

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 2 December 1985

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Palace of Westminster (Statistics)

Sir Anthony Grant asked the Lord Privy Seal if he will publish in the *Official Report* a table showing the numbers of individuals who were working in the Palace of Westminster and associated buildings in 1970, 1975 and 1980; and how many of those were hon. Members, peers, secretaries, research assistants, Officers of either House and employees of either House.

Mr. Biffen: The table gives the information requested in respect of Peers, Members, and Officers and employees of either House. Central records are not held for the other categories mentioned in my hon. Friend's question.

	1970	1975	1980
<i>House of Lords</i>			
Peers*	770	841	914
(Daily average attendance of peers)	(225)	(262)	(290)
Officers and staff	184	234	263
<i>House of Commons</i>			
Members	625	635	635
Officers and staff	407	545	†860

* Excluding peers without writs or summons or on leave of absence.

† Includes 235 staff of the Refreshment Department, which became a Department of the House on 1 April 1980. In 1970 and 1975 the number of staff working in the Refreshment Department was approximately 185.

SOCIAL SERVICES

AIDS

Mr. Sims asked the Secretary of State for Social Services what further plans he has to help in the fight against acquired immune deficiency syndrome; and whether he will make a statement.

Mr. Fowler: The Government regard reduction of the rate of spread of this serious virus infection as a matter of very high priority. We have already taken important steps.

First, we have improved the safety of blood and blood products supplied through the blood transfusion service. All Factor VIII and IX clotting agents derived from pooled plasma used by haemophiliacs are heat treated; all donations of whole blood are screened for antibodies to the AIDS virus. Second, detailed advice on the disease, how to help those infected, and how to avoid infection has gone to health professionals. Third, counselling and testing services have been introduced in the National Health Service. Fourth, information is being provided to those at risk by the Government—funded Health Education Council, and by the key voluntary organisations—the Terrence Higgins trust and the Haemophilia Society. Both of those organisations receive Government grants. Fifth, this year we have provided an extra £1.8 million for the development and use of a test for the AIDS virus, a special

allocation to the three Thames regions and haemophilia centres, additional money for voluntary organisations and for the training of councillors.

I am now announcing an allocation of an additional £6.3 million to support a package of measures to help those already infected and to reduce the number who become infected.

First £2½ million for a national information campaign to begin next Spring and run throughout the year. The campaign will be directed at the public in general and this will be coupled with a series of targeted campaigns for those known to be at special risk. The aim is to improve understanding of the disease and the ways in which its spread can be controlled. The necessary preliminary research and testing is already under way.

Second £2.5 million to help the three Thames regional health authorities, who will still next year carry the heaviest burden of the disease, to provide the necessary treatment and counselling services.

Third £270,000 for the six haemophiliac reference centres in England to continue support for the specialist counselling services which they have set up.

Fourth £100,000 for training health professionals in the counselling of AIDS sufferers. Courses have already been set up at St. Mary's hospital, Paddington, and these will continue along with new ones in Birmingham and Newcastle.

Fifth £750,000 for the public health laboratory service to continue its work in testing blood samples provided by the national blood transfusion service or the NHS for the presence of the AIDS virus.

DUCHY OF LANCASTER

Bolton Magisterial Panel

Mr. David Young asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what percentage of the Bolton magisterial panel is currently not in full-time employment; what percentage is unemployed; what percentage is retired; what percentage is of independent status or means; and if he will list the panel by occupation.

Mr. Tebbit: Of the Bolton magistrates' bench, 46 per cent. are not in full employment, three per cent. are unemployed, and 16 per cent. have retired. I have no means of knowing—and do not wish to have any means of knowing—which members of the bench are of independent means.

At the last review of the bench, the occupations were:

	Number
Directors and professionals	49
Landowners and farmers	2
Wholesale and retail proprietors and managers	15
Managers in industry and commerce or service	16
Teachers, nurses and other medical, social and artistic workers	25
White collar workers	34
Industrial, agricultural and service workers	19
Total	160