed community reactions. The Committee also endorses attempts to find peaceful solutions to the regional tensions creating the refugee exodus.

Australia has been described as 'in the region but not of it'. In the Committee's opinion the applicability of that description is changing. Australia is frequently referred to as having a multicultural society and through growing contacts there is developing a gradual awareness that it is becoming more of 'the region'. The mutual gaps in understanding are still immense but it is partly through endeavours such as co-operation in aiding refugees and a non-discriminatory immigration policy that Australia can demonstrate its willingness to participate in solving problems to promote progress in the region. The Committee is concerned that Australia is still seen as a European outpost in an Asian region. The Committee believes it is imperative for Australia to remove this impression and recommends that the Government concentrate on projecting Australia's identity which is evolving through the changing structure of its society. The Committee also recommends the further development of the immigration policy along the lines recently adopted, a humanitarian approach to the needs of refugees and the intensification of efforts to finalise the reunion in Australia of families from East Timor.

Narcotics control

Tourism between Australia and the ASEAN countries is well established, it is growing and has considerable scope for development. During the inquiry the Committee received evidence which indicates that Australian tourists are well regarded in the ASEAN region and the same applies to tourists from the region in Australia. An area of concern associated with tourists is the high incidence of illicit trafficking in narcotics.

The majority of illicit drugs entering Australia originate in South East Asia and the main trafficking or transshipment centres are in Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and to a lesser extent the Philippines. Heavy tourist traffic provides good cover for drug smuggling by sea and air and strains inspection resources. Narcotics

abuse is a universal problem and to reduce the flow of drugs international co-operation is required to eliminate sources and intercept drug traffic en route. On a multilateral basis Australian participation in anti-narcotics measures includes:

- a contribution of \$1 million to the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control over the 1979–81 period;
- membership of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs along with all ASEAN countries;
- membership of the Commission's Heads of National Narcotic Law Enforcement Agencies; and
- attendance at Commonwealth Heads of Government Regional Meeting Working Group on Illicit Drugs.

Co-operation in anti-narcotics activities with the ASEAN countries is essential. Earlier forms of co-operation were on an ad hoc basis involving training and donations of equipment. Australia now has narcotics liaison officers stationed in a number of the ASEAN countries co-operating with local authorities. In addition a specific action program for narcotics enforcement projects in the ASEAN countries has been initiated by the Government. The Committee fully supports any programs and proposals aimed at effective narcotics control and it recommends that particular emphasis be given to such endeavours and that any initiatives or opportunities to assist international efforts in this field should not be hampered by arbitrary decisions on staff restraints or budgetary limitations.

Media relations

One of the less tangible and sometimes more contentious features of Australian ASEAN relations is the role of the media. Does it enhance appreciation of each others' systems or is it an influence which distorts mutual images? The Australian media is criticised in ASEAN countries and vice versa. A fundamental difference exists. The Australian media is not subject to government control of censorship and it does not represent the Government's policies. In the ASEAN countries governments have more control of the media and can direct its operations. The respective situations are understood at government levels but not generally throughout the communities. As a result of sensitivities and varying interpretations on topics presented in the media, accusations of bias and lack of balance recur.

There is no ready solution to this problem. The Australian media is independent and much of it is commercially motivated. Government funded radio and television services, including Radio Australia, operate as separate entities and are not an instrument of government policy. Radio Australia maintains an independent editorial policy seeking to provide an impartial, balanced service. It is mindful of Australia's image and foreign relations and liaises with the Department of Foreign Affairs to ensure that its broadcasts are not damaging to these considerations.

Despite its best intentions to provide an extensive service, objections to aspects of Radio Australia's functions arise, e.g. Indonesia sees its reporting as biased and inaccurate. As a consequence the Indonesian Government refused a visa to Radio Australia's Indonesian linguist and did not renew a visa for the Australian Broadcasting Commission's journalist in the country. This situation can only be harmful to bilateral relations and the Committee recommends that the Government initiate further discussions with the Indonesian authorities to ensure that Radio Australia has a correspondent in Indonesia.

As at June 1980 there were seven Australian correspondents located in the ASEAN countries and no full-time ASEAN media representatives in Australia. The

Committee feels that 'on the spot' representation, although costly, is a most valuable means of achieving accurate reporting and considers that ASEAN countries should be encouraged to establish media representation in Australia. For Australia, wider media representation in the ASEAN countries has obvious benefits, with emphasis on the importance of reliable, accurate and balanced reporting.

Educational and cultural relations

CO-OPERATION IN EDUCATION

The ASEAN countries are geographically Australia's closest Asian neighbours and they attract the largest percentage of Australians who visit Asia. The development of closer educational and cultural relationships with ASEAN is important to promote wider knowledge of Australia in the region, and greater understanding of the ASEAN countries on Australia's part. Australia has concluded cultural agreements with each of the ASEAN countries, which include provisions relating to educational co-operation, for example:

- exchanges of experts in educational fields, scholars, students, researchers and trainees;
- the development of relations between academic bodies, universities, scientific and research institutions, professional associations and other institutions of learning;
- the exchange of information regarding their respective educational systems; and
- the exchange of information on educational developments, practices and co-operation in joint educational projects.

International educational relations are the product of both private and public initiatives and during its inquiry the Committee received assistance from both sources. It was concerned to find that generally Asian studies, including the study of the ASEAN countries and their languages, have declined at undergraduate levels in the past few years, although there is an increase of interest in South East Asian studies among academics. Dr Stephen Fitzgerald, former Australian Ambassador to China, now Deputy Chairman, Australia-China Council, stated in 1978 that Australia's educational priorities were out of balance and while that situation persisted, resources going into education were in some degree misdirected and Australians were not being equipped adequately to handle their most immediate external environment. The concern of the Asian Studies Association of Australia (ASAA) at the downturn in Asian studies is evidenced by the fact that it has been instrumental in setting up an inquiry seeking information from educational institutions, about the place of Asian studies in the courses they offer. The inquiry was completed and the report issued in August 1980.

The Committee was concerned to know the reasons for this fall off of interest in Asian studies and found that the following reasons were suggested as contributing factors:

- lack of employment opportunities for graduates in Asian studies;
- a general decline in the study of Asian languages excepting Indonesian, Japanese and Malay;
- interest in Asia, generated by Australia's involvement in the Vietnam war waned with the end of the war;
- restrictions on government expenditure for activities under the educational provisions of the cultural agreements with the five ASEAN countries; and

- lack of special support for South East Asian studies in Australia.

Employment opportunities are a major consideration in choosing a course of study, particularly when unemployment is high. What appears to be an interesting and challenging course of study, may have to give way to one which simply offers employment. There seems to be little interest from Australian companies operating in ASEAN countries in employing people who have undertaken ASEAN studies. Knowledge of the local language in these countries is not always a problem, as locals who speak English can be employed, and English is a business language in Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines and to a degree in Indonesia. While industry regards knowledge of the local language as desirable, companies when they consider additional skills such as language are needed by an employee, tend to have people trained themselves. The Department of Foreign Affairs which should be a small but obvious source of employment tends to recruit people on a generalised interest in foreign affairs basis, rather than on a specialist language basis. Although there is a valuable pool of graduates in various Asian studies disciplines in Australia, because they are mainly from the humanities or social science faculties, few of them have been utilised by the Australian Development Assistance Bureau or other aid agencies.

Disinterest in language study stems partly from lack of employment opportunities. Businesses are not interested in students studying a language: 'It is thought they are wasting their time, they should just do economics, get a job first and think about languages later'.¹⁴ Consequently a 'vicious circle' is created in Asian language studies because classes attract small numbers, as do Asian studies generally, at universities. These faculties are the most vulnerable when financial cuts are made. Employment prospects at universities are therefore lessened, and interest in this field of study is declining among both students and administrators. Another reason given for the decline in language studies generally is that it is hard work to learn a language, particularly when a student has had no background or introduction to the country of the language, and although generally Asian languages are not taught to any great extent at earlier stages in the educational process, the Committee notes that efforts are being made by the Curriculum Development Centre to make language courses more interesting by including cultural materials, on for example Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines.

Many of these issues were dealt with in the report of the Committee on Asian Studies to the Asian Studies Association of Australia, issued in August 1980. The report addresses four main areas of concern:

- (i) career prospects for graduates with an Asian emphasis in their studies;
- (ii) tertiary education in general, with emphasis on universities;
- (iii) schools and teacher education;
- (iv) education beyond formal institutions, through the media, libraries and information services, publishing, Australian relationships with Asian countries, continuing education and the visual and performing arts.

In its findings the Committee stated on page IV:

On the question of the allocation of resources, the central recommendation is that the Association request the Federal Government to establish an Asian Studies Council to fund a variety of developments at all levels of the education system. These include the expansion and diversification of postgraduate study of Asian countries, the extension of teaching about Asia in discipline-based courses in schools and tertiary institutions, the provision of teaching materials on the region for primary and secondary schools and of increased opportunities for pre-service and in-service education about Asian countries, support for small and vulnerable Asian studies programmes, the development of facilities for the study of Asian languages not already widely

¹⁴ See transcript of evidence, *Official Hansard Report*, p. 1495.

taught in Australia, the provision of scholarships for study of various kinds, including study in Asian countries, the expansion of research on Asian countries, support for education and scholarly publications on the region and increased provision for Australians to become familiar with the visual and performing arts of Asian countries.

As a result of restrictions on funding for the implementation of provisions in the cultural agreements, exchanges of personnel such as academics, teachers and scholars have not occurred to any great extent. In fact the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (AVCC) which advises the Government on and participates in the exchange of people, knowledge and ideas under programs established under the cultural agreements, has been approached by the Government in the general area of exchanges, but mostly in relation to countries other than the ASEAN countries. Assistance requested in relation to cultural exchanges with Thailand is an exception. Other evidence given to the Committee e.g. by scholars from the Australian National University, also reinforces the view that there should be more cultural-educational exchanges between Australia and the ASEAN countries. The Committee notes that the Government has taken a new initiative in this field and has established an annual lecturer exchange program between Australia and Indonesia.

Despite the fact that in 1978-79 more than one third of Australia's total expenditure on the official cultural relations program was directed to activities with ASEAN countries, e.g. half of the Special Overseas Visits Fund was used to finance visitors from ASEAN countries in that period, the Committee is aware that these activities were on a one-way basis, rather than by way of exchanges. It has been pointed out to the Committee that, with the present lack of activity, prospects for undergraduates to follow-up their studies in the country of their choice in the ASEAN region, are limited and this could well have a dampening effect on interest in a career involving Asian studies.

The Committee acknowledges that the study of Asia, its culture and languages is needed to achieve greater understanding of the ASEAN countries in Australia. However as indicated elsewhere in this report there is stagnation, and in some cases a decline in interest in these studies at undergraduate level. While the Committee is concerned with this situation and considers that it should be remedied, it is faced with a dilemma in recommending the promotion of Asian studies, when career prospects for such students are less than encouraging. The Committee is mindful of additional difficulties which need to be overcome if these studies are to gain momentum, e.g. funding of classes by the universities is very closely tied to a staff/student ratio and, as Asian studies classes are smaller and considered more exotic and expensive, they tend to be cut back in times of stringency. Another difficulty is the fact that \$5 million allocated by the Government for multicultural education is to be spent mainly on the teaching of migrant community languages, such as Greek and Italian. The Committee emphasises, however, that it does not wish to detract from efforts being made to promote Asian studies and encourages their continuation. Although the demand for Asian studies in Australia at present is limited the Committee concludes that there should be increasing efforts made to promote the teaching of Asian languages as they are a means of achieving deeper understanding of Asian traditions and cultures and this will in turn assist with Australia's relations with ASEAN countries.

In this context the Committee recommends that the Government implement the proposals of the Committee on Asian Studies to establish an Asian Studies Council to promote Asian studies at all levels.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TRAINING

The need for more English language training to be made available to the ASEAN countries, both within Australia and in the countries themselves has been emphasised

throughout the inquiry. Attention has been drawn to the need for tuition in Indonesia, where such training is eagerly sought, and in Thailand, where, as in Indonesia, staff in universities have difficulty in teaching conversational English.

Radio Australia broadcasts English lessons to Indonesia and Thailand and these series have proved one of the most popular programs in Radio Australia's transmission to these countries. Since 1959 four million copies of the booklet entitled 'English from Radio Australia' have been distributed to Indonesia and Thailand as an accompaniment to the lessons. In 1980 the booklet was completely revised and a new series issued. In 1982 the lessons are scheduled to be broadcast weekly through the medium of Standard Chinese.

The type of operation suggested to the Committee for English language training in Indonesia, for example, is one similar to that conducted there by the British Council i.e. Staff English Language Training Units and that this idea could be developed to provide a series of specialised English courses for Indonesian university students and possibly other students in the region. ADAB has recognised this need and proposes to provide English teachers for Thailand and Indonesia to provide language training.

English courses are already provided in Australia:

- as a pre-course study for sponsored students who come to Australia to attend courses;
- as professional training for teachers from developing countries who will return home to teach English; and
- as an intensive course for people from developing countries who need to upgrade their language skills for work in their home country.

English language training is an area of co-operation which is important, and should be capable of expansion as a service without too much difficulty. The Committee has been told in evidence that Australia has a number of unemployed English teachers and there could be some scope for their employment in the ASEAN region. The Committee sees an active role for Australia in increasing English language training especially as a second language course for ASEAN students and also in providing facilities for technical and other training which is sought by the ASEAN countries. The Committee recommends that every effort be made by the Australian Government to meet requests from the ASEAN countries for assistance in education, particularly the teaching of English.

INSTITUTIONS, ORGANISATIONS AND SCHEMES

Despite the pessimistic outlook presented to the Committee for studies involving the ASEAN countries at undergraduate levels, there is some activity conducted by a number of institutions, organisations and schemes, both private and government funded. Among those responsible are the Australian National University which has a Faculty of Asian Studies, and a Department of Indonesian Languages and Literatures. The University works in conjunction with the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee on matters undertaken by the Australian-Asian Universities Co-operation Scheme (AAUCS).

Other examples of tertiary institutions involved with Asian studies are in Queensland where the Griffith University has a Centre for the Study of Australian-Asian Relations and the James Cook University, where a South East Asian Studies Committee was set up in 1976 to promote teaching, publications and studies relating to the region. Its Department of Modern Languages teaches Bahasa Indonesia, and related Indonesian studies e.g. history and literature. Tagalog is also taught.

The Australian-Asian Universities Co-operation Scheme funded from the Australian development assistance program, was set up by agreement between the Department of Foreign Affairs and the AVCC, to conduct programs in Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore in disciplines related to food production and population studies. Its program now includes the Philippines and Thailand and has expanded to include agricultural education in Indonesia and Malaysia and Commerce in Singapore. Its activities involve training programs in Australia for university staff members, assignments of Australian academics, short courses, workshops and seminars in the regional universities and the provision of basic equipment, materials and teaching aids. The Committee was told that although the Scheme is functioning on 'a shoestring compared with most foreign operations' it 'has worked very effectively'.¹⁵

Some criticism of AAUCS has been voiced relating to its narrow agricultural focus. The opinion expressed was that it could be used more in the social sciences and humanities fields for exchanges, and to supplement Australia's development assistance activities with the ASEAN countries in these disciplines. There appears to be some difficulty about bringing these disciplines under the AAUCS 'umbrella' because the Scheme would be used then, for a different kind of function i.e. a function not related sufficiently to development in economic terms. In this context mention has been made of the fact that although ADAB has been helpful with scholarly rather than technical exchanges, as far as the Asian Studies Association of Australia is concerned, in most cases where assistance by the Association has been sought, there are problems in relation to matters which ADAB feels are not sufficiently related to development. In this regard the AVCC has posed the question, which is also implicit from the comments above, whether development assistance and cultural relations should be treated separately or whether academic exchanges should be part of the development assistance program. At the moment they are funded separately.

ASEAN countries are also provided for in education matters by the Australian National Commission for the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). Australia has developed contacts with the ASEAN countries through the UNESCO Asian Program of Educational Innovation for Development. This program is a regional mechanism through which national efforts in educational reform and innovation are promoted. One example of Australia's involvement in this area is a visit from six Thai educators, concerned with curriculum development evaluation and training, who came to Australia for two weeks in 1979. Exchanges between Australia and Indonesia to advance studies of tropical and sub-tropical forest projects have been arranged under this scheme as well as seminars dealing with educational and cultural matters.

The Colombo Plan has played an important part in bringing students from ASEAN countries to Australia. Sponsored students also come to Australia under other regional co-operation schemes such as AAUCS, the Commonwealth Co-operation in Education Scheme (CCE), and the ASEAN-Australia Economic Co-operation Program. In addition Australia provides funds to the South East Asian Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO) and United Nations agencies, on a multilateral basis.

The Department of Education has an important role in the provision of educational facilities for students from ASEAN countries and has indicated that these students 'have had a strong influence on developing relationships between the ASEAN countries and Australia, both within Australia by the presence of students and in the home countries when the students return'.¹⁶ This view was endorsed by other witnesses as a

¹⁵ See transcript of evidence, *Official Hansard Report*, p. 75.

¹⁶ See transcript of evidence, *Official Hansard Report*, p. 1172.

most important means of developing lasting impressions and contacts between ASEAN countries and Australia. The Department is involved with ASEAN through the ASEAN Education Project and the initial program is in the following areas:

- manpower and youth development
- education systems
- teacher education and training of other educational personnel
- special education

SEAMEO is a regional organisation in which all the ASEAN countries are active members and Australia is an associate member. Australia provides consultants and experts to the SEAMEO regional centres such as the Regional English Language Centre in Singapore and the Regional Centre for Education in Science and Mathematics in Malaysia. Consultants have also been provided by Australia for SEAMEO regional centres operating in the fields of tropical medicine and public health, and educational innovation and technology. Malaysia and Singapore are additionally involved with Australia in the CCE which holds conferences periodically and has a strong orientation towards the educational needs of developing countries.

The Australian Film and Television School as part of its work in advanced training in film, television, radio and audio visual communications, is also concerned with regional operations and conducts short-term specialised courses for overseas personnel, through its Open Program, including visitors from ASEAN countries. It has received requests for assistance with training from Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. UNESCO has requested the School to undertake a co-ordinating role in regional film and television training, which includes the ASEAN countries. Exchanges of staff and students from training institutions in developing countries are matters which are being considered in relation to the ASEAN countries. However information given to the Committee by the School indicated that extensive assistance to the ASEAN countries in this type of training would be difficult without additional financial support. ADAB has provided some assistance in the past relating to specialised training and the School is hopeful that this will continue.

The Committee commends the work being carried out by these institutions, organisations and schemes, and considers they make a valuable contribution to the region as well as promoting understanding and co-operation. It recommends that their work continue to be supported by the Government and that support be expanded wherever possible in response to the needs indicated by the ASEAN countries. The Committee also draws attention to its earlier recommendation on the proposed Asian Studies Council.

STUDENTS FROM ASEAN COUNTRIES IN AUSTRALIA

Sponsored students

Since the inception of the Colombo Plan in 1951, 10 789 Colombo Plan students from ASEAN countries have come to Australia. In 1980 there were 677 Colombo Plan students studying in Australia. On a country-by-country basis Colombo Plan students to the beginning of the financial year 1979-80 numbered:

Indonesia	3325
Malaysia	3028
Philippines	1245
Singapore	1239
Thailand	1952

Source: Australian Development Assistance Bureau.

The sponsored student program is administered by ADAB on a government-to-government basis, related to Australia's training expertise where it can assist the development priorities of the recipient countries. The main objectives of the sponsored overseas student program are to contribute to the economic and social development of the recipient countries through manpower, training and education. Requests from ASEAN countries for Australia to sponsor students under the Colombo Plan have remained constant over the last few years, however the type of training requested is changing. Indonesia and Malaysia have indicated an increased preference for short-term specialised courses, while Thailand has virtually ceased nominating undergraduate trainees. The number of ASEAN students sponsored and funded by their home governments who have received training in Australia to the end of 1979, totalled 1333.

Private students

Over the years Australia has accepted private students from overseas including the ASEAN countries e.g. in 1951 there were 1543 private students from those countries, in 1963 there were 11 158 (this represents the highest total between 1951 and 1979) and in 1979 there were 8,572.

New policies announced by the Government in 1979 are designed to make the student program more effective and facilitate opportunities for an increased number of overseas people to study in Australia. Briefly, the changes made include:

- in future, no limitations are to be applied on the number of people wanting to study the English language and many of the eligibility restrictions have been lifted;
- normal entry requirements have been extended to include Australian interest in the country of origin, the capacity of the Australian training institutes, level of English language competence, the content, duration of the course, and its value to the home country and applicant; and
- the introduction of charges on people from overseas undertaking courses at colleges of advanced education and universities.

During the course of its examination of policy on overseas students, including the introduction of tuition fees, the Government consulted the major source countries, including the ASEAN countries. These countries made no objections in principle to the introduction of charges.

In the field of occupational training there has been considerable overall growth, ASEAN private student participation has risen from 160 in 1975 to 287 in 1979 which represents 22.0% of the total intake. With exchange students the ASEAN participation has been relatively small with the exception of students from Indonesia.

Members of the Committee were told in Malaysia that the imposition of high fees on foreign students undertaking British university courses was creating difficulties for Malaysians who wanted to study in Britain and many Malaysians would be prevented from going there. It was hoped that Australia would take more students as a consequence. The revised student policy stresses the importance of facilitating the entry of students and trainees from ASEAN countries and although the impact of these measures cannot be fully judged at this stage, statistics show that the intake for 1980 has increased. In the first quarter of 1980 entry of private and sponsored students from ASEAN countries exceeded 34.4% which was their total percentage for the whole of 1979. ASEAN students now make up 52.0% of the total private and sponsored student intake into Australia.

The Committee considers that training particularly for technical students from ASEAN countries is important, not only for the obvious benefits to be derived by the home countries, but also for the contacts built up and friendships made by people studying in Australia. Besides the new policies on the entry of private students there may be additional possibilities for student intakes from the ASEAN countries, as the drop in growth of population in Australia becomes evident in educational institutions. If Australia's declining birth rate continues and causes a corresponding fall off in enrolments at educational institutions, it has been suggested to the Committee that consideration could be given to making under-utilised facilities available to overseas students. Such possibilities, if they arise, would need to be carefully considered, e.g. courses may need to be restructured and suitably staffed. While at present there is little scope to implement such a program, the concept is worth noting.

ACADEMIC AND GOVERNMENTAL CO-ORDINATION

Perhaps the most frequent comment made to the Committee on this subject was the need for a cultural relations or some similar body, preferably non-governmental, to co-ordinate scholarly requests from Australians, ASEAN sources and governmental organisations. Although some progress has been made by the AVCC in conjunction with AAUCS, the extent to which they can absorb such requests is limited. Mention was also made of an ASEAN-Australia council or foundation, along the lines of the Australia-Japan Foundation. However some reservations were expressed in relation to this as it would mean dealing with five countries instead of on the usual bilateral basis.

Some witnesses indicated that requests for assistance, e.g. in English language training, are matters which could be dealt with by a co-ordinating body with more flexibility than the present system permits. It has also been argued, as set out earlier in the report, that some of these requests could be dealt with more easily if the charter of AAUCS is widened to include the social sciences. The AVCC has stated that it would be timely to bring engineers, medical people and social scientists into the program, provided the countries concerned want it, taking into account that it would involve a substantial increase in the AAUCS budget. Another example of the kind of assistance sought which could be accommodated by AAUCS is a request made to ADAB by Indonesian social scientists for a five year plan to upgrade the standards and qualifications of their university staff. In-country technical training is another area where AAUCS could be used. The Committee was told that in Indonesia and Malaysia the universities have no basis of apprenticeship training and in employment no career structure for technicians.

The Committee agrees that whenever possible provision should be made to accommodate requests for assistance where they are initiated by the ASEAN countries in these fields, and particular consideration should be given to requests for technical assistance. During their visit to the ASEAN countries members of the Committee were informed that technical assistance was needed in, for example, the updating of motor mechanic manuals in training workshops in some of the countries.¹⁷ It considers that this type of technical assistance is available and there should be efforts made to ensure these requests are met. The English language training requests should be satisfied to some extent at least in Thailand and Indonesia by the ADAB program for providing teachers to those countries and the Committee believes that in due course this program should be extended, if requested, to other member countries of ASEAN.

¹⁷ The provision of updated motor manuals was investigated by a Committee member on his return from the visit and arrangements have now been made to supply them to the workshops.

INFORMATION EXCHANGES

The National Library of Australia co-operates with all the ASEAN countries in the exchange of information. It is also committed to a policy of acquiring publications from South East Asian countries to support the information and research needs of the Parliamentary Library, government departments and the widespread need to assist South East Asian studies in Australia. It is able to offer technical assistance to developing libraries in the region and co-operates with libraries in all the ASEAN countries. The Library has acted as a consultant for the development of the National Libraries of Malaysia and Indonesia and has trained librarians from the National Library of Thailand and several Indonesian librarians. Personnel from the National Library have worked in ASEAN countries for example in Thailand on a training seminar and in Indonesia where lectures, talks and reader education courses were conducted.

The Library houses a large Indonesian collection and since 1971 has had an acquisition office in Jakarta. Current commercial publications from the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Malaysia are particularly sought by the Library and general order agents have been engaged in those countries for that purpose. The importance of resource sharing on an international level has been recognised by the Library, in particular the exchange of information, and the Library is investigating a program of supplying Indonesia with publications and microfiche from its holdings.

The Committee considers that in view of the extensive holdings of the National Library on South East Asia a valuable contribution can be made to the ASEAN countries by meeting their requests for information material and technical assistance. Staffing restrictions may limit the Library's ability to assist to a certain extent, however, whenever possible these requests should be considered.

The Bibliographic Information on Southeast Asia (BISA) project which is conducted jointly by the University of Sydney Library and the University's Department of Indonesian and Malayan Studies, is compiling a computerised record and retrieval system of the National Library, Monash University Library, the Australian National University Library and the Sydney University Library holdings on Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore. The information collected by BISA will not only eventually be available Australia-wide, but world-wide, and will be of particular interest to the three ASEAN countries presently subjects of the information. Ultimately BISA envisages including material on the other South East Asian countries in its data bank.

Although BISA began as a project for scholarship and research, it has potential for much wider use. A number of large commercial organisations have enquired about the kind of information which will be available and there is a strong emphasis on social and, economic matters in the information. Secondary schools e.g. those providing Indonesian studies would find it applicable, while government departments have also expressed interest in the project. The Committee understands that ADAB has agreed to fund over a period of 3 years the development of the project's data base, and the training of librarians from Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore who will also assist in the setting up of the data base. The organisers of the project are hopeful that eventually it will become a joint Australia-ASEAN facility.

Generally the evidence received on information services emphasised that improved access to information on and from ASEAN countries is important to developing the relationship between Australia and ASEAN. The formation of a Southeast Asian Bibliographic and Information Centre was also suggested to the Committee. At present, an informal body of scholars, librarians and other people interested in research on South East Asia, the Southeast Asian Research Materials Group, is a modest attempt to supply some bibliographical information on South East Asia to the general public.

INTEREST IN AUSTRALIAN STUDIES IN THE ASEAN REGION

'Within universities, promotion of an understanding of Australia is not a policy goal with a high premium'.¹⁸ This appears to the Committee to be a fair comment on the situation of Australian studies in ASEAN countries. Most of the evidence given on this topic indicated that there is little interest in Australian studies in any of the ASEAN countries despite the fact that Australia has been admitted as an associate member of the Association of South East Asian Institutes of Higher Learning, which was considered by one witness to be an indication of a closer association with the ASEAN countries. It may, however, be something to be aimed for, as discussions Committee members had in Singapore indicated, but by and large, interest in Australia appears to be in the training and teaching Australia carries out for these countries. In fact, 'it is rather surprising on the whole how little interest Indonesia has in Australia'.¹⁹ In Singapore, an attempt to set up a program of Australian studies at the Nanyang University, was not successful, through lack of interest. 'Enrolments just declined after the initial flutter'.²⁰ The Department of Education indicated in evidence that some interest in Australian studies does exist in the ASEAN countries at primary and secondary school levels. The need for more materials in English and in their own languages with a broader coverage i.e. more cultural, social studies and visual materials for school children, was indicated by representatives from the ASEAN countries at the conference of the Asian Program of Educational Innovation for Development held in Australia in 1979.

The Curriculum Development Centre, which is involved in work with Educational Innovation for Development relating to the ASEAN countries is concerned with Australia's image in text books used by these countries. 'At present, Australia is often loosely lumped in with "Commonwealth Studies" or "Oceanic Studies" with a consequent blurring of our image'.²¹ The Centre sees an urgent need for a more detailed and accurate image of Australia to be established. Further indications of this lack of interest are provided by the number of Australian publications held in libraries in the ASEAN countries. In Indonesia, little systematic collecting of Australian publications is carried out, although the Australian Cultural Centre, some universities and the Australian Information Service make contributions. Holdings are also small in Singapore where the National Library and three other educational institutions have some 2000 publications, including books, journals, newspapers and maps. Malaysia also houses a small number of books, serials and microfilm in its National Library, totalling some 600 items. The Philippines has in its National Library over 800 publications including maps, while the main libraries in Thailand have materials, including books, journals, newspapers, films and maps amounting to over 7000 items.

The Committee acknowledges that Australian studies attract little interest in the ASEAN countries. While it is important for students to learn about the other ASEAN countries, some knowledge of Australia is desirable if two-way interest and understanding is to be promoted and Australia should ensure that its information service has available up-to-date material for distribution. ASEAN countries have made it known that they would like to have more Australian publications for their students. The Committee considers that the provision of these materials containing detailed information on Australia would create greater interest and awareness of Australia in the ASEAN

¹⁸ See transcript of evidence, *Official Hansard Report*, p. 311

¹⁹ See transcript of evidence, *Official Hansard Report*, p. 49.

²⁰ See transcript of evidence, *Official Hansard Report*, p. 247.

²¹ See transcript of evidence, *Official Hansard Report*, p. 1164.

countries. The Committee recommends that the Government meet the needs for this material as indicated by the ASEAN countries.

Seven Australian information officers are located in ASEAN countries, an Australian Cultural Centre was established in Jakarta in 1974 and a considerable proportion of Australia's official information program is aimed at ASEAN countries. Expenditure levels in support of the Australian Information Service activities however have declined since the mid-1970s. The Committee understands that this has resulted in a general shortage of information material for distribution by the Service, including 'Hemisphere' magazine, an Australian Government publication supplying information about both Asia and Australia. This magazine is acknowledged as an example of Australia's interest in Asia, its lifestyles, religions and culture generally, while at the same time presenting material about Australia. Approximately 30 000 copies are produced per issue and its principal distribution is to Asia although it brings information about Asia to Australia, through school and university subscriptions. The Australian Film Commission also supplies information to the ASEAN countries by providing films about Australia to the region. The activities of the Commission are discussed in more detail later in the report.

The Committee was told that the Australian Cultural Centre in Jakarta needs more information publications, particularly of a cultural nature. Australian publications are seen by the Committee as an important means of disseminating information about Australia in the ASEAN region, and it recommends that a wider variety and a larger quantity of material be made available for distribution.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Australia has cultural agreements with each of the ASEAN countries which cover matters such as educational exchange, visitors from ASEAN countries under the Special Overseas Visits Fund, visits to Australia under the Cultural Awards Scheme, sport, music, exhibitions, films, book gifts and subventions to the Institute of South East Asian Studies in Singapore. In 1978-79 more than one third of total Australian expenditure on the official cultural relations program was directed to activities with the ASEAN countries.

The Committee was informed that the Australian Cultural Centre in Jakarta is well used, appreciated and carries a good deal of useful material. It is a place where people may go and read books, listen to records, watch films, attend concerts and obtain general information. However some evidence indicated that there is a need for expansion of the activities carried out by the Centre and it was suggested that these activities should be undertaken along the lines of the British Council scheme. The main tasks of the British Council are educational work and spreading knowledge of Britain through information publications and displays, fostering personal contacts in a variety of fields including education and culture and the promotion of the English language. Besides the promotion of English language training it was also suggested that the Cultural Centre could organise programs for recipients of short term study awards and that it should be non-governmental. Reasons given for it being non-governmental were that the Australian Embassy which staffs the Centre has to perform other functions in Jakarta and there is also a lack of continuity in staff.

The Committee understands that one of the intended purposes of the Cultural Centre was to provide English language training, and that the necessary steps are being taken by Australia to provide English language teachers for this purpose. It has also been suggested that other Australian Cultural Centres should be established in the ASEAN countries.

Radio Australia

Evidence shows that radio broadcasts from Australia are an important contact with the ASEAN countries and are for the most part very well received. Generally the program objectives for Radio Australia's overseas service are:

the development of international awareness of Australia and the Australian identity through programs of high quality news, current affairs, entertainment and cultural enrichment, which reflect the realities and quality of the Australian life and culture and the full spectrum of Australian viewpoints on domestic and international affairs.²²

The ASEAN region receives Radio Australia broadcasts in standard Chinese (Mandarin) and Cantonese, English, Thai and Indonesian. These broadcasts are made up of news bulletins, public affairs program, and information and entertainment programs. Programs are constantly reviewed and updated and include 'Holiday Australia' a service in English, a series on Australian trade and exports, a weekly edition of 'Business Report' on the Thai program, Australian topical talks, interviews, sport and music. The English service is broadcast for 24 hours a day and foreign language services added to that give a broadcasting total of 47.5 hours per day. .

Estimates of the total number of listeners in Indonesia are between 30-36 million and approximately 300 000 in Thailand, while the English language audience is estimated at 200 000 in Malaysia, 200 000 in Indonesia, 50 000 in Singapore, 34 000 in the Philippines and 7000 in Thailand. Transmissions in the Chinese languages also have millions of listeners in the ASEAN region.

The work of Radio Australia has been hampered to some extent since the transmitter in Darwin was destroyed by a cyclone in 1974 and the temporary transmitter is much less powerful than the former. However Radio Australia expects the Darwin transmitter will be restored by 1982. It is noted that funds for this purpose were allocated in the 1980-81 Budget and the Committee believes that this project should proceed without further delay.

Radio Australia provides a great number of overseas listeners their only contact with Australia. There has been some criticism from overseas, concerning the content of broadcasts and that the reporting of events is not always balanced or highlights the negative aspects about their country. However the Committee considers the work of Radio Australia is a valuable contribution to Australia's cultural and indeed general relations with the ASEAN countries.

Australian Film Commission

'The Asean [ASEAN] region is one where the cinema is still the most popular form of public entertainment'²³ and the Australian Film Commission also submitted that there is a 'magnificent opportunity' for Australia to take advantage of this medium to project Australia to the ASEAN countries as well as to increase the sale of films. It also provides a beneficial cultural crossflow through the contacts made by Australian filmmakers working in these countries.

The Australian Film Commission hosted the 24th Asian Film Festival in Sydney in 1978 which was attended by delegates from all ASEAN countries. In the ASEAN countries the Commission conducts film events in conjunction with the Department of Foreign Affairs, sells feature film, produces documentary films on the region for educational purposes and television and has produced versions of its films in all the ASEAN languages. Perhaps the most valuable undertakings by the Commission as far as cultural relations are concerned are the joint venture projects e.g. the making of a

²² See transcript of evidence, *Official Hansard Report*, p. 1626.

²³ See transcript of evidence, *Official Hansard Report*, p. 766.

film on location in Malaysia and the retention in Thailand of a cinematographer to produce a feature film there. In addition some commercials are made in the ASEAN region and Australians are hired for this work. Films are also distributed to Australian diplomatic missions. From ASEAN sources cultural films are shown in Australia from time to time assisted by the Australian Film Commission and films from the Philippines and Thailand are shown on a commercial basis at film festivals in Australia.

Exhibitions and entertainment

The cultural exchange scheme conducted by the Department of Foreign Affairs has brought craftsmen, gallery directors and arts administrators to Australia from Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. The Crafts Council of Australia has been involved with arrangements in Australia for these people and has maintained contact with them after their return through the World Crafts Council. Australian artists are also travelling in ASEAN countries, and in some cases living there, absorbing and studying the music, dance, sculpture, painting, crafts and other artistic traditions of those countries.

Matters raised by those concerned with these issues which could lead to greater involvement with the ASEAN countries were:

- there could be better contact between the Department of Foreign Affairs, ADAB, the Crafts Council and the Asian Zone of the World Crafts Council in relation to exchanges on craft matters. This could co-ordinate better opportunities for Australian craftsmen in ASEAN countries and assist in the choice of suitable people to come to Australia from the ASEAN countries;
- increased opportunity for Australian journals and craft resource materials to reach ASEAN countries and in particular the extension of distribution of the Crafts Council Journal 'Craft Australia' in the Asian Zone—for example copies could be purchased for distribution to the Australian missions in ASEAN;
- the possibility of assistance to Australian non-government agencies for craft projects in developing countries;
- the importance of the exchange of information, craft work and people and the utilisation of the Asian Zone of the World Crafts Council in this regard; and
- planning in the cultural exchange area i.e. setting up an effective, possibly modest, cultural program in the region.

Musical groups and artists have visited the ASEAN countries as well as the Australian Ballet. The Committee considers that exchanges of artists and craftsmen should be promoted and their itineraries made as extensive as possible. The Committee also supports the wider distribution of 'Craft Australia' as a publication contributing to information material on Australia which would be appreciated and utilised overseas.

In the context of educational and cultural relations evidence throughout the inquiry indicated that Indonesia occupies a large part of the Australia-ASEAN relationship. Comment was made that this imbalance has resulted in a neglect of the other countries and as a consequence ASEAN could be used as a means of directing more attention to the other countries of the Association. The Committee agrees that more knowledge of Indonesia exists than of the other ASEAN countries, and this has developed through long association and proximity. While the Committee acknowledges the situation in relation to Indonesia, it considers that the bilateral relations with each ASEAN country are equally important and in cultural and educational matters every effort should be made to accommodate exchanges, tuition and information requests whenever it is possible.

Sport

Australia could play an important role in furthering the development of a wide range of sports in the member countries of ASEAN. Leadership and assistance by Australia in this field can contribute to long term international understanding. UNESCO has recognised the importance of sport in society by encouraging member nations to facilitate the universal development of sport.

At present, sporting contact between Australia and ASEAN occurs in the following ways:

- Australian Government funded cultural-sporting exchanges;
- bilateral sporting competitions between teams from Australia and ASEAN countries;
- participation by Australian and ASEAN teams in international sporting events held in Australia, ASEAN countries, and other countries; and
- participation by Australia and ASEAN countries in regional and international sporting associations.

The Department of Foreign Affairs funds sporting exchanges under its cultural program and co-operates with the Department of Home Affairs which is responsible for the administrative details and liaison with the relevant national sporting bodies. These exchanges involve both sportsmen and coaches for example, and the Committee has been assured that the exchanges have been an outstanding success, given that they have been short-term and as such do not develop long-term proficiency. The Government also assists national sporting associations to travel overseas for international competition by grants under the Sports Development Program.

The Confederation of Australian Sport was responsible for a new initiative involving ASEAN countries when at a meeting in Melbourne in March 1980, the East Asian and Pacific Sports Assembly was formed. Foundation members include Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia. Other sporting ventures which could be undertaken by Australia, suggested in evidence are:

- inviting sportsmen to Australia to participate in national championships;
- increasing bilateral sporting exchanges with the ASEAN countries;
- inviting coaches, administrators and sportsmen to visit Australia for specialised training; and
- exchanging technical advice on all sporting matters.

The Committee acknowledges the advantages and goodwill which emanate from sporting exchanges. It considers that Australia is able to promote valuable exchanges with the ASEAN countries in sport and feels that more emphasis should be placed on this aspect of the relationship.